

Renewal Journal

7

Blessing

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Contents

Editorial	5
1 What on Earth is God Doing? By Owen Salter	9
2 Times of Refreshing, by Greg Beech	15
3 Renewal blessings, Ron French	29
4 Catch the Fire, by Dennis Plant	45
5 Reflections, by Alan Small	49
6 A Fresh Wave, by Andrew Evans	55
7 Waves of Glory, by David Cartledge	63
8 Balance, by Charles Taylor	71
9 Discernment, by John Court	77
10 Renewal Ministry, by Geoff Waugh	91
Reviews and Resources	99

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Cover Photo

Pacific Islanders (now leaders and lawyers) at renewal
meetings in Brisbane, Australia, sharing God's blessing
as they lead worship and pray for people.

Renewal Journal Logo

Ancient lamp and parchment scroll; also basin and towel
– anointed ministry, in the context of the cross and the
Light of the World.

Editorial

“Blessings abound where e’re He reigns”

This *Renewal Journal* continues to discuss controversial issues, such as the ‘blessing’ transforming thousands of churches and multiplied thousands of people.

People often have strong and opposite opinions about whether it is indeed a ‘blessing’ or not.

What can we make of it all?

Caution

Important cautions need to be made. To endorse and swallow everything that is happening as good would overlook the usual excesses, theological imbalances, and human sin. We are never free of that. It is present in all we do.

So we need to recognise our own bias to sin and to blindness. We all need the light of God’s grace and mercy.

Often those who most strongly assert their own theological purity may tragically disobey the most important commandments of all – to love God and love others. Theological purists, of all traditions, tend to judge others in direct contraction to Jesus command (Matthew 7:1 – judge not).

Wisdom

Having said that, we do need to exercise wisdom and discernment.

Some groups are excessively emotional and gullible. Other groups are excessively intellectual and proud. Others toss around like the waves of

the ocean, riding the latest fad. None of us are free of a blind spot or two. So we need to walk humbly with our God, open to correction and willing to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

God gives grace to the humble and wisdom to the meek, but he resists the proud. The discernment we need is available, but hidden from the worldly wise and haughty. That is a key to understanding this current 'blessing'.

Thousands of God's people testify to the humbling grace of God transforming their lives, even with and often through strange manifestations. Hard hearts are softened, and people weep – then joy comes in the morning. Burdened souls find release in joy unspeakable, full of glory and wonder, including laughter. Broken lives find a peace that passes understanding even in the midst of uncertainty; worry dissolves into exultant faith.

Empowering

A common thread in the blessing of the mid-nineties into the 21st century is the empowering grace of God multiplied to those who hunger and thirst after what is right.

More than most of us have ever seen, we now see, hear about and read of significant changes in people and in churches where the current blessing has burst into bloom.

Pastors confess their sins of control, pride, theological rigidity, jealousy and fear of people's opinions. Many are reconciled and work publicly together for God's glory, not for the glory of their own denomination or theological stance. Churches which once competed, blamed others for 'sheep stealing' and criticised each other, have confessed their sins of division and hatred, found reconciliation and an astonishing love for one another. Many of them now co-operate to minister this blessing together.

Blessing in the nineties catapulted so many of us into new dimensions of renewal and revival in the 21st century. This century opened with renewal and revival transforming individuals, churches and whole communities.

The Renewal Journals document some of those recent changes.

Fruit

The current 'blessing' has been around long enough for us to assess its fruit in thousands of churches and lives. Ask around. You may be amazed at the people who will tell you of God's grace bursting into their lives in these days, of new zeal for the Lord, of worn out leaders refreshed and renewed, of timid Christians finding surprising boldness and joy.

The high and mighty are being brought low, and the lowly made strong. Such is the Kingdom of God. Surely it is logical that if the glory and power of God touches us even a little, we will be undone, shake, tremble, weep or laugh for sheer joy.

The *Renewal Journal*, Number 5, on 'Signs and Wonders' included comment on the current blessing from overseas by Derek Prince, John Wimber, Jerry Steingard and others. It included some early Australian observations on this blessing. This issue, Number 7, gives Australian testimony and comment from leaders involved in it.

Owen Salter describes developments in Australia and overseas. Greg Beech, and Ron French add historical reflection to their testimonies. Dennis Plant, Alan Small, Andrew Evans and David Cartledge give their perspectives on the impact they have seen in the church. Charles Taylor and John Court offer wise counsel, and I comment on our discoveries in current renewal ministry.

The Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship (formerly Toronto Airport Vineyard Christian Fellowship), which during the first two years of the current blessing impacted about 100,000 people a year, still continues to minister in its significant expression of this current blessing. The Vineyard Churches also continue to minister that blessing in their unique way which has brought blessing to thousands around the world. Others minister this blessing in their own ways also, such as the Anglicans at Holy Trinity Brompton in London, the combined churches in Sunderland in England, Melbourne in Florida, Pasadena in California, Brownsville in Pensacola and various Pentecostal expressions of this impact such as ministries of people like Rodney Howard-Browne, Benny Hinn, Argentine healing evangelists, and many others.

And you? And me?

If, as multiplied thousands testify, God is blessing his people in profound ways right now, may we not miss the day of our visitation. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. They shall be filled (Matthew 5:6).

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1 What on Earth is God Doing?

Owen Salter



Owen Salter wrote as editor of 'On Being' magazine in 1996 while an elder at Hawthorn West Baptist Church community in Melbourne.

***More of Jesus; more of his love; more love for him -
all brought with a fresh intensity by his Spirit -
the experience of growing thousands of Christians***

In the first week of May 1993, the Holy Spirit erupted at the Christian Outreach Centre in Brisbane. Some people rocked with laughter, others fell to the floor, others reeled around as if intoxicated. Within days similar phenomena broke out in COC congregations across Australia.

'I've seen the Holy Spirit move like this here and there over the years, but this was different, said Nance Miers, wife of COC International President Neil Miers. 'In the past it seemed to have affected a few individuals, but this time it was a corporate thing.'

Miers himself commented, 'It started in New Zealand and then broke out in New Guinea, and now it's here. If I know the Holy Ghost, it will break out across the world – wherever people are truly seeking revival.'

If the evidence of the last 18 months is anything to go by, Miers does indeed know the Holy Ghost. Excited reports are painting a picture of a global wave of extraordinary phenomena, accompanied by a powerful upsurge of repentance, hunger for God, deep intercession, maturity, boldness, reconciliation in relationships, healing and release from demonic oppression.

In Australia, the 'Toronto Blessing', as it has become internationally known, seems to be spreading faster than you can hear about it. From Randwick Baptist in Sydney to Shiloh Faith Centre in Perth, people are falling down, laughing uproariously and reporting a great growth of love for Jesus.

