

Theological Reflections on the Charismatic Movement

(Part 2)

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IV

We move now to the main question, to which we have thus far been clearing the way. In what terms should we theologize—that is, explain in terms of God—the characteristic charismatic experience? What should we take the Holy Spirit to be doing in the lives of charismatics at the point where they profess a spiritual experience transcending that of other Christians? This is in fact the major question which the movement raises, and by concluding from its central convictional and ethical fruits that God is in it and by finding closer correspondence between ‘charismatic’ and ‘non-charismatic’ spirituality than is sometimes noticed, I have made it more difficult than it would be otherwise. For the fact we must now face is that the theology most commonly professed within the movement concerning its own claimed distinctives, is deeply unbiblical.

Granted, the movement disclaims any specifically theological purpose, and claims to be a renewal of experience, not doctrine, and so is impatient of intellectual niceties. But ‘experience’ is a slippery word, and ‘experiences’ (i.e., specific states of thought and feeling) coming to imperfectly sanctified sinners cannot but have dross mixed with their gold, and no ‘experience’ just by happening can authenticate itself as sent by God to further his work of grace. The mere fact that a Christian has an experience does not make it a Christian experience. The sign that an experience is a gift of God’s grace is that when tested by Scripture it proves to have at its heart an intensified awareness of some revealed truth concerning God and our relationship to him as creatures, sinners, beneficiaries, believers, adopted sons, pledged servants or whatever. But if experiences are pointed to as evidencing and confirming beliefs which appear biblically to be mistaken, we then have only two options: either to reject the experiences as delusive and possibly demonic in origin, or to re-theologize them in a way which shows that what they actually evidence and confirm is something different from what was first alleged. This is the

choice we now have to make with regard to at least the main stream of charismatic testimony.

Some, noting the mistakes which charismatic experience is said to verify, have taken the first course and written off the movement as delusive and dangerous. Nor can one altogether blame them when one thinks of the euphoric conceit with which the mistaken assertions are sometimes (not always) made, the naive mishandling of Scripture that often goes with them, and—most distressing of all—the seeming unconcern of charismatic spokesmen about questions of truth, with their inability to see what difficulties of principle they raise by their bland assumption that once conservative and liberal Protestants and conservative and liberal Roman Catholics share together in the Spirit all their doctrinal differences may safely be left to look after themselves. I confess myself to be one among the many whom these features bother. Nonetheless, I think I see God's touch in charismatic experience; and therefore I venture upon the second course, that of re-theologizing. The reader must judge how I get on.

First we glance at the traditional Pentecostal account of charismatic experience, for which most charismatics outside Germany have settled more or less. This, the *restorationist* view as I called it, makes the essence of the disciples' experience on Pentecost day, as described in Acts 2, and of the Corinthian experience as described in 1 Corinthians 12-14, into norms, ideals and goals for Christians now. The view centres on a conception of Spirit-baptism as 'an experience distinct from and usually subsequent to conversion in which a person receives the totality of the Spirit into his life and is thereby fully empowered for witness and service.'⁴⁴ Until Spirit-baptism takes place, the Christian lacks essential resources which God has in store for him; therefore he is charged to seek this experience till he finds it.⁴⁵ When it comes thus to upgrade him, glossolalia occurs as the outward sign of what has happened.⁴⁶ Since only hereby does he receive 'the totality of the Spirit' (however that odd phrase be construed), his experience as thus theologized may properly be viewed as completing his initiation into Christ, just as in Anglo-Catholic theory receiving the Spirit in confirmation has been seen as completing the initiation which water-baptism began.⁴⁷ (Baptismal imagery is, of course, intrinsically initiatory.) Recent thorough examinations of this view by J. D. G. Dunn, F. D. Bruner, J. R. W. Stott and A. A. Hoekema⁴⁸ make it needless for us to weigh it in detail here. Suffice it to say, first, that it compels an evaluation of non-charismatic Christianity—i.e., Christianity which neither knows nor seeks post-conversion Spirit-baptism—as low-road, second-class and lacking something vital; and, second, that it cannot be established from Scripture, for it has no coherent answer to biblical counter-questions like these:

1) *Can it be convincingly denied that 1 Corinthians 12:13 ('We*

were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink', (NIV) refers to one aspect of what we may call the 'conversion-initiation complex' with which the Christian life starts, so that according to Paul every Christian as such is Spirit-baptized? Surely not.

The only alternative to this conclusion would be to hold, as the late R. A. Torrey influentially did,⁴⁹ that Paul here speaks of a 'second blessing' which he knew that he and all the Corinthians had received, though some Christians today have not. But 1) this hardly squares with Paul's earlier description of the Corinthians as, despite all their gifts, unspiritual babes in Christ, unable as yet to take solid food (3:1 f); and 2) it forces one *either* to deny that Christians who lack the 'second blessing' belong to the one body of Christ *or* to disregard the natural meaning of 'into one body' and render it as 'for the sake of' or 'with a view to benefiting', which the Greek can hardly stand; and 3) if the latter line is taken, it constitutes a vote of censure on Paul for a needlessly and almost mischievously misleading use of words.⁵⁰

Some, accepting this conclusion, have urged that this initiatory baptism *by* the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:13 is distinct from Christ's subsequent baptism *with* or *in* the Spirit, referred to in Mark 1:8 = Matthew 3:11 = Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5, 11:16. But in all seven passages the same preposition (*en*) is used, making the Spirit the 'element' in which Christ baptizes, so that the distinction is linguistically baseless.⁵¹

2) Can it be convincingly denied that the narratives of Acts, from Pentecost on, assume that faith-repentance (Luke alternates these words when specifying response to the gospel) and the gift of the Spirit in the fulness of his new covenant ministry come together? I do not think so.

Paul's words at the close of the first Christian evangelistic sermon, 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2:38) are unambiguously clear on this point. So, as Luke narrates it, is the abnormal character of the 'two-stage' Samaritan experience (8:14-17)⁵²—the only such abnormality, be it said, in the whole book, for the Ephesian disciples who had not received the Spirit (cf. 19:2-6) were not Christians when Paul met them, any more than Cornelius was before hearing Peter (cf. 11:13). The case of Cornelius, who received the Pentecostal gift while faithfully drinking in Peter's gospel, confirms the conjunction between faith-repentance and bestowal of the Spirit which Peter affirmed in Acts 2:38, and further shows (as Peter's words in 2:38 did not) that it is the outgoing of the heart to God, rather than the water-baptism which from the human side expresses it, that occasions God's gift.⁵³

3) *Can it be convincingly denied that, as Luke presents the matter, the sole reason why Jesus' first disciples had a 'two-stage' experience, believing first and being Spirit-baptized after, was dispensational, inasmuch as nine o'clock on Pentecost morning was the moment when the Spirit's new covenant ministry among men began; so that their 'two-stage' experience must be judged unique, and not a norm for us at all? Surely this, too, is certain.*

The common Pentecostal-charismatic handling of Acts 2, like that of the holiness teachers (Torrey, etc.) from whom it came, misses this point; yet it is really inescapable. Luke's theology of the Pentecostal event as fulfilling Jesus' promise and Joel's prediction (1:4 f, 2:17 f), and the thrust of Acts as a whole, combine to put it beyond doubt. It is evident that Luke wrote his second volume to tell how the age of the Spirit dawned following Jesus' ascension, and how in the Spirit's power the gospel ran from Jerusalem to the capital of the Empire. He recorded particular experiences—Pentecost itself; the conversions of the Ethiopian eunuch, Paul, Cornelius, Lydia and the gaoler; Ananias' and Sapphira's heart failure when their duplicity was exposed; the humbling of simoniacal Simon and the blinding of Elymas; the visions of Stephen, Cornelius, Peter and Paul—as so many milestones on the gospel's road to Rome, not as models or paradigms of how God always acts. I guess Luke would have been both startled and distressed had he foreseen how some of his latter-day readers would misconstrue him in these matters. For in so far as his story is paradigmatic, it is 'an object lesson in the nature of the church and its mission'⁵⁴ rather than in the stages of universal Christian experience.⁵⁵

