

Evangelism teachers—have now blended into a powerful coalition which is rapidly spreading. This poses a great threat to the purity of the Church and the gospel.

We want to briefly point out some of the dangers of this movement so that God's people can be forewarned. We realize there are many true believers in this movement; but that fact in no way decreases the dangers inherent in it. It is important to look at principles, doctrines and positions, and not to look solely at the individuals who compose this movement. The Word of God must be the only basis for conclusions drawn. We must not judge by personal relationships or prejudice. Why do we say the Charismatic Movement is dangerous?

(1) It accepts tongues, interpretation of tongues, visions, dreams, prophecies, etc., as being messages from God. This is a grave danger. Once you accept "extra-biblical messages" (those in addition to the Bible but not necessarily contrary to the Bible *per se*), it is not long before you will be accepting "anti-biblical messages" as being valid (those directly contradicting God's Word). The Charismatic Movement has done and is doing exactly that. In reality, all extra-biblical messages are anti-biblical messages because God's Word specifically warns against adding to the Scriptures (*Deut 4:2; 12:32; Rev 22:18-19*). This group defends these extra-biblical, anti-biblical messages on the basis that, "New winds of the Holy Spirit are blowing." They say, "Who knows what the Holy Spirit may do?" Never forget that the Word of God is a completed revelation and was given by the Holy Spirit (*2 Peter 1:19*). We can be sure of one thing—the Holy Spirit will never contradict himself. It was the Holy Spirit who warned about adding to the Word of God. Therefore, those who add to God's Word cannot claim to be authorized or empowered by the Holy Spirit.

(2) It encourages its followers to stay in apostate Protestant churches as well as Roman Catholic churches and others that preach a false gospel by asserting that if the supposed "gifts of the Spirit" are present in false religious systems then joining them in evangelism and worship must be an acceptable ministry. God's Word plainly says that those who preach another gospel are "accursed" (*Gal 1:6-9*) and those who fellowship with false teachers are partakers of their evil deeds (*2 John 10-11*). Satanic deception through false tongues, miracles, and the like help to bring together what God's Word declares must be kept separate. The Charismatics are promoting the Ecumenical Movement and the Roman Catholic Church by overlooking serious doctrinal error, with eternal consequences, for the sake of "unity in the Spirit." This is dangerous indeed!

(3) It places unscriptural emphasis on physical healing. This stumbles many believers who are falsely taught that it is always God's will to heal. Both Scripture and experience teach that God may use physical afflictions for refining, correcting and chastening his children (*Heb 12:3-11; Job 23:10; Psalm 119:65, 67, 68, 71; John 15:2; 1 Peter 1:6-7*). God's Word teaches that he can heal anyone, anytime, but that he does not heal every one, every time. Paul's thrice-repeated prayer for personal healing was not granted (*2 Cor 12:1-10*); and one of Paul's faithful helpers, Trophimus, was unable to accompany him because of sickness (*2 Tim 4:20*). When we pray for healing for ourselves or others, we must never

forget that such healing is always God's prerogative based upon what is best for each of his children, not upon "demanding" or "claiming" such healing as do the Charismatics.

(4) It fosters and encourages a spirit of worldliness in the church and in the individual believer. Instead of striving for true holiness and godliness in speech, dress, hair, music, entertainment, etc., the Charismatic Movement prides itself in using worldly means to entertain their own and attract the lost. This is also very dangerous (*see 1 John 2:15-17*).

(5) It encourages women to forsake their God-given place in the home and in the church. This results in disorderly homes and disorderly churches as women assume places of leadership in direct violation of the Word of God. Charismatics use 1 Corinthians 14 to justify speaking in tongues as a gift of the Spirit for our day,* yet that very same chapter says so plainly, "Let your women keep silence in the churches" (*v34*). To countermand God's command to women is dangerous—for women, for the home and for the church.

(6) It promotes what is called "coming under the power," a dangerous practice where leaders "lay hands" on people causing them to "swoon, faint, slump down, experience the power" etc., then remaining unconscious or semiconscious for several seconds or longer. They attempt to use John 18:6 to justify this practice which is another example of how they twist the Scriptures to defend their practices. There's no scriptural precedent, example or command for this experience. Hypnotic suggestion and the desire for an extra-biblical experience opens one up to either pretended or demonically energized results which parallel those of the occult.