'From what we have seen and experienced we have no doubt that at the heart of what is happening there is a genuine movement of the Spirit of God', says John Davies, rector of St Mark's Anglican Church in Northbridge, Sydney, and NSW chairman of Anglican Renewal ministries of Australia. 'Although some of the outward manifestations are unusual, and sometimes bizarre, the fruit that is being produced bears all the marks of true godliness.'

'Toronto Blessing' is the name coined by the British media to describe the spiritual renewal as it swept through British churches during 1994.

It arose when Christian leaders began visiting the Airport Vineyard church in Toronto, Canada – part of the Vineyard network of churches founded by John Wimber – where these things were happening on an astonishing scale.

But the 'Toronto Blessing' did not, in fact, begin in Toronto. Most accounts trace it back to the ministry of a South African evangelist named Rodney Howard-Browne. Resident in the US since 1987, Howard-Browne's meetings are characterised by what he calls 'holy joy' and other unusual phenomena.

When Randy Clark, a Missouri Vineyard pastor who had been profoundly touched by God at a Howard-Browne meeting, went to Toronto in January 1994 to conduct four nights of meetings, so

extraordinary was the outbreak of the Spirit that the meetings were extended again and again for forty days. Since then the church has been meeting six nights a week until the early hours of the morning as thousands of people from around the world pilgrimage to Toronto to 'catch the blessing'.

Travelling to Toronto – or to some other place where the same phenomena have appeared – is perhaps the main way in which the 'Blessing' is spreading. While hundreds of churches are being affected, some seem to be playing a role as 'dispersal centres'. London's Holy Trinity Brompton is one. Another is Christ Church Anglican in Dingley, one of Melbourne's southern suburbs, which started holding meetings on Monday and Tuesday nights from October 1994 after its senior and associate ministers both visited Toronto.

Sometimes the 'Blessing' breaks out when people who have been touched by God visit a church and pass it on. This was the experience of the Hope Valley Uniting Church in South Australia when a ten-strong ministry team from the North Phoenix Vineyard visited in August 1994.

There have also been instances where Toronto-style phenomena have simply started. For example, in September 1993 in Veszprem, Hungary, more than 3,000 people experienced 'holy laughter' at a regional conference of Faith Church.

Features of the Renewal

It is more than a year since the 'Blessing' started in Toronto, and it is now possible to get a picture of its distinctive qualities.

Unusual physical phenomena. The most common is falling over, usually when prayed for (increasingly referred to as 'resting in the Spirit'). Laughter, from quiet chuckles to paroxysmal guffaws, is also widespread. Trembling and shaking, 'drunkenness' and bouncing up and down like a pogo-stick are among the manifestations. Waves of warmth flow through bodies; people feel wind that isn't there; they weep in repentance or bellow in triumph. Some phenomena are stranger than others, including dog barks and rooster crows.

Those involved generally understand these phenomena to be people's emotional and physical responses to what the Holy Spirit is doing

within them. Laughter, for example, is a manifestation in a body that can no longer contain the joy a person is experiencing.

A concern for biblically authentic fruit. Noticeable in scores of reports is the determination of advocates that this movement be judged by its results. Phil Martin, pastor of Waverley Community Church (AOG) in Melbourne, who visited Toronto, commented. 'Phenomena are always second to fruit. We're more interested in what God is doing *in* you than what he is doing *on* you'.

And what is God doing in people? Airport Vineyard pastor John Arnott put it this way: 'When I ask them, "What has it done for you?" they always answer, 'I'm so in love with Jesus''.

A sense of greater closeness to God is common. Frequently people can't wait to begin praising him and are reluctant to stop. A sense of being humbled is often described, as is conviction of sin, greater desire to read the bible, more power in prayer, lukewarm commitments turning to zeal, healing of long-standing emotional hurts, restored relationships, increased concern for those who don't know God. . .

Overall, joy seems to be paramount. West Australian Bible teacher David Boan says, 'God is doing many kinds of healing and change, but often people come up from prayer reporting an experience of God's joy. He's teaching people in their spirits and experience that they're loved by the Father and secure in him.'

Unity. The cross-denominational character of this renewal is also distinctive. God is showering it on Pentecostals, Anglicans, Baptists, Catholics, charismatics and everyone else besides. Observers estimate that at least 7,000 churches in Britain alone, from across the spectrum, were involved in 1995. Many church leaders have testified to the fact that God has broken their pride and denominational elitism.

The lack of focus on individuals. If aspects of Rodney Howard-Browne's theology and practice have come in for some sharp critical attention from evangelical theologians – and they have – his personal self-effacement doesn't square with the normal stereotype of the Pentecostal revivalist. In late 1994 he dropped his name from the name of his organisation, having earlier told *Charisma* magazine that he didn't want his face associated with the new outpouring and that

anyone who wanted to could 'press in and touch the hem of [God's] garment.'

One mark of this renewal is that it is largely growing independent of major personalities. Low-key and diverse, it has by its very nature been a movement of thousands of excited people taking their experience to others.

An acknowledgment of dangers. The frank acknowledgment that alongside the genuine experiences there are always likely to be the spurious defuses some of the charges that it's all just fleshly emotionalism or demonic counterfeit. 'We try to be careful about the physical phenomena,' explains Marc Dupont of the Airport Christian Fellowship. 'The roots can be the Holy Spirit, the flesh or the devil. Things are always mixed, you know.'

The emerging consensus is that Christian leaders have a responsibility to give proper and mature biblical shape to what is happening so that people can test their experiences according to truth. To this end, a growing number of churches, including the Vineyard, Holy Trinity Brompton and the UK's Pioneer network of charismatic churches, are putting out resources to help people be discerning.

What does the 'Blessing' mean?

Notwithstanding criticisms, there is a swelling tide of opinion that the 'Toronto Blessing' is definitely God's work. It has received affirmation from evangelical leaders like Michael Harper. So that leaves us with the question: What is God doing?

The traditional distinction between ***renewal, revival and awakening*** has been pressed into service as Christians have tried to get a handle on these events. In this understanding, *renewal* is an action of God in stirring up the 'first love' of Christians; it becomes *revival* when it flows over to non-Christians on a substantial scale; and it moves to *awakening* when its effects are so significant that the surrounding society is widely impacted.

Few are saying this is revival. The Vineyard churches have labelled it instead a 'refreshing' – a time when God is drawing his saints near to himself to experience the joy of their salvation. Their description has rung true with thousands around the world.

But is that all there is to it? Few seem happy to think of God giving people a rollicking good time without having some wider purpose. There is a widespread belief that the 'refreshing' is the forerunner of something bigger.

'There is no doubt that we are seeing the early stages of a transnational move of God, linked to the whole unfolding process of world revival', writes Patrick Dixon in his new book, *Signs of Revival*. 'This is no "flash in the pan"; no unexpected visitation.'