4) *Can it be convincingly denied that when Paul wrote, 'Do all speak in tongues?' (1 Cor. 12:30) he expected the answer 'No'? Again, surely not.*

Older Pentecostals distinguished between glossolalia as a universal, one-off, involuntary manifestation attesting Spirit-baptism and as a continuing, non-ecstatic, controllable gift which not all have.⁵⁶ Most charismatics agree with most Pentecostals that glossolalia is the universal sign of Spirit-baptism, and seem to go beyond them both in their valuation of it as a devotional aid and in their expectation that all Spirit-baptized Christians will practise it regularly.⁵⁷ But in this their restorationism, unlike that of the Pentecostal churches, takes them beyond Paul; which gives point to the next question.

5) *Can charismatic glossolalia, which is frequently a learned skill and technique, which lacks language-structure and which its own practitioners regard as mainly for private use, be convincingly equated with the tongues of 1 Corinthians 12-14,*

which were for public use, which were a 'sign' to unbelievers ('a negative sign towards their judgement', as Stendahl explains it⁵⁸), and which Paul (I quote Stendahl again) 'thought about as a language', conveying meaning and therefore capable of being interpreted?⁵⁹ Can the identity of these two glossolalic phenomena be convincingly affirmed? Surely not. The negative resemblance of unfruitful understanding (1 Cor. 14:14) may be thought to be there⁶⁰ but the extent of the correspondence overall is quite uncertain.

On the nature, worth, provenance and cessation of New Testament tongues, much is obscure and must remain so. Various interpretations on key points are viable, and perhaps the worst error in handling the relevant passages is to claim or insinuate that perfect clarity or certainty marks one's own view. The texts (Acts 2:4-11, 10:46, 11:17, 19:6; 1 Cor. 12-14) are too problematical for that.

Some exegetes, with Charles Hodge, regard both the Pentecostal and the Corinthian tongues as a gift of languages (xenolalia, xenoglossia).⁶¹ Others, with Abraham Kuyper, regard both as the uttering of unintelligible sounds (which Kuyper guesses may be the language we shall all speak in heaven), so that the Pentecostal miracle ('we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God'. Acts 2:11) was one of miraculous hearing rather than miraculous speaking (unless Kuyper's guess is right, in which case it was both).⁶² Most, with Calvin, think the Pentecostal tongues were languages and the Corinthian tongues were not; but there is no unanimity. Each case is arguable, and Hoekema is right when he says, 'It seems difficult, if not impossible, to make a final judgement on this matter.'⁶³

Then, too, opinions vary as to how far Paul's *thelō* in 1 Corinthians 14:5 expresses positive desire rather than concessive willingness, courteously phrased, for the Corinthians to speak in tongues, and why he thankfully records that he speaks in tongues more than all of them (14:18): whether because he wanted to testify that tongues enriched his ministry or his devotions, or simply because he wanted leverage for making his point about necessary restraint in the next verse. Again, different viewpoints are defensible.

Views vary too as to what Paul meant by 'the perfect' (*to teleion*) at whose coming tongues will cease (13:10): whether it is maturity in love,⁶⁴ or the complete New Testament canon and the fully-equipped state of the church that has it,⁶⁵ or (the majority view) the life of heaven upon which Christians will enter when the Lord comes. The second view entails that the gift of tongues was withdrawn before the first century closed; the first and third leave that question open, just as the question whether 'sign-gifts' were ever given apart from the apostles' personal ministry must finally be left open.

But one thing is clear: *prima facie*, Paul is discussing public use of tongues throughout 1 Corinthians 13 and 14, and it is neither neces-

sary nor natural to refer any of his statements to glossolalia as a private exercise. Charismatics often explain 14:4 ('he who speaks in a tongue edifies himself') and 18 ('I speak in tongues more than you all') in terms of private glossolalic prayer, but exegetically this is a guess which is not only unproveable but not in fact very plausible. It involves a gratuitous modelling of first-century experience on the charismatics' own ('Paul and the Corinthians must have been like us'); furthermore, it is hard to believe that in verse 4 Paul can mean that glossolalists *who do not know what they are saying* will yet edify themselves, when in verse 5 he denies that the listening church can be edified unless it knows what they are saying.⁶⁶ But if in verse 4 Paul has in view tongue-speakers who understand their tongues, today's charismatics cannot regard his words as giving them any encouragement, for they confessedly do not understand their own glossolalia. And the supposition that these verses relate to private glossolalia cannot in any case be supported from Paul's flow of thought, to which private glossolalia is irrelevant. This supposition can be read into the text, as so much else can in these chapters, but not read out of it.

As for the tongues spoken for two generations in Pentecostal churches⁶⁷ and nowadays by millions of charismatics also, linguists, sociologists, doctors, psychologists and pastors have studied them first-hand with some thoroughness.⁶⁸ The study has its hazards, for the phenomenon is widespread among all sorts of people, and the risk of generalizing from untypical cases is high. Also, it is clear that some students find glossolalic piety unsettling, indeed unnerving, so that strong defensive prejudices arise to cloud their judgement.⁶⁹ However, there seems to be, if not unanimity, at least a growing agreement among present-day investigators on the following points.

i) Whatever glossolalists may believe to the contrary, glossolalia is not language in the ordinary sense, though it is both self-expression and communication; and whatever Freudian theorists may have suspected or feared, it is not a product of the kind of disassociation of mind and bodily function which argues stress, repression or mental sickness. It is, rather, a willed and welcomed vocal event in which, in a context of attention to religious realities, the tongue operates within one's mood but apart from one's mind in a way comparable to the fantasy-languages of children⁷⁰ and the scat-singing of the late Louis Armstrong.⁷¹ It is not the prerogative of one psychological type rather than another, nor is it the product of any particular set of external circumstances or pressures.

ii) Though sometimes starting spontaneously in a person's life, with or without attendant emotional excitement, glossolalia is regularly both taught (loosen jaw and tongue, speak nonsense-syllables, utter as praise to God the first sounds that come, etc.) and learned,

and is in fact easy to do if one wants to.

iii) Contrary to the sombre ideas of earlier investigators, who saw it as a neurotic, psychotic, hysterical or hypnotic symptom, psychopathological or compensatory, a product of emotional starvation, repression or frustration, glossolalia argues no unbalance, mental disturbance or prior physical trauma.⁷² It can and does occur in folk so affected, for whom it is often, in effect, a support mechanism;⁷³ but many if not most glossolalics are persons of at least average psychological health, who have found that glossolalia is for them a kind of exalted fun before the Lord.

iv) Glossolalia is sought and used as part of a quest for closer communion with God, and regularly proves beneficial at conscious level, bringing relief of tension, a certain inner exhilaration and a strengthening sense of God's presence and blessing.

v) Glossolalia represents, focuses and intensifies such awareness of divine reality as is brought to it; thus it becomes a natural means of voicing the mood of adoration, and it is not surprising that charismatics should call it their 'prayer language'. As a voice of the heart, though not in the form of conceptual language, glossolalia, in Christianity as elsewhere, always 'says' something—namely, that one is consciously involved with and directly responding to what Rudolf Otto called the 'holy' or 'numinous', which sociologists and anthropologists now call 'the sacred'.

vi) Usually glossolalia is sought, found and used by folk who see the tongue-speaking community as spiritually 'special', and who want to be fully involved in its total group experience.