(7) It glories in "miracles" and often uses a "miracle" as the basis for validating a man's message or practices, even though the message or the practice is unscriptural. This is dangerous since the Bible plainly says that the last days will be days of great deceitfulness (*2 Tim 3:1,13*), a time of "all power and signs and lying wonders" (*2 Thess 2:9-11*). The validation of a man's message and methods today is not "miracles"—it's conformity to the Word of God. It's dangerous to accept any other basis of judgment. The false notion that miracles must accompany the preaching of the gospel in order for the lost to be saved today is definitely unbiblical. Multitudes today are trusting in a Charismatic "experience" for their salvation due to these false teachings rather than the sure promises of God's Word (*John 1:12; 3:36; 5:24; Rom 10:13-17*).

(8) It confuses believers as to scriptural teachings concerning prayer. Using Matthew 18:19 ("If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing...") as a basis for claiming healing, financial blessings or the solution of any problem, they ignore what God says elsewhere—"If we ask any thing according to his will..." (*1 John 5:14-15*). The Charismatic teaching that it is never God's will for any believer to be ill or in trouble of any kind is neither scriptural nor is it actually true in their own ministries and personal experiences. Yet, over and over again, they say in public meetings or to multitudes over the air, "Let's

agree together that every person listening be healed—in Jesus' name." Are they all healed? Of course not! By twisting and misapplying the Scriptures, they are deceiving millions.

(9) It promotes unscriptural teachings concerning the present power of Satan and the believer's attitude toward this "prince of the power of the air" (*Eph 2:2*). Charismatic leaders whip their audiences into a veritable frenzy as they speak of binding Satan, casting him out of individuals and into the pit, etc. They talk of "stomping on Satan" and "chasing him out of this world." This teaching completely ignores the believer's scriptural instructions to "resist Satan" (*James 4:7; Eph 6:10-17*), not forgetting the example of Michael the archangel's attitude when dealing with the devil (*Jude 9*).

If the Charismatic Movement were of the Holy Spirit of God, it would be exercising spiritual discernment and calling for separation from false prophets, apostate churches and unscriptural practices. It would also be exposing the false gospels and other heresies taught by the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, not joining with them in evangelism, prayer and worship. For all these reasons and many others, we sound this word of warning: The Charismatic Movement is dangerous—Watch out for it! □

ANOTHER CHRIST / ANOTHER GOSPEL

WHAT CHARISMATIC LEADERS ARE TEACHING

Today there are an abundance of teachers that bear the name "Christian." But this is not necessarily a cause for rejoicing, for much of the New Testament was written to warn us of false teachings and false teachers. We should not be surprised when we see counterfeits of the true gospel of Christ. Satan, the angel of darkness, continues to transform himself into an angel of light (*2 Cor 11:14*). There are popular Charismatic leaders today who are preaching a false gospel and a false Christ to millions around the world. They have a clever scheme that appeals to many who are ignorant of the truth. Their "gospel" ultimately denies the most foundational Bible truths, while it exalts the Devil who dreamed it up.

The Counterfeit Gospel—According to this modern scheme, God is in trouble. He created the world and then turned it over to Adam. Adam was an incarnation of God, a little God ruling over the earth. One of these Charismatic writers, **Earl Paulk**, has said, "Just as dogs have puppies and cats have kittens, so God has little gods."¹ But to God's surprise, Satan came and tempted mankind to sin. By sinning, Adam handed the authority of the earth over to Satan. This teaching is called "man's treason." Now Satan is God in the earth. Furthermore, Adam fell from being an incarnation of God to being an incarnation of Satan. Instead of being a little God, every person is now a little Devil. In other words, everyone is demon-possessed.