According to John Davies, these events fit with a number of prophetic words, some going back to 1984, that 1993/4 would see a great outpouring of blessing. Now some of the prophets are saying that this is the first of a three-stage work of God, the second part of which will be a time of exposure of sin in the church and of repentance, and the third a time of evangelistic harvest. In this scenario, the current refreshing is understood as God preparing his people for discipline by making sure they are secure in his love.

And being secure in his love is what it seems to be about. Mary Pytches, wife of retired Anglican bishop David Pytches, tells how she initially went to Toronto dry and thirsty. She felt she needed more anointing from God, so she stood in a service calling out to him. Then people started singing the song 'Holy and Anointed One'.

'Suddenly I thought, "How stupid I am! Why don't I just ask for more of Jesus? That is the answer. If you have more of Jesus you have more of everything. You have more anointing, more gifting, more fruit, more righteousness and holiness – the lot." And so I changed my prayer and I kept praying, "Lord, I want more of Jesus" – and that's what I got.'

More of Jesus; more of his love; more love for him – all brought with a fresh intensity by his Spirit. That seems to be the experience of growing thousands of Christians. As one child commented when the experience first fell on the Christian Outreach Centre churches in 1993, 'God is making me bigger inside so I can love him more.'

And if that's the case there's really only one thing to say: "More of you, Lord – more of you."

Reprinted with permission from On Being, April 1995, pp. 32-38.

2 Times of Refreshing

Greg Beech



The Rev Greg Beech wrote as the minister of Randwick Baptist Church in Sydney. He is CEO of Homes of Hope International.

***a significant work of God
is sweeping the church today***

Many Christians are talking about a significant work of God that is sweeping the church today which has become known as the *Toronto Blessing*.

Hundreds of churches around Australia have already been touched, blessed and changed. Christians are testifying to significant life change, wonderful fruit and a new zeal for God. People are laughing, crying, falling down, experiencing strange body movements. Many who have exhibited these phenomena have never had such experiences before nor, by their own testimony, did they expect to. Services are lasting for hours longer than usual. Many pastors are rejoicing as they observe the spiritual fruit.

At Randwick Baptist Church (hereafter R.B.C.), some of these phenomena have been present in lesser degrees for about nine years. They occurred spontaneously and without prompting or discussion.

At the same time the critics have been quick to respond. Several have published claims that what they believe is the Toronto Blessing is in fact demonic. Another church has arrived at the conclusion that this is

a work of hypnotism. Yet others claim it is just a passing fad for the deluded.

The secular media have been intrigued. Newspaper, radio and T.V. have all visited church services to see for themselves. The response of the secular media has been mainly positive. We need to be aware however that the media often seeks sensationalism rather than an accurate portrayal of what is happening.

What are we to make of this extraordinary outpouring? What place should the phenomena have in our church? How can we test it to ensure that it is a true work of God? How should meetings be administered where such phenomena occur? Furthermore, what is the fruit of all these things? It is important that we follow the biblical injunction to test all things, and seek to establish biblical foundations for what we see happening.

The current refreshing is not some kind of new 'latest and greatest' programme which has been introduced to revitalize church services. The 'refreshing' is not something that pastors introduce to see if new life can be breathed into their church. We believe what we are witnessing is a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit. It was with considerable amazement that we stood back and watched God pour out His Spirit in November 1994 at R.B.C. We found it difficult to come to terms with the sheer power and intensity of God's work.

For over a year we have pastored this movement, prayed for discernment, discussed, theologized, debated with our critics, searched the Scriptures, and carefully watched and examined the fruit. We are convinced this is a true work of God. However, we acknowledge that any work of God which involves a human element, will encounter sinful tendencies, perhaps demonic attack, and therefore must be carefully dealt with.

There are a number of 'streams' of refreshment and renewal that God is using around the world. For example, God is using the Toronto Airport Vineyard to refresh his church. We have been greatly blessed by them although we ask that people assess R.B.C. based on what we teach and practice, not on what another church does. Each stream of the

movement needs to be assessed on its own merits. The conclusions and positions we have reached, both in theology and practice, may well be rejected by other churches. We do not believe that ours is the only orthodox position.

The aim of this article is to explain and define what we see God doing in our own experience and to provide a framework to assess other movements worldwide.

Some of the material has been drawn from, expanded and redrafted from an earlier work by Bill Jackson ('What in the World is Happening to us?' A biblical perspective by Bill Jackson).

The outpouring at R.B.C.

Late 1993 and the first seven or eight months of 1994 had been a considerable time of change for R.B.C. involving difficult decisions, change of staff, relational tensions, loss of some members, and a rethink of the church's vision. The 'ship' of the church had slowed and was making a careful, yet sure change, in direction.

Throughout the year there was much soul searching and grappling with tough questions. Old foundations were reaffirmed while new foundations were carefully put in place. In what was often a painful process the church sought to come to grips with developing its relational life. An adjoining property was sold, a fresh vision statement adopted and contracts were signed for the completion of building extensions. It involved considerable flux. Churches need to go through times when they carefully evaluate what they are doing.

The outcome of this process was a greater sense of unity in the church, a growing commitment to corporate prayer, and a desire to get on with the work of the Kingdom.

In hindsight, we realise that some of the things we went through were necessary for God to be able to come and move freely among us. Change is never easy and refining is often painful at the time. We are filled with gratitude as we reflect upon how God was working during this time.

By November an examination of our leadership structure had begun

and many questions still needed to be answered. Considerable discussion took place on what we would do with our evening service. How could we best reach our community? Yet we were experiencing considerable faith that God was establishing his plans and purposes in our midst. The Leadership were confident that we were tracking in the right direction.

Factors leading up to the outpouring at R.B.C. include :

- * A gradual renewal of the church's prayer life with new prayer meetings and a number of people joining the 'prayer watch'.

- * A four month teaching series on the Holy Spirit was undertaken on Sunday evenings.

- * A stronger sense of 'grace' in the church.

- * A sense of expectation. We had been feeling spiritually dry for sometime. We believed in the work of the Spirit but were not seeing much power. A sense of a new day dawning.

- * A couple in the church visited Toronto and were dramatically touched by the Holy Spirit. Upon arriving home on 1st November they prayed for some of us. We were powerfully ministered to. They also brought back from Toronto some resources, in particular three videos. Watching one of these I was touched with joy by the Holy Spirit.

- * Sunday, 6th November, was a remarkable day for a number of reasons. In the early morning prayer meeting there was a sense of expectation. At the worship service an American Pastor, Roy Kendall and his family, (who pastor a church in Jerusalem) led a wonderful time of praise. Roy spoke on the subject of praise including a word about spiritual dryness, and thirst for God. He gave me a dry Jericho Lily which while totally dry (and it can stay that way for decades), when touched by a shower of rain releases its seed that germinates in desert conditions in as little as an hour. For some reason he felt this was an important symbol for R.B.C. A number of people received ministry after that service but it wasn't until the evening service that we saw power being poured out. Chris Acland preached on Isaiah 55, Steve

and Cathy testified on their experience in Toronto, and afterwards we saw some of the signs that have since increased in intensity and breadth.