All this argues that for some people, at any rate, the capacity for glossolalia is a good gift of God, just as for all of us power to express thought in language is a good gift of God. But since glossolalists see their tongues as mainly if not wholly for private use and do not claim to know what they are saying, while Paul speaks only of tongues that are for utterance and interpretation in public and seems sure that the speaker will always have some idea of his own meaning, it is not possible to be as sure of the identity of the two phenomena as restorationism requires.

Uncertainty peaks, as it seems to me, in connection with the interpretation of tongues.⁷⁴ Restorationism invites us to equate both tongues and interpretation today with the charismata at Corinth which were so named nineteen centuries ago. Paul's word for 'interpret' is *diर्मēneuō* (1 Cor. 12:30, 14:5,13,27), which can mean explaining anything not understood (so in Luke 24:27), but in connection with language naturally implies translating the sense that is 'there' in the words (as in Acts 9:36). Paul certainly speaks as if the Corinthian sounds carried translatable meaning (14:9-13), and present-day interpreters assume this about present-day tongues (unjustifiably, as we have seen). But their performances perplex.

Interpretations are as stereotyped, vague and uninformative as they are spontaneous, fluent and confident. Weird mistakes are made. Kildahl tells how the Lord's Prayer in an African dialect was interpreted as a word on the second coming.⁷⁵ An Ethiopian priest whom I tutored went to a glossolalic gathering which he took to be an informal multi-lingual praise service, and made his contribution by standing and reciting Psalm 23 in Ge'ez, the archaic tongue of his native Coptic worship; at once it was publicly interpreted, but, as he said to me next day in sad bewilderment, 'it was all wrong'. Kildahl also reports that of two interpreters who heard the same tape-recorded glossolalia one took it as a prayer for 'guidance about a new job offer' and the other as 'thanksgiving for one's recent return to health after a serious illness.' Told that there was a clash here, 'without hesitation or defensiveness, the interpreter said that God gave to one interpreter one interpretation, and gave to another interpreter another interpretation.'⁷⁶ The experience is that interpretations come to mind immediately, the claim is that God gives them directly, and as with charismatic prophecy, for which a similar claim is made, so long as what is said is biblically legitimate it is irreformable because uncheckable. Without venturing to dismiss all interpretation as delusive on the basis of a few slips that showed, and agreeing with Samarin that the sense of group rapport which the glossolalia-plus-interpretation ritual creates may be valuable in itself,⁷⁷ I think it would be most hazardous to assume that here we have a restoring of the gift of interpretation of which Paul wrote. The evidence is just too uncertain.

Hoekema suggests that when tongue-speaking brings blessing its source is 'not the glossolalia as such but the state of mind of which it is said to be the evidence, or . . . the seeking for a greater fullness of the Spirit which preceded it.'⁷⁸ This suggestion seems solidier than any version of the claim that current glossolalia, in which the mind is in abeyance, is edifying in and of itself. So, too, interpretations may bring blessing, by ministering scriptural encouragement, without necessarily being God-given renderings of God-given languages, as some think they are, and as interpretations at Corinth perhaps were.

6) Can charismatic healing ministries be convincingly equated with the healing gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28, 30? Surely not.

The model for healing gifts in the apostolic churches can only have been the apostles' own healing gifts, for which in turn Jesus' own healing ministry was the model. But Jesus and the apostles healed directly with their word (Matt. 8:5 ff, 9:6 f; John 4:46 ff; Acts 9:34) or their touch (Mark 1:41, 5:25 ff; Acts 28:8); healing was then instant (Matt. 8:13; Mark 5:29; Luke 6:10, 17:14; John 5:9; Acts 3:7; once in two stages, each of which was instant, Mark 8:22 ff); organic defects

(e.g. wasted and crippled limbs) were healed, as well as functional, symptomatic and psychosomatic diseases (Acts 3:2 ff; Luke 6:8 ff; John 9, etc.); and on occasion they raised individuals who had been dead for days (Luke 7:11 ff, 8:49 ff; John 11:1-44; Acts 9:36 ff). They healed very large numbers (Luke 4:40, 7:21; Matt. 4:23 f; Acts 5:12 ff, 28:19), and there is no record that they ever attempted to heal without success (save in the one case where the disciples failed to pray, Mark 9:17-29, and Jesus had to take over). Whatever else can be said of the ministry of Pentecostal and charismatic healers of our time, and of those whose praying for the sick has been a matter, as it seems, of specific divine calling, none of them has a track record like this. We may not therefore assume, as is sometimes done, that what charismatics have now must be what Paul was talking about in 1 Corinthians 12:28—that, and no more. In apostolic times the gift of healing was a great deal more. The most we can say of charismatic healers is that at some moments and in some respects they are enabled to be like the gifted healers of New Testament times, and every such occasion confirms that God's touch has still its ancient power. But that is much less than saying that in the ministry of these folk the New Testament gift of healing reappears.⁷⁹

The operative word in all my six questions has been *convincingly*. That all these ventures of assertion and denial have been tried is not in question. My point is that no arguments to date have been cogent enough to make them stick, and it seems clear enough that none ever will be. Certainly, there have been providences and manifestations among charismatics (others, too) corresponding in certain respects to the miracles, healings, tongues and (more doubtfully) interpretations of tongues which authenticated the apostles and the Christ whom they preached (see 2 Cor. 12:12; Rom. 15:15-19; Heb. 2:3 f; and the Acts narratives).⁸⁰ Certainly, too, both in and beyond charismatic circles there have been all down church history 'second blessings' and anointings of the Spirit corresponding in certain respects to Pentecost.⁸¹ But it cannot be *convincingly* concluded from any of this evidence that the archetypal New Testament realities have now, after long abeyance, been given back to the church just as they were. We need not deny that some Christians' experience of spiritual deepening in all traditions since the end of the first century may have felt like the apostles' Pentecostal experience; we need only note that New Testament theology forbids us to interpret it in Pentecostal terms, or to interpret any experience apart from conversion itself as receiving the Spirit of Christ in the fulness of his new covenant ministry. Nor need we express a view on the perhaps unanswerable question, whether God's withdrawing of the so-called 'sign-gifts' after the apostles' ministry, which the gifts authenticated, was over meant that he would never under any circumstances restore them as they were; we need only observe that they have not actually been restored as

they were, though some charismatics groundlessly claim the contrary. In short, it seems plain that restorationism as a theology of charismatic experience will not do, and if we want to discern what God is doing in this movement we must think about it in other terms.⁸²

V

I offer now an alternative proposal for theologizing charismatic experience—sketchy and tentative, but congruous, I think, with the Bible doctrine of man, of salvation and of the Spirit, and congruous too with the largely positive evaluation of charismatic spirituality reached earlier, which is not affected by the inadequacy of the theology that often goes with it. I introduce my proposal by pin-pointing some facts which by now, I think, have become clear.