God owed every person a chance to get out of this mess. Since Satan was their rightful owner, God had to bargain with him. In the contract, God paid a price to Satan for the redemp-

tion of all men. The price God paid was the deaths of Jesus Christ. That's right, deaths, plural! Today we are taught that Christ had to die twice: once in the body and once in the spirit. In fact, the physical death of the cross was not really the big one; the spiritual death later on in hell was the crucial event. **Kenneth Copeland**, a prominent televangelist and well-known teacher, has gone so far as to say, "When his blood poured out, it did not atone."²

To save us, Christ had to identify himself with us in every way. Since we are all little demoniacs, possessed by a satanic spirit, Christ likewise had to become a demoniac. When he died, Christ ceased to be the incarnation of God and became the incarnation of Satan. **Kenneth Copeland** said, "Jesus made himself obedient to the Lordship of Satan at the cross."³ **Willie George**, a popular Charismatic pastor of Tulsa, Oklahoma, said that "Christ in his death took sin into his soul, lost the life and nature of God, then received it once again in the resurrection; our iniquities penetrated his very character. He didn't just carry iniquity; iniquity dropped into him."⁴ This sounds alarmingly similar to the tragic teaching of **Edward Irving**, known as the forerunner of the Charismatic movement, who in the late 1820's taught "the sinful substance of Christ."⁵

Thus, in his second death, Christ went to hell, the place of the demons, for that was his rightful place. There, he suffered much more than what he suffered on the cross. At some point, while in hell, a great transformation occurred: his spirit was born again. He returned to being God once again. Some even say that Christ was justified while in hell—saved just like any other sinner. After all, if he identified with us in every way, he had to be a sinner too! He had to offer a sacrifice for himself as well as for us. **Willie George** said, "He went through the new birth just like you and I go through the new birth."⁶ This teaching is called the doctrine of "Christ's identification."

Because Christ died two deaths, he had to rise again twice: once in spirit in hell, and once in body from the grave. But the victorious resurrection from the grave, which is so central to New Testament doctrine, is today considered only secondary in significance, since the physical death itself was secondary. Since Christ died these two deaths for all men, yet all men are not saved, something else must be added to Christ's deaths to make them work. Christ has done all he can for us; the rest is up to us. We must contribute our faith. Christ himself had faith that he would overcome, and we too will overcome if we have as much faith as he had. If we can stir up enough faith, we will be transformed from being a Devil into being a God, returning to what Adam supposedly was in the first place.

I am not misrepresenting the false gospel that abounds today victimizing so many people. **Kenneth Hagin**, another self-proclaimed Charismatic "prophet" said, "The believer is as much an incarnation as was Jesus of Nazareth."⁷ He has gone so far as to say that salvation is "God imparting his very nature, substance, and being to our human spirits."⁸ This deification of man sounds more like Eastern mysticism or Mormonism than like the true gospel of Christ. Indeed, **Earl Paulk** said, "For so long we have said—Why don't the Mormons change? Perhaps we should be the ones to change."⁹

* Speaking in tongues is dealt with in two of our other tracts—"Speaking in Tongues" and "The Apostles & the Gifts."

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

At the turn of the 20th Century, the present-day Pentecostal Movement came into being, emphasizing “speaking in tongues” and “divine healing.” Their failure to “rightly divide the Word of Truth” led to many false teachings regarding the ministry of the Holy Spirit, producing confusion for the saved and unsaved alike. This Pentecostal Movement arose mainly from within various Protestant churches but they were soon forced out, either because of their unusual beliefs and practices or, in some cases, because they felt unhappy in churches that had become liberal and worldly in position and practice.

In the 1960’s a new movement took shape, sharing the basic doctrines of Pentecostalism but advocating a “stay in” rather than a “come out” policy with regard to church affiliations. This movement is known as the “Charismatic Movement.” It involves not only various Protestant churches but Roman Catholic churches, too. In fact, if one is able to “speak in tongues” or has experienced a “healing,” he is accepted by the Charismatics with little or no regard to his church affiliation or doctrinal deviation. When you hear Roman Catholics talk about how their “baptism in the Holy Spirit” has given them a greater love for the Mass, you know this cannot be attributed to the Holy Spirit, but rather to a false spirit.

In the 1980’s, yet another movement appeared on the scene which made the Pentecostal/Charismatic false teachings even more appealing and dangerous. Why? Because this movement promoted the same, basic unscriptural doctrines held by both of these groups; and, in its inception, it denied any relationship to either of them, thus making it especially attractive to anyone not wanting to wear the label of either group because of their deviant teachings and practices.