* We recognise and wish to emphasise that the outpouring was not so much a result of anything we did but was a sovereign movement of God.

The outpouring seems to have transferred from the Toronto Airport Vineyard, and is being transferred to churches around the world. We have been thrilled to learn of other churches in Sydney also being touched.

* While we had prayed for the outpouring of the Spirit, it still caught us by surprise! The sheer intensity and broad sweep of the Spirit's work has been staggering.

* Once the outpouring had begun we were reminded of several prophetic words given to us. Brent Rue had prophesied in October 1990 that a large wave of the Holy Spirit would crash over us. This wave would be following by waves of converts.

* Glen Sheppard prophesied on 6th October, 1985 at R.B.C. He believed God spoke to him: 'You are sitting in the midst of a people who can shake a nation.' Glenn prayed: 'I thank you Lord that these young folk are standing on the brink of moving into something that is beyond anything they can conceive of. I see the breath of holy revival for a nation.' Glenn saw a fountainhead in the church that would flow out and touch the nations.

* Karen Richardson from the Vineyard-Birmingham, Alabama, wrote to us in February 1993:

"IT'S HARVEST TIME! I see big combines, many big combines out in the field, gathering in. The Lord says, 'It is harvest time. Go out and gather that which has been prepared. The crop is ready. The fruit is ripe and ready for picking.' I see a huge barrel of water, fresh, clean, pure water being poured over that field, the Holy Spirit, cleansing, purifying and perfecting. In the past you've laboured, and you've thought, 'We have laboured in vain.' The Lord says, 'No, your labour was not in vain. And soon, yes very soon, you shall see the reward

being manifested. It shall come forth. For truly I, your Lord, am the Lord of the harvest. And this harvest will be different for you, different from the past. For this harvest is in season. And there shall be joy – great joy in the Lord. And songs to the Lord will break forth in this church in a new way. My Spirit is moving upon this people, this place. And you are going to be surprised, pleasantly surprised at the new giftings, the new talents, that I am bringing to this place. A fresh anointing. A sweet anointing. You'll even see some dear faces returning back to you. They will be there to help with the new harvest!@

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Testimonies by others

Leaders around the world now report on fresh touched from God.

Ellie Mumford (South West London Vineyard)

I have a greater love for Jesus than I have ever known; a greater excitement about the Kingdom than I had ever thought possible; a greater sense that these are glorious, glorious days to be alive. I'm thrilled about the Scriptures I haven't had this appetite for ministry for years. Jesus is restoring his joy, and his laughter is medicine to the soul.@

John Mosier (Pastor of Christ the King Church in Brighton, UK)

We know that there is always flesh and spirit in these things and for some suggestible people there will be an experience but little change. We are hearing many testimonies however of a sense of an encounter with God, an increase in prayer and Bible reading, a boldness in witnessing. We've seen our Sunday evening congregation double@ (*Alpha*, May, 1995).

Phil Rees (South Street Baptist Church, Greenwich, UK)

The Lord takes over – you can hardly believe it. There have been tears

of repentance and a release of tension. There's a growth of holiness and dwelling close to God. The last seven weeks have been the best in my Christian life.@

Dave Holden (Pastor of Sidcup Community Church)

When we pray for them they laugh or weep. In the following days they talk of a sense of God's presence, their marriages being different, ethical changes in their lives. We have discovered a new lease of life. Our prayer meetings have quadrupled.@

Peter Grearley (Covenant Ministries, UK)

People have been falling over, laughing uncontrollably, rolling around drunk, and crying deeply. We have been unable to end some meetings because the people don't want to stop praising God or leave his presence. As we worshipped last Sunday, Agnes Morris was instantly healed of a twenty-year back problem. She had been unable to bend properly and is now a living testimony to God's healing power.@

Glimpses of revival

It is important to remember what God has done in the past. We don't want to live in the past, or be so consumed by the past that we are no use in the present. We do, however, want to draw inspiration from what God has done time and time again in different ways, in the past. The current outpouring is not revival although some of the manifestations and testimonies are typical of what occurs in revivals.

Jonathan Edwards – 1737

'As I rode out into the woods for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner has for commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that was for me extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as Mediator between God and man, and His wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The Person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thoughts and conceptions, which

continued as near as I can judge, about one hour; such as to keep me a greater part of the time in a flood tears and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust and to be full of Christ alone; to love Him with a holy and pure love; to trust in Him; to live upon Him; to serve Him and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a Divine and Heavenly purity.'

'I can see him in my mind's eye in his pulpit, reading his sermon short-sightedly as he peered at the manuscript by candle light. He must have been charged with passion. But his reedy, high-pitched voice would hardly qualify him as a dynamic preacher. It was the power of God, not erudition or eloquence, that gripped church members that night. The building rang with echoing cries of terrified listeners, men and women clutching the pillars of the building with all their strength, terrified that the floors would split and their feet go slipping and sliding into hell.'

John Wesley – 1st January, 1739

'Mr. Hall, Hinching, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutching and my brother Charles were present at our love feast in Fetter Lane with about 60 of our brethren. About 3 in the morning as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, in so much that many cried out for exulting joy and felt to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from the awe and amazement of the presence his Majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise Thee O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.'

George Whitefield, 5th November, 1740

'Mr. Gilbert Tennant preached first and I then began to pray and to give an exhortation. In about sixminutes one person cried out, 'He's come! He's come!' and could scarcely sustain the manifestation of Jesus to his soul. But having heard the crying of others for the like favour I was obliged to stop and I prayed over them as I saw the agonies and the distress increase. At length we sang a hymn and then retired to the house, where the man that received Christ continued praising and speaking of Him until near midnight. My own soul was so full that I retired and wept before the Lord, and had a deep sense of my own

vileness; and the sovereignty and greatness of God's everlasting love. Most of the people spent the remainder of the night in prayer and praising God. It was a night much to be remembered.'

Daniel Rowland – Wales, March 1743

The preaching of Daniel Rowland in Wales in 1743 is described by Howel Harris; 'They fall almost as dead by the power of the Word and continue weeping for joy, having found the Messiah; some mourning under a sense of their vileness, and some in the pangs of new birth!.....The power at the conclusion of his sermon was such that multitudes continued weeping and crying out for the Saviour and could not possibly forebear.'

Christmas Evans – Wales, early 19th Century

In every place he preached, multitudes would weep as he proclaimed the power of the cross of Jesus, and would be converted to Christ. Under Evan's preaching the cross of the Lord Jesus took on incredible power and importance, which is its rightful place.