The charismatic movement, like other movements in the church, is something of a chameleon, taking theological and devotional colour from what surrounds it and is brought to it, and capable of changing colour as these factors change. Everywhere it, or the older Pentecostalism out of which it grew, began with some form of restorationism which rested on the axiom of the holiness movements, that the disciples' baptism in the Spirit in Acts 2 is a model for ours; but it has not everywhere stayed with that theology. Whereas in the USA, where holiness-Pentecostal traditions remain strong in denominations, books and teaching institutions, Protestant charismatics are mostly restorationists still (at least, their literature suggests that), in Britain at least, where Reformed soteriology, stressing the unity of salvation in Christ, has more impact than Wesleyan anthropocentrism, which parcels out salvation into a set of separate 'blessings', charismatic leaders have mostly dropped the doctrine of baptism in the Holy Spirit as a necessary second work of grace and substituted for it the thought that the entry into a fuller experience of the Spirit which they pin-point (sometimes called the *release* of the Spirit) is rather the subjective realization of what initiation into Christ involves.⁸³ English-speaking Roman Catholics have come to say very much the same, deprecating the older Spirit-baptism teaching, stressing the objective gift of the Spirit in water-baptism in a way that evangelicals are bound to challenge, but avoiding the Arminian model of faith, or 'openness to God', as a trigger activating God in his character as a deliverer of goods—a model which evangelical charismatics do not always avoid. Charismatic experience, we said earlier, will consist of more than one theology; now we must observe that where charismatic teaching has been revised, the thrust of the revision has been to assimilate it to accepted 'home church' doctrine, whatever that happens to be. Charismatics, while maintaining

solidarity spiritually with other charismatics, are more and more seeking theological solidarity with their own parent segment of Christendom.

Moreover, the earlier theology of the charismata which maximized their supposed discontinuity with the natural and thus their significance as proof of God's presence and power in one's life, is being replaced by 'naturalizing' accounts of them which reflect unwillingness to oppose the supernatural to the natural as the first restorationists did. (It was this 'super-supernaturalist' view of the life of grace as characteristically discontinuous with nature which at bottom divided original Pentecostalism from the rest of the evangelical world, and made it so unpopular: 'super-supernaturalism' frightens people, and no wonder.) But now among charismatics (not so much among Pentecostal church members, who are tied to the older tradition) spiritual gifts are increasingly viewed as sanctified natural abilities; and Bennett, as we saw, would have us know that some folk speak in tongues from childhood without realizing it; and divine healing is domesticated by being expounded as a natural element in the church's regular ministry to the whole man, rather than being highlighted, as formerly, as the fruit of a supernatural healing gift which particular Spirit-baptized individuals have from God.⁸⁴ These emphases also have the effect of moving charismatic thought into line with the mainstream Christian tradition, which sees grace not as overriding or destroying nature but rather as restoring and perfecting it, eliminating our radical sinfulness but not our rational humanity. It seems clear that all along the line charismatics today are cultivating, in place of the sense of being different from other Christians which marked them a decade ago, a sense of solidarity with their own churches. Formerly there was in the movement an undercurrent of sectarian judgementalism with regard to Christians and congregations of non-charismatic spirituality, but that has now gone. At leadership level, the charismatic way of life with God is recommended as vital and fruitful without censoring other forms of devotion; and if recent converts are less tolerant, the leaders know that the pendulum-swing reaction of converts against what hurt and disillusioned them before they left it is a universal human problem which only time can ever resolve. Any continuing censoriousness and divisiveness among recent converts to the charismatic way, therefore, should be seen as a special local problem, and not be allowed to blind us to the fact that charismatics today as a body, some millions strong, are seeking to deepen their churchly identity at all points.⁸⁵

So it should not jar when I propose an understanding of their experience which turns on the assumption that what God is doing in the lives of 'card-carrying' charismatics is essentially what he is doing in the lives of believing, regenerate people everywhere—namely, working to renew Christ's image in us all, so that trust, love,

hope, patience, commitment, loyalty, self-denial and self-giving, obedience and joy, may increasingly be seen in us as we see these qualities in him. Earlier I listed twelve points where the characteristic charismatic emphases were biblical, healthful and needed,⁸⁶ but I have also argued that at each point where restorationism strikes out on its own, affirming God's renewal of New Testament distinctives as norms for our time (Spirit-baptism as at Pentecost, with gifts of tongues, interpretation, healing, prophecy), it is wrong; and if so, charismatic experience, being shaped in part by eccentric expectations arising from eccentric beliefs, will have in it elements of distortion also. My line of thought involves that, as will be seen, though I believe that all that is central and essential in charismatic experience it affirms. Let it be tested by the facts of that experience on the one hand, and by the Bible on the other. Only if it fits the facts will it merit attention, and only if it squares with Scripture will it deserve acceptance.

Assuming, now, that the categories of New Testament theology, being God-taught, have ontological status, i.e. express the truth and reality of things as God sees and knows it, and assuming further that Christlike wholeness is God's purpose for charismatics, as for other Christians, I reason thus.

God in redemption finds us all more or less disintegrated personalities. Disintegration and loss of rational control are aspects of our sinful and fallen state. Trying to play God to ourselves, we are largely out of control of ourselves and also out of touch with ourselves, or at least with a great deal of ourselves, including most of what is central to our real selves. God's gracious purpose, we know, is to bring us into a reconciled relationship with himself through Christ, and through the outworking of that relationship to reintegrate us and make us whole beings again. The relationship itself is restored once for all through what Luther called the 'wonderful exchange' whereby Christ was made sin for us and we in consequence are made the righteousness of God in him (2 Cor. 5:21). Justified and adopted into God's family through faith in Christ, Christians are immediately and eternally secure; nothing can sever them from the love of the Father and the Son (Rom. 8:32-39). But the work of re-creating us as psycho-physical beings on whom Christ's image is to be stamped, the work of sanctification as older evangelical theology called it, is not the work of a moment. Rather, it is a lifelong process of growth and transformation (2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:14-16, 23 f; Col. 3:10; 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:18). Indeed, it extends beyond this life, for the basic disintegration, that between psychic (conscious personal) life and physical life, will not be finally healed till 'the redemption of our bodies' (Rom. 8:23; cf. 1 Cor. 15:35-57; 2 Cor. 5:1-10; Phil. 3:20 f.). Not till then (we may suppose) shall we know all that is now shrouded in the mysterious reality of the 'unconscious', the deep Loch Ness of

the self where the monsters of repression and fear, and below them the id and the archetypes, live, and in which Freud and Jung and their brethren have fished so diligently (cf. 1 Cor. 13:12). Nor, certainly, till we leave this mortal body shall we know the end of the split-self dimension of Christian experience, analysed in Romans 7: 14-25 and Galatians 5:16 f, whereby those whose heart delights in God's law nonetheless find in themselves allergically negative reactions and responses to it—reactions and responses which Paul diagnoses as the continuing energy of 'sin which dwells within me', dethroned but not destroyed, doomed to die but not dead yet. But the indwelling Holy Spirit, whose presence and ministry are the first instalment of the life of heaven (Rom. 8:23; 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13 f; Heb. 6:4 f), and who is sovereign in communicating to us the touch and taste of fellowship with the Father and the Son (cf. John 1:3 plus 3:24 with John 14:15-23), abides and works in us to lead us towards the appointed goal, and he deals with each one's broken and distorted humanity as he finds it.

So what about glossolalia? We saw that present-day tongue-speaking, in which the mood is maintained but the mind is on vacation, cannot be confidently equated from any point of view with New Testament tongues. Against the background of this perception, it is often urged that since God's goal is full integration of the individual under fully self-conscious rational control, the overall pattern of ongoing sanctification must involve steady recovery of such control as we move deeper into what Scripture calls sincerity, simplicity and single-mindedness, whereby in all my many doings 'one thing I do' (Phil. 3:13; cf. 2 Cor. 11:3; Jas. 1:7 f); and in that case (so the argument runs) there can be no place for glossolalia, in which rational control of the vocal chords is given up. But a double reply may be in order.