The driving force for this new movement came largely from widely circulated books and lectures to evangelical groups around the world by Dr. John Wimber, founder of the Vineyard Christian Fellowship, and Dr. Peter Wagner of Fuller Theological Seminary Institute of Church Growth. Both men greatly influenced each other and, as they experimented with various teachings and practices related to “healing, miracles, signs and wonders,” they soon went even beyond the Pentecostal/Charismatic errors. They claimed that the exorcising of so-called “territorial spirits” was essential to complete the task of world evangelization; and, that God had re-established the offices of prophet and apostle with those supposedly holding these offices receiving direct messages from God for the Church, and exercising divine authority over the Church.

This newest movement is often referred to as “Power Evangelism,” “Healing, Signs, Wonders and Miracles Evangelism,” or the “Third Wave of the Holy Spirit.” Ecumenical and decidedly worldly in practice, the three so-called “waves of the Holy Spirit”—Pentecostals, Charismatics and Power

What’s Wrong With All This?—There is only one God. He is the God whose nature and attributes are revealed in Holy Scripture. Contrary to the contemporary gospel, this God is totally Sovereign. His “dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?” (*Dan 4:34,35*). This God “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (*Eph 1:11*). He truly rules over all. He never gave over the control of all things to man or Satan. He has decreed all that comes to pass, and is never in trouble, never frustrated, never confused. This is a God that never needs a back-up plan in case of failure. He is both all-wise and all-powerful. “Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased” (*Psalms 115:3*).

Satan never had rightful possession of anything. He is a created being, an angel who rebelled. God, by virtue of being Creator, is owner of everything. “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof” (*Psalms 24:1*). He has never owed anything to Satan, and never shall. God is no one’s debtor (*Rom 11:35,36*). God did not give man a divine nature, nor an angelic (nor demonic) nature, but a human nature. Adam was neither an incarnation of God nor of the Devil. He was simply man. Yes, he was created in the image of God, but he was not God. When Adam sinned, he did not become a devil. He became a sinful man.

When Christ came to earth from heaven, the nature he assumed was an unfallen human nature, not an angelic nor demonic nature. “Verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham” (*Heb 2:16*). At no point in his life or death did this human nature change into a demonic nature. According to this new gospel, the one dying on the cross of Calvary is a Devil-man, not a God-man. In other words, the Devil died for your sins! Could any teaching be more perverted or harmful? The price for the redemption of sinners was not paid to Satan. Such a thought is blasphemous! The price was paid by God the Son to God the Father. It was between the persons of the eternal Trinity that the transaction was made. “Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God” (*Eph 5:2*). The sacrifice was not “to Satan” but “to God.”

Christ was never a sinner himself. He “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (*Heb 4:15*). He “knew no sin” (*2 Cor 5:21*). In redemption, we do not become little Gods, and God the Son did not become a sinner. The true doctrine is not the so-called “identification” but rather imputation: my sin credited to his account, his righteousness credited to my account. There is a substitution of Christ in my place as my Surety who assumes my debt, but not a transformation of Christ into a demon-possessed man. To be consistent, the bizarre teaching of “identification” would require Christ to suffer forever and never be raised from the dead!

Christ died one death, not two: “the death of the cross” (*Phil 2:8*). He did suffer both in body and soul, but it all took place on the cross. He cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (*Matt 27:46*). No Scripture teaches that Christ

endured any suffering beyond that of the cross. He entered into joy immediately after the cross. He said, “Today shalt thou be with me in paradise...Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit” (*Luke 23:43-46*). His triumphant cry, “It is finished” (*John 19:30*) and the tearing of the veil in the temple proved that the work of atonement was done then and there. He suffered no more. The book of Hebrews emphasizes over and over that Christ died only “once” (*Heb 9:26-28; 10:10-14*).

The Bible teaches conclusively that Christ’s death on the cross, not some subsequent death in hell, satisfied God’s righteous demands: “Having made peace through the blood of his cross...that he might sanctify the people with his own blood...who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree” (*Col 1:20; Heb 13:12; 1 Peter 2:24*). The Bible also shows that the blood atonement was the climax of Christ’s redemptive obedience: “Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood...being now justified by his blood...In whom we have redemption through his blood...[ye] are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (*Acts 20:28; Rom 5:9; Eph 1:7; 2:13*). There is no doctrine more anti-Christian than to say that Christ’s blood did not atone. But this is precisely what many blind followers are hearing from their blind guides. This subtle shift of emphasis from the cross to hell as the focal point of redemption is grotesque, as well as unbiblical.