Ulster, Ireland – 1859

One of the chief characteristics of this revival was the 'slaying' of people. People would fall to the ground on the streets or in the fields and would lie there motionless for hours. When they recovered, they sensed that God had visited them, and they would worship him and praise him with great fervour and excitement. Crowds were attracted to observe this incredible phenomenon. Many people were won to Christ as they believed that this was the work of God. God doesn't always work in the ways we expect, and very often works contrary to accepted scientific practice!

Charleston – 1858

In 1858, John Girardeau was leading his normal evening church service in Charleston, North Carolina, when, 'He received the sensation as if a bolt of electricity had struck his head and diffused itself through his whole body. For a little while he stood speechless under the strange physical feeling. Then he said, 'The Holy Spirit has come; we will begin

preaching tomorrow evening.’ He closed the service with a hymn, dismissed the congregation, and came down from the pulpit; but no one left the house. The whole congregation had quietly resumed their seats. The Holy Spirit did not only come to him, he had also taken possession of the hearts of the people. Immediately he began exhorting them to accept the Gospel. They began to sob softly, like the falling of rain, then, with deeper emotion, to weep bitterly, or to rejoice loudly, accordingly to their circumstances. It was midnight before he could dismiss his congregation. The meeting went on night and day for eight weeks.

Charles Finney – mid 19th Century

Finney described his overwhelming experience of God as ‘waves of liquid love’. In once service in Northampton Massachusetts, such was the anointing on Finney’s message that the whole congregation of about 500 people rose up and cried out ‘Oh God we are not worthy to stand in your presence. Save us or destroy us’ Many Christians feared to enter a church with unconfessed sin in their hearts unless, in front of the congregation their sin would be revealed.

D. L. Moody – late 19th Century

‘I began to cry as never before for a greater blessing from God. The hunger increased. I really thought that I did not want to live any longer. I kept on crying all the time that God would fill me with His Spirit. Well, one day in the city of New York – Oh! what a day, I cannot describe it, I seldom refer to it. It is almost too sacred an experience to name. Paul had experience of which he never spoke for 14 years. I can only say God revealed himself to me and I had such an experience of his love that I had to ask him to stay his hand.’

Evan Roberts – Leader of the Welsh Revival, 1904-5

In 1904 Roberts wrote, ‘After many had prayed, I felt some living energy or force entering my bosom, restraining my breath, my legs trembling terribly; this living energy increased and increased as one after another prayed. Feeling strongly and deeply warmed, I burst forth in prayer.

David Davies – Wales, 1904

David Davies, a minister in the town of Swansea, South Wales was a very poor speaker. When revival hit Swansea, David Davies became a transformed preacher. Gone was the hesitancy and stuttering, instead he spoke with the most amazing authority and power. Following his messages, hundreds of men and women were converted to Christ. Davies exercised an incredible ministry in the power and demonstration of the Spirit. When the revival simmered down the following year, the strange thing was that David Davies reverted to his previous hesitant style of preaching.

The Welsh Revival – 1904-5

When the fire of God fell on the people one of the first evidences that God was at work was a new desire for people to pray. Prayer meetings lasted from ten in the morning until midnight. There was preaching, singing, testimony, prayer and reading the Bible aloud. Coal miners, thousands of feet below the earth, would gather together during their food breaks, not to eat, but to pray and read the Scriptures aloud. Some would even gather at the pinhead an hour before work in order to sing and pray. Often the revived Christians had fallen in love afresh with their Saviour. They delighted to talk with him, to spend time with the Lord, to listen to His voice and to speak of His glory.

Edinburgh – 1905

In 1905, the pastor of the Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh visited Wales and told the story of God's great work in Wales to his own congregation. An incredible movement of the Spirit erupted. 'It was at a late prayer meeting, held in the evening at 9.30, that the fire of God fell. There was nothing, humanly speaking, to account for what happened. Suddenly, upon one and another came an overwhelming sense of the reality and awfulness of his presence and of eternal things.

Life, death, and eternity suddenly seemed laid bare. Prayer and weeping began, and gained in intensity every moment. As on the day of the laying the foundation of the second temple, 'The people could not discern the noise of the shouts of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people' (Ezra 3:13). One was overwhelmed before the sudden

bursting of the bounds. Could it be real? We looked up and asked for clear direction, and all we knew of God was, 'Do nothing'. Friends who were gathered sang on their knees. Each seemed to sing, each seemed to pray, oblivious of one another. Then the prayer broke out again, waves and waves of prayer; and the mid-night hour was reached. The hours had passed like minutes. It is useless being a spectator looking on, or praying for it, in order to catch its spirit and breath. It is necessary to be in it, praying in it, part of it, caught by the same power, swept by the same wind. One who was present says; 'I cannot tell you what Christ was to me last night. My heart was full to overflowing. If ever my Lord was near to me, it was last night.'

Malawi – 1910

We find a similar description of a church meeting in Malawi in 1910. 'An elder began to pray confessing before all the sin of having cherished the spirit of revenge for an evil done him. Then another began to pray, and another and another, till two or three were praying together in a quiet voice, weeping and confessing, each one unconscious of the other. Suddenly there came a sound of 'a rushing wind'. It was the thrilling sound of 2500 people praying audibly, no one apparently conscious of the other. I could think of no better image to describe the noise than the rushing of wind through the trees. We were listening to the same sound as filled that upper room at Pentecost. Not noisy or discordant, it filled us with a great awe.'

Scotland – 1949

The famous Duncan Campbell described a meeting on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland during 1949. 'The lad rose to his feet and in his prayer made reference to the fourth chapter of Revelation, which he had been reading that morning; 'O God, I seem to be gazing through the open door. I see the Lamb in the midst of the Throne, with the keys of death and of hell at his girdle.' He began to sob, then lifting his eyes toward heaven, cried: 'Oh God, there is power there, let it loose!' With the force of a hurricane the Spirit of God swept into the building and the flood gates of heaven opened. The church resembled a battle field. On one side many were prostrated over the seats weeping and sighing; on the

other side some were affected by throwing their arms in the air in a rigid posture. God had come.'

Phenomena accompanying revival

While the current outpouring is not revival, we are seeing things that often accompany revival. Consider what God has done in the past.

1. Dislike of enthusiasm is to quench the Spirit. Those familiar with the history of the church, and in particular the history of revivals, will know this charge of enthusiasm is one always brought against people most active in a period of revival@ (Martin Lloyd Jones).

2. Lady Huntington wrote to Whitefield regarding the cases of crying out and falling down at the meetings, and advised him not to remove them, as had been done, for it seemed to bring a damper on the meeting. She wrote, >You are making a mistake. Don't be wiser than God. Let them cry out; it will do a great deal more good than your preaching@ (Wallis 1956:75).

This is not to say that we do not insist on the regular exposition of Scripture but make the point that the evidences of God's power among us are also instructive.