First, since the charismatic deliberately chooses glossolalia as a means of expressing adoration and petition on themes he has in mind, but on which he wants to say more to God than he can find words for, it is not true to say that rational control is wholly absent.

Second, it does not seem inconceivable that the Spirit might prompt this relaxation of rational control at surface level in order to strengthen control at a deeper level. Wordless singing, loud perhaps, as we lie in the bath can help restore a sense of rational well-being to the frantic, and glossolalia might be the spiritual equivalent of that; it would be a Godsend if it were. Also, if its effect was to intensify and sustain moods of praise and prayer which otherwise one could not sustain because of wandering thoughts, it could be a positive character-builder, and lead into what exponents of mystical prayer term contemplation. And this might be specially beneficial to folk who as victims of the bustle, superficiality and unauthentic brittleness of modern living are not in touch with themselves at a deep

level, and whose Christianity is in consequence more formal, notional, conventional, stereotyped, imitative and second-hand than it should be. (The charismatic movement is, after all, a mainly urban phenomenon, and it is in towns that these pressures operate most directly.) In this way glossolalia could be a good gift of God for some people at least, on the basis that anything which helps you to concentrate on God, practise his presence and open yourself to his influence is a good gift. (For others, however, with different problems whom God already enables to pray from their heart with understanding, glossolalia would be the unspiritual and trivial irrelevance that some now think it to be wherever it appears. It would be a case of one man's meat being another man's poison.)

What, then, about Spirit-baptism? We saw⁸⁷ that testimonies to this experience, as to the other 'second blessings' of evangelical pietism—Thomas Goodwin's sealing of the Spirit, the non-charismatic Spirit-baptism of Finney, Moody and Torrey, Andrew Murray's personal Pentecost, the 'Keswick experience' of being Spirit-filled—and also to such experiences as that of Bishop Moorhouse, all have at their heart joyful assurance, knowing God's fatherly love in Christ and so tasting heaven. I suggest that all these should be theologized as in essence so many experiences of the Spirit of adoption, who prompts believers to call God 'Father', bearing witness with, or to, our spirit that we are God's children and heirs (see Rom. 8:15-17); and of the active dwelling of the Father and the Son through the Spirit in and with the obedient saint (see John 14:15-23); and of our being filled in the direction of all God's fulness as the indwelling Christ enables us to grasp the divine love more and more (see Eph. 3:16-19), and so to rejoice with joy that is ineffable and glorified, i.e. has the tang and tincture of the manifested glory of God about it (see 1 Pet. 1:8). These are all aspects of the 'assurance-complex' which the New Testament exhibits alongside the 'conversion-complex' of calling, baptism into Christ, regeneration, and incorporation into Christ's dying and rising. If this is right, the experience in question is not isolated (though in narrating it the temptation will always be to isolate it, particularly if a 'second blessing' theology lies already in one's mind); it is, rather, an intensifying of the sense of acceptance, adoption and fellowship with God which the Spirit imparts to every Christian and sustains in him more or less clearly from conversion on (cf. Gal. 4:6, 3:2).

Why the intensifying—which, so far from being a once-for-all thing, a 'second (and last!) blessing', does (thank God!) recur from time to time? We cannot always give reasons for God's choice of times and seasons for drawing near to his children and bringing home to them in most vivid and transporting ways the reality of his love.⁸⁸ Later we may be able to see that in particular cases it was preparation for pain, perplexity or loss, or for some specially demanding or

discouraging piece of ministry, but in other cases we may only ever be able to say: God chose to show his child his love simply because he loves his child. But there are also times when it seems clear that God drew near to men because they drew near to him (cf. Jas. 4:8; Jer. 29:13 f; Luke 11:9-13, where 'give the Holy Spirit' means 'give experience of the ministry, influence and blessings of the Holy Spirit'). Different concerns drive Christians to renew their vows of consecration to God and seek his face—that is, to cry in sustained prayer for his present attention, favour and help in present need (cf. Ps. 27:7-14). The occasion may be guilt, fear, a sense of impotence or failure, discouragement, nervous exhaustion and depression, assaults of temptation and battles with indwelling sin, ominous illness, experiences of rejection or betrayal, longing for God (all these are instanced in the Psalms), and many other things. And when God reveals his love to the hearts of such seekers, putting into them, along with joy, new moral and spiritual strength to cope with what weighed them down, the specific meaning of the experience *for them* will relate to the needs that it met. So one will identify with those who theologize it as an endowment for holiness, another with the theology which views it as an empowering for service, and so on. It looks in fact (though this is not the place to give the evidence) as if all the 'second blessing' theologies, Pentecostal Spirit-baptism included, owe at least as much to the experience of their exponents as they do to biblical exegesis. However, the biblical reality to which they all testify, each in its own partly perceptive and partly misleading way, is God's work of renewing and deepening assurance.

Let Pentecostal and charismatic testimonies to Spirit-baptism, along with testimonies to being Spirit-filled at Keswick and entirely sanctified in conservative Wesleyan circles, be weighed in the light of this hypothesis. Let the correspondence between the teaching and expectations which preceded the blessing and the testimony subsequently given to it be measured. Let physical adjuncts of the blessing—shouting, glossolalia, physical jerks, trance-phenomena and other hysterical symptoms—be discounted, for the view being tested (not to mention sober common sense) sees all these things as reflecting our own more or less idiosyncratic temperament and psychology rather than any difference between God's work of deepening this as distinct from that man's assurance and sense of communion with himself. I think it will be found that the theology proposed fits the facts.⁸⁹

VI

Some conclusions are now in order.

1) The common charismatic theology of Spirit-baptism (common, at

least, in the world-wide movement as a whole, if not in particular segments of it in Britain and Germany) is the Pentecostal development of the two-level, two-stage view of the Christian life which goes back through the last-century holiness movements (Keswick, Higher Life, Victorious Life), and the power-for-service accounts of Spirit-baptism that intertwined with them, to John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection, otherwise perfect love, entire sanctification, the clean heart, or simply the second blessing. This charismatic theology sees the apostles' experience at Pentecost as the normative model for transition from the first and lower level to the higher, Spirit-filled level. But this idea, though put forward in good faith, seems to lack both biblical and experiential justification, while the implication that all Christians who are strangers to a Pentecostal transition-experience are lower-level folk, not Spirit-filled, is, to say the least, unconvincing. Yet the honest, penitent, expectant quest for more of God, out of which has come for so many the precious experience mis-called Spirit-baptism, with all that has followed it, is always the tap-root of spiritual renewal, whether impeccably theologized or not; and so it has been in this case.

2) The restorationist theory of 'sign-gifts', which the charismatic movement also inherited from older Pentecostalism, is inapplicable; nobody can be sure, nor does it seem likely, that the New Testament gifts of tongues, interpretation, healing and miracles have been restored, while Spirit-given prophecy, which in essence is not new revelation (though in biblical times this was often part of it), but rather power to apply to people truth already revealed, is not specially related to the charismatic milieu but has been in the church all along. Yet the movement's accompanying emphasis on every-member ministry in the body of Christ, using ordinary (!) spiritual gifts of which all have some, is wholly right, and has produced rich resources of support and help for the weak and hurting in particular.

3) The charismatic stresses on faith in a living Lord, learning of God from God through Scripture, openness to the indwelling Spirit, close fellowship in prayer and praise, discernment and service of personal need, and expecting God actively to answer prayer and change things for the better, are tokens of true spiritual renewal from which all Christians should learn, despite associated oddities to which mistaken theology gave rise.