Christ was never born again nor justified as they teach. In Scripture, he is called the “firstborn” in his human nature, by virtue of his bodily resurrection (*Col 1:18*), not because he was regenerated like a sinner. He was “justified” (*1 Tim 3:16*) only in the sense that he was declared to be what he eternally was: righteous. He never had need at any point to be made or constituted righteous.

Finally, nowhere does the Bible teach that we must whip ourselves up into a frenzy called “faith” and then trust in that faith. Yet, **Kenneth Hagin** wrote a booklet entitled *Having Faith in Your Faith*.¹⁰ But Scripture teaches that only Christ is the object of faith, as well as its author (*Heb 12:2*). There is an eternity of difference between trusting Christ and trusting your trust.

The True Gospel—The good news is that God in pure mercy and grace, out of the goodness of his own heart, and under no obligation to man, has freely taken upon himself the redemption of a multitude of Adam’s fallen race. This redemption has been fully accomplished by Jesus Christ. By his becoming a man and living a spotless life and dying a substitutionary death and rising again from the grave, he has “perfected forever” his people, those given to him of the Father (*John 17:2; Heb 10:14*). As they commit their souls unto him, he gives them a perfect righteousness, something they themselves could never produce. That which God’s justice demanded, Christ has provided. In Christ, sinners are acceptable to God.

Yes, Christ did suffer hell for those he redeemed: it was while he was on the cross, as his blood flowed down. A real transaction occurred there: all of his sheep were ransomed. “The good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep” (*John 10:11*). The Father was satisfied with the price that Jesus paid. That which the angel proclaimed at his birth became a reality—“He

shall save his people from their sins” (*Matt 1:21*). Redemption was fully accomplished. Salvation is absolutely sure for all of those who were chosen through God’s electing grace (*Rom 11:5-7*). “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (*John 6:37*). Nothing is left to chance: “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed” (*Acts 13:48*). God is not in trouble. He is accomplishing his eternal purpose, glorifying himself in the salvation of sinners.

The Greatest Deception—The differences between the genuine gospel and the counterfeit are monumental. We are not dealing here with a slight deviation of the truth. We are dealing with a diabolical fabrication of lies. The whole nature and character of God is at stake. **(1)** To say that God is indebted to the Devil makes the Devil to be above God. **(2)** To say that the sinless Son of God became a demoniac and that his blood did not atone for sin, is to deny everything the Scriptures teach about the person and work of Christ.

Thus, this false system exactly reverses the truth by making Satan to be God, and God to be Satan. It exalts the Devil and debases God. What could be more hideous and blasphemous? This elaborate system of deception is neither biblical nor historical. It must be labeled what it is: a false gospel. We are talking about two very different Christs. The apostle warned us of preachers who come preaching “another Jesus” (*2 Cor 11:4*). There is no salvation in a false Christ; and a false gospel gives only false peace. God’s Word pronounces a curse upon any one who preaches any gospel other than the true one. “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (*Gal 1:8, 9*).

We are warned that false prophets would come with false teachings, “There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (*2 Peter 2:1*). Will you be destroyed with these false prophets? Will you hear the Devil’s gospel or the true gospel of Christ? “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*). □

References:

(1) Earl Paulk, *Satan Unmasked*, p96 **(2)** Kenneth Copeland quoted by D.R. McConnell, *A Different Gospel*, p118 **(3)** Kenneth Copeland, *Substitution and Identification*, taped message [quoted by Michael Horton, ed., *The Agony of Deceit*, p274] **(4)** Willie George, *Redeemed from Hell*, taped message E0925 **(5)** Arnold Dallimore, *The Life of Edward Irving*, pp 77-82 **(6)** Willie George, op cit. **(7)** Kenneth Hagin, *Word of Faith*, p14 **(8)** Kenneth Hagin, *Zoe: The God-Kind of Life*, p2 **(9)** Earl Paulk, *Unity of Faith*, p4 [quoted by Horton, p278] **(10)** (Tulsa: Faith Library Publications, 1981).