3. Wesley's Journal, July 1739, commenting on developments in Whitefield's meetings: Afor no sooner had he begun ... to invite all sinners to believe in Christ, than four persons sunk down close to him, almost in the same moment. One of them lay without either sense or motion. A second trembled exceedingly. The third had strong convulsions all over his body, but made no noise, unless by groans. The fourth, equally convulsed, called upon God, with strong cries and tears. From this time, I trust, we shall all allow God to carry on His own work in the way that pleaseth Him@ (Wallis 1956:75).

4. Barton Stone in 1801 on the Kentucky revival: AThere on the edge of the prairie ... multitudes came together ... The scene was new and passing strange. It baffled description. Many, very many, fell down as men slain in battle, and continued for hours together in an apparently breathless and motionless state, sometimes for a few moments receiving and exhibiting symptoms of life by a deep groan or piercing

shriek, or a prayer for mercy fervently uttered@ (Pratney 1994:103).

5. Sober professors who had been communicants for many years now were lying prostrate on the ground crying out in such language as this: >Oh how I would have despised any person a few days ago who would have acted as I am doing now’@ (James McGready).

6. “At one time I saw at least *five hundred* swept down in a moment as if a battery of a thousand guns had opened upon them, and then immediately followed shrieks and shouts that rent the very heavens@ - James Finley, a convert who became a Methodist minister, on the Cane Ridge Revival, Kentucky in 1800 (Pratney 1994:104).

7. As though hit by a bolt of lightning, the entire company was knocked from their chairs to the floor. Seven began to speak in diverse kinds of tongues and to magnify God. The shouts were so fervent and so loud that a crowd gathered outside wondering ‘what meaneth this?’ Soon it was noised over the city that God was pouring out His Spirit” – Carl Brumback, on the 1905 Azusa Street revival (Riss 1988:53).

8. There is a dimension of openness to the Holy Spirit which allows Him the sovereign right to intervene and override the rational guidance system, to go beyond the written revelation (by prophecy) if He chooses, which must be preserved or else we will fail to do justice both to Scripture and to our common experience (Lovelace p 269).

May God keep us open to the surprising impact of the Holy Spirit in our time in history.

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Renewal Blessings

Ron French



The Rev Ron French, a Uniting Church minister (photo with Janie and Tim), wrote when editor of Living Water, the Journal of the Uniting Church Queensland Synod Committee for Renewal Ministries.

***There's a world of difference between
a commitment to the Lord
and a relationship with the Lord.***

It was a warm night in March, 1995, as around 2,000 people crowded into the worship centre and overflowing areas of Northside Christian Family in Brisbane. The organisers had been expecting 400-500 but 800 had registered for the day event and many more had gathered for the Wednesday night meeting once it was known it was open for general attendance.

The reason? To find out what this 'Toronto blessing' was all about. To find out if God indeed was blessing people with an outpouring of his Spirit, and, if that was so, to get some for themselves, for the people who had gathered were hungry.

Pastor John Lewis introduced us to Baptist pastor Guy (pronounced Gee) Chevrau, and some of what Gee shared with us over the next three days is summarised here.

What cannot be fully expressed is what happened after the message.

I've seen people slain in the Spirit before as the man out the front shouts for the power of God to come down and with hand on forehead down they go. But this was different. There was no hand on forehead, nor was there shouts from those in charge. Instead a gentle voice invited to you to close your eyes and fix your vision on Jesus, and, in many cases, legs out from underneath you and gentle down you went.

This was also followed by laughing or sobbing or twitching or moving or jerking or some or all of the above. Some explanation of the phenomena follows in this article.

Guy shared with us that it ought not surprise us that God should want to initiate a blessing upon his people at particular times and in particular places. He said in the UK you can now travel 30 miles in any direction and find an outpouring of God in this way. His comment:

This new move of God is taking us out to where we cannot return.

God is calling us to a radical theological humility.

There's a world of difference between a commitment to the Lord and a relationship with the Lord.

God desires not just the former but also the latter.

Is this from God?

Guy cautioned us on judging the phenomena. He called on us to wait six months and then look at the kind of fruit we have.

Do we have a renewed desire for worship?

Have the dividing walls come down?

Are we feeding the poor?

Are we praying for the sick?

Is there a renewed love for God's word?

Is it a privilege to pray?

Has fear and insecurity been lifted off?.

Where did this come from?

Randy Clark is the founding pastor of the Vineyard Fellowship in St. Louis. After years of seeing little fruit and power in his ministry he became desperately hungry for God. Hearing of unusual manifestations of God's presence through the ministry of South African evangelist, Rodney Howard-Brown, Randy attended one of Rodney's meetings at Tulsa, OK. Randy was powerfully touched and, in going home, began to see a similar outbreak of the Spirit among his people.

In January 1994 John Arnott, pastor of the Toronto Airport Vineyard invited Randy to come to Toronto to speak and minister. Two days of meetings in Toronto turned into what, to date, have been 90 days of almost continuous in numerous locations in Ontario and in the United States.

The meetings have been dubbed renewal rather than a revival by psychiatrist and author John White and by John Wimber, international leader of the Association of Vineyard Churches.

Randy and those who have been associated with him say that this move of God is more associated with refreshing the church and calling home the prodigals than salvation for the lost. People are coming to Christ but not in the numbers one typically sees in times of revival.

The Toronto Airport Vineyard now has meetings of refreshment every night of the week except Monday and people from all over the world have attended and gone home blessed.

The ministers and leaders of Northside Christian Family and Garden City Christian Church have been across and the 'Catch the Fire' meetings at Everton Park occurred in response to these people meeting with this new wave of God's presence.

Now various Uniting Churches are experiencing this blessing.

The small group which meets at Rosewood Uniting Church on a Sunday night began experiencing some of these manifestations of the Spirit after the April John Wimber conference last year.

This particularly related to the shaking and laughing but in late January /early February this year the falling and resting in the Spirit was added to the agenda. We didn't understand what was happening at first, except we realised God was doing something. Attending the meetings at Everton Park clarified a number of issues for us. Since then the manifestations have only increased.

Those who have been hungry and desperate for an outpouring of God in their lives and in ministry have come forward for a blessing and have rested in the Spirit as he has gently blessed them. The other manifestations have occurred as well.

To explain this further, the following comments are adapted from Guy Chevrau's teaching.

What does the Bible and the church say?

There are basic doctrinal approaches in the Bible. These include:

- a. Christian theology (what Christians are to believe),
- b. Christian ethics (how Christians ought to behave),
- c. Christian experience or practice (what Christians do).

When dealing with supernatural phenomena, we are dealing with the area of Christian practice. While there is primary text dealing with prophetic revelation, there are no primary texts that clearly state that Christians are to fall down, shake or look drunk during seasons of divine visitation.

There are, however, a number of secondary (remember, secondary does not mean invalid or unimportant) texts that illustrate that these were some of the responses people had during the moments of divine visitation.