4) Charismatic glossolalia, a chosen way of non-verbal self-expression before God (chosen, be it said, in the belief that God wills the choice), has its place in the inescapable pluriformity of Christian experience, in which the varied make-up of both cultures and individuals is reflected by a wide range of devotional styles. It seems no less clear

that as a devotional exercise glossolalia enriches some, than that for others it is a valueless irreverence. Some who have practised it have later testified to the spiritual unreality for them of what they were doing, while others who have begun it have recorded a vast deepening of their communion with God as a result, and there is no reason to doubt either testimony. Glossolalic prayer may help to free up and warm up some cerebral people, just as structured verbal prayer may help to steady up and shape up some emotional people. Those who know that glossolalia is not God's path for them and those for whom it is a proven enrichment should neither try to impose their own way on others, nor judge others inferior for being different, nor stagger if someone in their camp transfers to the other, believing that God has led him or her to do so. Those who pray with tongues and those who pray without tongues do it to the Lord; they stand or fall to their own master, not their fellow-servants; and in the same sense that there is in Christ neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, so in Christ there is neither glossolalist nor non-glossolalist. Even if (as I suspect, though cannot prove) today's glossolalists do not speak such tongues as were spoken at Corinth, none should forbid them their practice; but they should not suppose that every would-be top-class Christian needs to adopt it.

5) Two questions needing to be pressed are whether, along with a sense of worship and of love, the charismatic movement also fosters a realistic sense of sin, and whether its euphoric ethos does not tend to encourage naive pride among its supporters, rather than humility.

6) Though theologically uneven (and what spiritually significant movement has not been?) the charismatic renewal should commend itself to Christian people as a God-sent corrective of formalism, institutionalism and intellectualism; as creatively expressing the gospel by its music and worship style, its praise-permeated spontaneity and bold ventures in community; and as forcing all Christendom, including those who will not take this from evangelicals as such, to ask: What then does it mean to be a Christian, and to believe in the Holy Spirit? Who is Spirit-filled? Are they? Am I? With radical theology inviting the church into the barren wastes of neo-Unitarianism, it is (dare I say) just like God—the God who uses the weak to confound the mighty—to have raised up, not a new Calvin or John Owen or Abraham Kuyper, but a scratch movement, cheerfully improvising, which proclaims the divine personhood and power of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit not by great theological eloquence, originality or accuracy, but by the power of renewed lives creating a new, simplified, unconventional and uncomfortably challenging life-style. *O sancta simplicitas!* Yet the charismatic life-stream needs an adequately biblical theology and remains vulnerable while it lacks

one. The present essay has been written in the perhaps audacious hope of helping at this point.

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NOTES

- 44 A. A. Hoekema, *Holy Spirit Baptism* (Eerdmans : Grand Rapids, and Paternoster : Exeter 1972) p 10.
- 45 cf. the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God (USA), 7: 'All believers are entitled to, and should ardently expect, and earnestly seek, the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church . . .'
- 46 This is the usual Pentecostal view, though the British-based Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance, the Swiss Pfingstmission and some German Pentecostal bodies dissent (Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, p 77, n 30). Some charismatics who value tongues also dissent, e.g. Larry Christenson (cf. Hoekema, *op. cit.*, p 31) and O'Connor (cf. my part I, n 17).
- 47 For this idea, see Bruner, *op. cit.*, pp 185ff; J. D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*; G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit* (Longmans, Green : London 1951).
- 48 In works already cited.
- 49 Cf. *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*, pp 177 f : the baptism is potential for all, actual only for some. Bruner notes Torrey's role as 'a kind of John the Baptist figure for later international Pentecostalism.' (*op. cit.*, p 45).
- 50 Cf. Dunn, *op. cit.*, pp 127 ff.
- 51 Cf. Hoekema, *op. cit.* pp 21 f.
- 52 Bruner, *op. cit.*, pp 177 f, urges from Luke's 'not yet' (*oudepō*) in v 16 that for a believer 'to be baptized and not to have received the Spirit was an abnormality, in fact . . . an impossible contradiction in Christian realities . . . The meaning is this: The Spirit *is* to come with baptism, but this coming had "not yet" occurred. The relation of baptism to the Spirit . . . is the relation of cohesion', baptism guaranteeing that the Spirit must and would also be given, the only question being when. This may be over-arguing, but at least *oudepō* implies expectation. The guess (it cannot be more) that God withheld the manifestation of the Spirit (in Luke's language, 'the Holy Spirit' simply) till apostles might be its channel so as to stop the Samaritan-Jewish schism being carried into the church seems rational and reverent. The gift showed that Samaritans and Jews were being equally blessed through Christ; the mode of its giving showed that all Christians, Samaritan and Jewish equally, must recognize the divinely established leadership and authority of Christ's Jewish apostles. Heb. 2:4 mentions charismata as authenticating the apostles' witness, and all such manifestations which the New Testament notices were connected with their personal ministry; though that, *pace* Warfield and Hoekema, is no proof that there never were any that were not so connected, or that there are none now.
- 53 Bruner, *op. cit.*, pp 196 f, rightly quoted Acts 2:39, 3:16, 26, 5:31, 11:18, 13:48, 15:8 f, 16:14, 18:27 to show that in Acts faith and repentance are no less God's gift than is the Spirit. Dunn, *op. cit.*, pp 101 f, maintains against a good deal of German and British exegesis that to understand Luke we must 'acknowledge both that Spirit-baptism and water-baptism are distinct entities and that the focus and nerve-centre of Christian initiation is the gift of the Spirit. At this point certainly Luke was no "early Catholic", and the attention which theologians have devoted to water-baptism on the assumption (implicit or explicit) that it is the most impor-

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tant element of conversion-initiation and that the salvation-gifts of God (including the Spirit) are somehow dependent on it, is to be regretted.'

54 Bruner, *op. cit.*, p 161.

55 Against the Pentecostal-charismatic thesis (cf. note 45 above) that the reception of the Spirit by the apostles at Pentecost after prayer, with glossolalia, as a second stage of their Christian experience, is presented in Acts as a revealed norm for all subsequent believers, it must be said: 1) This is nowhere stated or implied in Acts itself. 2) It is inconsistent: if speaking in tongues is part of the universal pattern, why not hearing a roaring wind? 3) In the other recorded instances of the Spirit and tongues being bestowed together (Samaritans probably, cf. 8:18; Cornelius' group and the Ephesians definitely, 10:46, 19:6) these gifts came through apostles to folk not seeking, praying or 'tarrying' for them (cf. Luke 24:49, AV). 4) In all four cases the manifestation of the Spirit came to whole groups, not just to seeking individuals within those groups to the exclusion of non-seekers. 5) Acts 4:8, 31, 6:3, 5, 7:55, 9:17, 11:24, 13:9, 52, speaks of persons being filled with, or full of, the Spirit with no reference, explicit or implicit, to tongues. But if being Spirit-filled without glossolalia was the lot of some then, it may be God's will for some now. 6) From the way he tells his story, Luke seems to have understood his four cases of 'Pentecostal' manifestations as God's testimony to his acceptance on equal footing in the new society of four classes of folk whose coequality here might otherwise have been doubted—Jews, Samaritans, Gentiles and disciples of John. Whether any more such manifestations took place in the apostolic age we do not know, but it would be gratuitous to assume without evidence that they did in any situations where the lesson of coequality in Christ was already understood.

Clearly much that cannot be read out of Acts has to be read into it to make the Pentecostal case.