There are also numerous examples of similar phenomena in church history, especially in seasons of revival. The purpose in putting this

information together is to develop a biblical apologetic for what we see happening among us. Much of what we are seeing is strange to the natural mind. The following are some of the phenomena that we have seen in our meetings: falling, shaking, drunkenness, crying, laughter, and prophetic revelation.

Are these manifestations biblical?

First it needs to be said that it is perfectly normal and even necessary to inquire into the biblical nature of Christian experience. It is also OK to admit that much of this looks 'weird' as long as we don't prematurely judge it. When Paul first went to the Greek city of Berea, the book of Acts says that the Bereans were more noble than the other Jews Paul had encountered in Greece because they 'searched the Scriptures daily to see if what Paul was saying was true.' (17 v 11)

When we ask. 'Is it biblical?' we are probably asking for what is commonly called proof text. A proof text is a portion of Scripture that, when taken in context, validates a particular position we are taking. In order to ascertain whether these phenomena are biblical, we need to lay down some ground rules for solid interpretation.

Falling

The most common phenomena we have seen in our meetings is people falling down. Often they remain conscious but engaged with the Lord. They feel weak and find it difficult to do anything but rest with God. We have seen that as they lay with the Lord they have had significant changes in their lives.

Genesis 15:12 - This literally reads 'A deep sleep fell on Abram'. This is the same word that is used when God put Adam to sleep when he made Eve (Genesis 2:21).

1 Samuel 19 - This text shows that for something close to a 24 hour period Saul lay in a prone position with God speaking through him.

Ezekiel 3: 23; Daniel 8:17; 10:9 - being overwhelmed

Matthew 17: 6,7; John 18: 6 - As Judas and the soldiers came to arrest Jesus, they had an interesting encounter. 'When Jesus said. 'I am he,' they turned back and fell to the ground.' Here we see an immediate

falling back in response to the presence of Jesus. They were apparently able to get up shortly thereafter because they went on to arrest Jesus.

Acts 9:3 - When Paul was apprehended on the road to Damascus by a light from heaven, he says, 'I fell to the ground and heard a voice.' Again we see that falling was a normal response to a divine visitation.

Revelation 1:17 - Here we see an experience similar to Adam's and Abram's where the person not only falls but is also unconscious for an extended period of time.

Jonathan Edwards, the main instrument and theologian of the Great Awakening in America (1725 - 1760), says in his *Account of the Revival of Religion in Northampton 1740 - 1742*:

Many have had their religious affections raised far beyond what they had ever been before, and there were some instances of persons laying in a sort of trance. Remaining perhaps for a whole twenty-four hours motionless, and with their senses locked up, but in the mean time under strong imaginations, as though they went to heaven and had there a vision of glorious and delightful objects.

It was a very frequent thing to see outcries, faintings, convulsions and such like, both with distress, and also admiration and joy.

It was no the manner here to hold meetings all night, nor was it common to continue them till very late in the night; but it was pretty often so, that there were some so affected, and their bodies so overcome, that they could not go home, but were obligated to stay all night where they were.

Charles Finney (1792-1875) was one of the most powerful revivalists since the reformation:

At a country place named Sodom, in the state of New York, Finney gave one address in which he described the condition of Sodom before God destroyed it. 'I had not spoken in this strain more than a quarter of an hour.' says he 'when an awful solemnity seemed to settle upon them, the congregation began to fall from their seats in every direction, and cried for mercy. If I had had a sword in each hand, I could not have cut them down as fast as they fell. Nearly the whole congregation were either on their knees or prostrate. I should think in less than two

minutes from the shock that fell upon them. Everyone prayed who was able to speak at all.' Similar scenes were witnessed in many other places.

A remarkable power seemed to accompany the preaching of George Fox where ever he went, whether in Britain or America, Germany, Holland or the West Indies. He usually went about the country on foot, dressed in his famous suit of leather clothes, said to have been made by himself, and often sleeping out of doors or in some haystack. He was ridiculed and persecuted, beaten and stoned, arrested and imprisoned, more frequently perhaps than any other man, and yet the Lord seemed to greatly bless and own his labours.

Describing his meetings at Ticknell, England, he says "The priest scoffed at us and called us "Quakers". But the Lord's power was so over them, and the word of life was declared in such authority and dread to them, that the priest began trembling himself, and one of the people said "Look how the priest trembles and shakes, he is turned Quaker also".'

Conclusion: There is a biblical precedent for shaking in God's presence. In the verses where the cause of shaking is mentioned, it has to do with holy fear. The shaking we are experiencing seems to be related more to prophetic ministry and impartation of spiritual gifts of which parallels can be seen in Fox's ministry.

Drunkenness

Jeremiah 23:9 – as drunk

Acts 2:13 ff - 'Some, however, made fun of them and said, 'They have had too much wine.'

Compare Acts 10:44-46 where apparently the same kinds of phenomena occurred with the Gentiles. That the 120 newly filled believers were acting in a 'drunken' manner is what is known as an argument from silence. The text never says that they were but it is obviously inferred. They would not be accused of being drunk because they were speaking in different languages. They would have been accused of such because they were acting like drunks. ie.laughing, falling, slurred speech by some, boldness through lack of restraint, etc.. The analogy of the gift of the Spirit being 'new wine' would lend itself to the connection.

Eph 5:8ff: In a passage dealing with the Ephesians putting off their old carousing lifestyle, Paul exhorts them 'Do not get drunk on wine which leads to debauchery, instead be filled (Greek present tense 'keep on being filled') with the Holy Spirit'. Paul is contrasting carnal drunkenness with spiritual filling. Given the tense of the Greek verb, he appears to also be making an analogy as well as a contrast. Being filled with God's Spirit is similar to being drunk on wine. The difference is that the former is holy while the other is sinful.

Shaking

Shaking is also common in our meetings and is one of the hardest phenomena to understand. The kinds of shaking vary greatly. Sometimes the shaking is accompanied by all sorts of bodily contortions, sometimes mild, sometimes almost violent. What, if any, biblical precedent is there?

Daniel 10:7; Psalm 99:1; 114:7; Jeremiah 5: 22 - trembling

Jeremiah 23:9 – This is a significant verse because Jeremiah is relating that what happened to him on at least one occasion involved a trembling/shaking of his bones. His wording seems to imply that he shook from the inside out. It would take a powerful force to cause his bones to quiver inside his body. The analogy to being overcome could also be a reference to being entranced by the coming of the prophetic word. This text is an answer to God's plea in Jeremiah 5: 22.

Hab. 3:16; Acts 4:31; James 2:19:

George Fox (1624 – 1691) founder of the Quakers:

After a life changing experience with the Holy Spirit. Fox had some remarkable experiences.