56 This is the point of the otherwise enigmatic sentence in the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God, 8: '*The Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost . . . The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 12:4-10, 28), but different in purpose and use.*'

57 Cf. the quotations in Hoekema, *op. cit.*, pp 31, 47. Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan write: 'We are convinced that as far as the charismatic movement is concerned everyone touched by it is meant to pray in tongues.' 'Once a person has yielded to the gift of tongues and given his body-person over so radically to the operation of the Spirit, the power and dynamic begin to flow tangibly and visibly through his life.' (*Catholic Pentecostals*, Paulist Press: New York, and Fountain Trust: London 1969, pp 222, 221) This is extreme, and some Catholic charismatics explicitly dissent (cf. my part I, note 17); nonetheless, it is a statement to which most charismatics, it seems, would assent, as consonant with their own experience. Glossolalia is certainly the movement's badge in the eyes of the Christian public everywhere, and it is clear that charismatics as a body are happy to have it so. Cf. John L. Sherrill, *They Speak with Other Tongues* (Hodder & Stoughton: London 1964, Spire Books: Westwood, NJ 1965).

58 In *The Charismatic Movement*, p 53.

59 *op. cit.*, p 60, n 12.

60 Or it may not. *Akarpos* (unfruitful) in verse 14 may mean either 'helping nobody' (Goodspeed; so in Eph. 5:11; Tit. 3:14; 2 Pet. 1:8; Jude 12) or 'blank'. The former meaning is consistent with the speaker understanding the tongue he utters, which Charles Hodge (*An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Banner of Truth: London 1958, p 288) held to be implicit in the passage. But today's charismatics confessedly do not understand their tongues.

61 Hodge, *op. cit.*, pp 248-52, 276-302. Robert G. Gromacki, *The Modern Tongues Movement* (Presbyterian and Reformed: Philadelphia 1967), p 113, takes this view.

62 Kuypers, *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids 1946), pp 133-8.

- Of a piece with Kuyper's suggestion is the view, often met, that Paul saw Christian glossolalia as 'tongues of angels' (1 Cor. 13:1), angelic as distinct from human language. But while this, like so much else that is proposed in the discussion of 1 Cor. 12-14, is not absolutely impossible, Paul's words in 13:1 are sufficiently explained as a rhetorical hyperbole meaning simply 'no matter how wonderful a performance my glossolalia may be.'
- 63 Hoekema, *What about Tongue-Speaking?* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, and Pater-noster: Exeter 1966), p 83; cf. p 128: 'The baffling question remains: how can Pentecostals . . . be sure that what goes on in tongue-speaking circles today is the same thing that went on in New Testament days?'
- 64 Cf. Nils Johannson, '1 Cor. XIII and 1 Cor. XIV', *New Testament Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 3, April 1964, p 389.
- 65 Cf. Gromacki, op. cit., pp 125-9.
- 66 Cf. Hodge on verse 4: 'The speaker with tongues did not edify the church, because he was not understood; he did edify himself, because he understood himself . . . the understanding was not in abeyance.' On verse 18 he says: 'That Paul should give thanks to God that he was more abundantly endowed with the gift of tongues, if that gift consisted in the ability to speak in languages which he himself did not understand, and the use of which, on that assumption, could according to his principle benefit neither himself nor others, is not to be believed.' Hodge's axiom that edification presupposes understanding is hard, biblically, to get round; accepting it, however, entails the conclusion that glossolalia as practised today cannot edify, which is a most unfashionable view.
- 67 Interestingly, Nils Bloch-Hoell in his authoritative survey, *The Pentecostal Movement* (Allen & Unwin: London 1964, p 146) noted that 'glossolalia is definitely decreasing within the Pentecostal Movement.' Whether this was what the charismatic Derek Prince had in mind when he said in 1964: 'They have programmed the Holy Spirit out of most Pentecostal churches, do you know that?' (*Bap-tism in the Holy Spirit*, Fountain Trust: London 1965, p 27) can only be surmised. Virginia H. Hine, in an enquiry into tongues-speaking that embraced USA, Mexico, Colombia and Haiti, found that second-generation Pentecostals generally used tongues less than did their fathers, and that 'the most frequent glossolalics were those who had been least socialized to accept the practice'—in other words, those for whom it had most charm of novelty and boldness of breaking with their past ('Pentecostal Glossolalia: Towards a Functional Interpretation,' *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 8 (1969), pp 221 f). I am told by British charismatic leaders that glossolalia has been less stressed in their circles during the past decade than it was before, but I cannot test that generalization.
- 68 See, among recent books, William J. Samarin, *Tongues of Men and Angels* (Macmillan: New York 1972, an authoritative, broad-based sociolinguistic study); John P. Kildahl, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues* (Harper & Row: New York, and Hodder & Stoughton: London 1972, a careful and fair-minded report on a ten-year investigation), plus his chapter, 'Psychological Observations', in *The Charismatic Movement*; Morton T. Kelsey, *Tongue Speaking* (Doubleday: New York 1964 and Epworth: London 1965, a welcoming assessment bringing Jungian personality theory to bear). See also Virginia H. Hine, art. cit. More negative assessments, reflecting older models, are those of Julius Laffal, *Pathological and Normal Language* (Atherton Press: New York 1965; glossolalia voices, while yet concealing, a 'conflicted wish') and Wayne Oates in Frank E. Stagg, Glenn Hinson and Wayne E. Oates, *Glossolalia* (Abingdon: Nashville 1967; glossolalia is a regressive symptom of a deprived personality). Among older authorities, George B. Cutten, *Speaking in Tongues* (Yale U.P.: New Haven) sees glossolalia as a syndrome found among non-verbalizers of low mental ability and social privilege, and Emile Lombard, *De la Glossolalie chez les Premiers Chrétiens et des Phénomènes Similaires* (Bridel: Lausanne 1910), depicts it as a kind of entranced automatic speech. A well-digested pastoral treatment is C. W. Parnell, *Understanding*

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- Tongues-Speaking* (South African Baptist Press: Johannesburg 1972). See also Hoekema's two books already cited.
- 69 'Quite clearly, available evidence requires that any explanation of glossolalia as pathological must be discarded. Even among those who accept this position, however, there often remains a sort of non-specific suspicion of emotional immaturity, of sub-clinical anxiety, or of some sort of personal inadequacy. This is particularly true of churchmen in whose denominations the ranks of Spirit-filled Christians are swelling.' (Hine, art. cit., p 217)
- 70 Cf. Samarín, op. cit., pp 142 f, and Dennis Bennett in *The Charismatic Movement*, pp 25 f. Bennett identifies childish pseudo-languages with the glossolalic gift, and on this basis claims that 'it is not unusual to find a person who has been speaking in tongues ever since childhood but who did not know the significance of what he or she was doing.' How this squares with Bennett's conviction that glossolalia is a Spirit-given consequence of conversion is not clear, but it shows most helpfully what sort of thing Bennett takes glossolalia in himself and in those to whom he ministers to be.
- 71 'There is no mystery about glossolalia. Tape-recorded samples are easy to obtain and to analyze. They always turn out to be the same thing: *strings of syllables, made up of sounds taken from among all those that the speaker knows, put together more or less haphazardly but which nevertheless emerge as word-like and sentence-like units because of realistic, language-like rhythm and melody . . .* Nothing "comes over [the speaker's] vocal chords." Speech . . . starts in the brain . . . when someone speaks in tongues, he is only using instructions [to the vocal organs] that have lain dormant since childhood. "Finding" them and then being willing to follow them are the difficult things. So the only *causes* that need to be found are those that explain why a person should *want* to use these rules again and how he becomes *willing* to do so.' (Samarín, op. cit., pp 227 f) Samarín parallels glossolalia with the 'nonsense vocalizations' of Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and others; he might have added to his list Adelaide Hall in Duke Ellington's 1927 *Creole Love Call* and Billy Banks in *Yellow Dog Blues* (1932), once a candidate for the title of the hottest track ever. It is unfortunate that Samarín miscalls scat-singing, be-bop (pp 145 f); be-bop was a name for 'progressive' instrumental jazz, and was coined in 1946.
- 72 Cf. Kildahl, *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues* (British ed.) pp 83 f.
- 73 Cf. Kildahl in *The Charismatic Movement*, pp 141 f.
- 74 See on this Samarín, op. cit., pp 162-172.
- 75 Kildahl, *Psychology . . .*, p 63.
- 76 Kildahl in *The Charismatic Movement*, p 136. He continues: 'I have gained the impression that interpreters who translate tongue-speech literally are often poorly integrated psychologically. Their view of their gift of interpretation borders on the grandiose. This impression has not been tested clinically, and I offer it to the reader simply to see whether it coincides with the general impression left by this type of interpretation of tongues.'
- 77 Samarín, op. cit., p 166.
- 78 Hoekema, *What about Tongue-Speaking?*, pp 135 f.
- 79 For a positive survey of healing in Christian history, cf. Morton T. Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity* (Harper & Row: New York, and SCM: London 1973), and Evelyn Frost, *Christian Healing: A Consideration of the Place of Spiritual Healing in the Church of Today in the Light of the Doctrine and Practice of the Ante-Nicene Church* (Mowbrays: London 1940). For negative assessments, see Warfield, op. cit., and Wade H. Boggs, Jr., *Faith Healing and the Christian Faith* (John Knox Press: Richmond, Va 1956). For a charismatic healer's perspective, see Francis MacNutt, *Healing and The Power to Heal* (Ave Maria Press: Notre Dame 1974 and 1977). For wisdom on the whole subject, see an older book written to counter the unbalance of A. J. Gordon and A. B. Simpson, Henry W. Frost, *Miraculous Healing* (repr. with 'An Appreciation' by D. M. Lloyd-Jones, Marshall, Morgan &

Scott: London, and Revell: Westwood NJ 1951); also MacArthur, *The Charismatics*, pp 130-55, and D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *The Supernatural in Medicine* (Christian Medical Fellowship: London 1971).

- 80 To include prophecy among 'sign-gifts' authenticating the apostles, as is sometimes done, does not seem correct. Joel's prediction, quoted by Peter at Pentecost, was of universal prophecy as one mark of the age of the Spirit (Acts 2:17 f); thus 'every Christian is potentially a prophet' (J. A. Motyer in *New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas et al., Inter-Varsity Fellowship: London, and Eerdmans: Grand Rapids 1962, p 1045). Though prophets both before and after Christ were inspired to foretell the future (cf. Matt. 24:15; Acts 11:28, 21:10 f; 1 Pet. 1:10-12; Rev. 1:3, 22:18), their essential ministry was forthtelling God's present word to his people. This regularly meant application of revealed truth, but not necessarily augmentation of it. As Old Testament prophets preached covenant and law, mercy and judgement, so New Testament prophets preached the gospel and the life of faith for edification and encouragement (cf. 1 Cor. 14:3, 24 f; Acts 15:32), and Paul wishes all the Corinthian church without exception to share in this ministry. So a prophetic 'revelation' (1 Cor. 14-26) must ordinarily have been an inspired application of truth that in one sense was revealed already; but the application would reveal how it bore on the hearers' lives there and then. There is no indication that New Testament prophets gave their messages in the name of the Father or the Son; as David Atkinson says, 'the common use of the first person singular in charismatic congregational prophecy today . . . would not seem to be of the essence of prophecy, but rather to be a behavioural habit developed within the subculture . . . the authority of the prophetic message is not (in) its form, but its content, and to use a form like that makes the weighing of the content [as prescribed, 1 Cor. 14:29 ff] that much harder.' (*Prophecy*, Grove Books: Bramcote 1977, p 22) The proper conclusion is that, rather than suppose prophecy to be a long-gone first-century charisma now revived, and therefore to be dressed up in verbal clothes which set it apart from all other Christian communications over nineteen centuries, we should realize that it has actually been exhibited in every sermon or informal 'message' that has had a heart-searching, 'home-coming' application to its hearers ever since the church began. The confused and confusing claim that charismatics enjoy a revived prophetic ministry has focused fresh interest on prophecy as a theme of discussion, but the thing itself has been and remains a reality whenever and wherever the Word is genuinely *preached*, i.e. *spelt out and applied*. See Atkinson, *op. cit.*, and David Hill, *New Testament Prophecy* (Marshall, Morgan & Scott: London 1979).
- 81 Regrettably, many charismatics have spoken and written as if these post-conversion deepening of fellowship with the Father and the Son through the Spirit have only ever happened with any frequency in the Wesleyan-holiness tradition and then in their own Pentecostal-charismatic circles. To those who know the history of Christian devotion, patristic, medieval and modern, Protestant and Catholic, this must appear as an arrogant provincialism matching in the realm of spirituality the so-called 'Anabaptist' ecclesiology, which in effect tells us to ignore the centuries between the apostles and ourselves, and see God as starting again with us. Such an attitude suggests not only ignorance of the Christian past but also forgetfulness of the Lord's promise that the Spirit should abide with the church always (cf. John 14:16).
- 82 In evaluating charismatic phenomena, it should be remembered that group beliefs shape group expectations, and group expectations shape individual experiences. A group with its own teachers and literature can mould the thoughts and experiences of its members to a startling degree. Specifically, when it is believed that an enhanced sense of God and his love to you in Christ and his enabling power (the anointing of the Spirit), accompanied by tongues, on the model of the apostles' experience in Acts 2, is the norm, it will certainly be both sought and found; but then it will have to be tested as an expectation-shaped experience, and the expect-

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tations which shaped it will have to be tested separately.

- 83 Cf. *Gospel and Spirit*, sec. 2.
- 84 Hummel (op. cit., ch. 17) does this typically and judiciously, but in a way which makes rather obvious the difference between the miraculous healing of the New Testament and today's ministry of spiritual healing by congregational prayer, when 'nothing is promised . . . but much is expected.' (p 218)
- 85 Cf. recent writings of Michael Harper, particularly *Let my People Grow* (Hodder & Stoughton: London, and Logos: Plainfield 1977) and *This is the Day: A Fresh Look at Christian Unity* (Hodder & Stoughton: London 1979).
- 86 Cf. my part I, *Churchman*, vol. 94:1, pp 15-16.
- 87 Cf. my part I, op. cit., pp 9-10.
- 88 Cf. John Owen: 'Of this joy there is no account to be given, but that the Spirit worketh it when and how he will; he secretly infuseth and distils it into the soul, filling it with gladness, exultations, and sometimes with unspeakable raptures of mind.' (*Works*, ed. W. Goold, Banner of Truth: Edinburgh 1967, II.253)
- 89 Charismatic theologians such as Harper and Smail, to whom the 'second-blessing' view of Spirit-baptism seems unacceptable, theologize the experience as one aspect of a unitary initiation into Christ of which water-baptism is the outward sign. But Christian initiation is essentially the establishing of a relationship with God and God's people in and through Christ, and the essence of Spirit-baptism, so-called, as we saw, is the vivid realization (God-given, as I hold) that you *have been* initiated into Christ, i.e. that you are his and he is yours. Surely it is not very plausible to call this a *part* or *aspect* of God's initiating work, especially when it comes to a Christian many years after his conversion, as on Harper's own showing it did to him. The more straightforward thing to say is that it *presupposes* initiation, being in fact the Spirit's witness to it.