After passing through the experience described above, Fox was mightily used of God, and great conviction of sin fell upon the people to whom he preached. 'The Lord's power began to shake them' says he,, 'and great meetings we began to have, and a mighty power and work of God there was amongst people, to the astonishment of both people and priests.' Later, he says, 'After this I went to Mansfield, where there was a great meeting of professors and people; here I was moved to pray, and the Lord's power was so great, that the house seemed to be shaken.'

Crying

Neh 8:9; 2 Chron 34:27; Lk 19: 41; Heb. 5:7.

Acts 2:37 - This text doesn't say they wept but it's hard to imagine 'being cut to the heart' as not evoking that emotional response.

John Wesley (1703-1791):

On April 17, 1739,, there was another remarkable case of conviction of sin, in Bristol, Wesley had just expounded Acts 4 on the power of the Holy Spirit, 'We then called upon God to confirm his Word' says he. 'Immediately one that stood by (to our no small surprised) cried out aloud, with the utmost vehemence, even as the agonies of death. But we continued in prayer till 'a new song was put in her mouth, a thanksgiving unto our God' Soon after, two other persons (well known in this place, as labouring to live in all good conscience towards all men) were seized with strong pain, and constrained to roar the disquietness of their heart. These also found peace 'Many other wonderful cases of conviction of sin attended Wesley's preaching. It was a frequent occurrence for people to cry aloud or fall down as if dead in the meetings, so great was their anguish of heart caused, no doubt, by the holy Spirit convicting them of sin.'

Laughter

Job 8:21; Psalm 126:2; Ecc 3:4.

John 17:13; If there is any prayer in the Bible that will be answered, it is the high priestly prayer in John 17. Certainly the full measure of joy with the Trinity includes laughter

Johnathan Edwards wrote:

It was very wonderful to see how person's affections were sometimes moved when God did as it were suddenly open their eyes, and let into their minds a sense of greatness of his grace, the fullness of Christ and his readiness to save. Their joyful surprises has caused their hearts as it were to leap, so that they have been ready to break forth into laughter, tears often as the same time issuing like a flood, and intermingling a loud weeping. Sometimes they have not been able to forebear crying out with a loud voice, expressing their great

admiration. The manner of God's work on the soul, sometimes especially, is very mysterious.

Conclusion: Again, laughter lifts within the general flow of Scripture. Christians can be so filled with the joy of the Lord that they are given over to fits of laughter.

Prophetic revelation

One of the things we are seeing is that people are having visions, dreams and prophetic words while under the power of the Spirit. All throughout the Bible, prophetic revelation occurs during periods of divine visitation.

There is no way we can cover this subject in this context so a few key passages will have to suffice.

Num12:29; This is a very significant passage. It shows that prophecy can be a response to the Spirits coming. The phrase, 'when the spirit rested on them' (v25) is also reminiscent of the Spirit alighting on Jesus like a dove at this baptism.

Num 11:6; 1 Sam 10:10; Acts 2:17-18; 1 Cor14.

George Fox: And a report went abroad of me, that I was a young man that had a discerning spirit; whereupon many came to me from far and near, professors, priest, and people; and the Lord's power brake forth; and I had great openings and prophecies, and spake unto them of the things of God and they heard with attention and silence, and went away and spread the fame thereof.'

What are the phenomena for?

Signs of the Lord's presence.

In Exodus 33 v 14 in response to Moses, it says, 'The Lord replied. 'My Presence will go with you.' The promise of God's Presence is the distinguishing mark of God's people. Moses says to God 'What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth.' (v16)

The abiding presence of the Holy Spirit is in each Christian and since Acts 2 has been continually active in the Church. Jesus speaking of the Spirit, says to the disciples, He is with you and will be in you.' (John 14 v 17) There are times, however, when God allows us to see his presence to build our faith and show us where he is working. 2 Kings 6:17.

Is God shaking us to wake us up?

Eph 5:14 This command precedes the exhortation to be filled continually with the Holy Spirit. We are to wake up and seek to be continually filled with the wine of God's Spirit.

If we haven't heeded God's previous wake up calls, perhaps He is now shaking us to arouse us and get our attention.

To humble us

When Randy Clark asked God why he was bringing all the phenomena to Toronto, God replied that he was looking for people who were willing to look publicly foolish for the honour of his name.

Paul Cain said *'God offends the mind to reveal the heart.'*

The bottom line issue is one of control. God wants to know who among his people will be willing to play the fool for his glory.

To anoint us

The filling of the Holy Spirit is a repeatable experience and one we are commanded to continually experience. (Eph 5:18)

God will sovereignly move on us to impart supernatural ability to do certain things. 2 Tim 1:6.

Charles Finney:

The Holy Ghost descended on me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love, for I could not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me, like immense wings.

No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love; and I do not know but I should say, I literally bellowed out the unutterable gushings of my heart. The waves came over me, and over me, one after the other, until I recoiled I cried out '*I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me.*' I said '*Lord I cannot bear any more*' yet I had no fear of death.

Finney continued for some time under this remarkable manifestation of the Holy Spirit's power. Wave after wave of spiritual power rolled over him and through him thrilling every fibre of his being.

Increased fruit

Galatians 5:22: 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.' Simply put, if the long term fruit is Gal. 5:22, it's of God. The character of Jesus is the destiny of the Church (Romans 8:29).

Concerning the fruit of this, we can ask:

1. Are the people being prayed for asking for God? They will get God.
2. Are the people praying asking for God and exalting Jesus? The Holy Spirit will come in answer to their prayers.
3. Are those praying asking for the gift of discernment? It is given.
4. Are the leaders humble and exalting Jesus? Is the atmosphere peaceful, even though perhaps noisy? If yes, then these are signs of the Holy Spirit's presence.
5. Is the fruit good? Then it's God.

What about the emotion?

Our presupposition: If it were God, there would be very little or no emotion in it. Again, the Bible says something else

There is a full range of emotions seen in the scriptures.

- a. David danced, wept, fought
- b. Jesus wept, was joyful, angry

- c. Peter wept, rejoiced, felt convicted
- d. God has emotion, as we do. We have been created in his image.

Historically, emotions have been seen in the movements of God.

Jonathan Edwards saw no distinction between the head and the heart. 'Nothing of religious significance ever took place in the human heart if it wasn't deeply effected by such Godly emotions.'

John White says 'The lack of emotion is just as sick as being controlled by emotion.'

Emotion comes from seeing reality (truth) clearly. When the Spirit of truth comes, we see things as they really are which opens up our emotional being.

What is happening?

We ask the question, 'What in the world is happening to us?' It is clear from what we are seeing and hearing from all over the United States, Canada, England and other places that we are in a sovereign move of the Holy Spirit. Peter told early onlookers to the Spirit's activity to repent that times of refreshment would come from the Lord's presence (Acts 3 v 19) What should be our response to such a season of diving visitation? The clearest passage in the New Testament on the subject of a local church's response to the coming of the Holy Spirit is 1 Cor 12-14.

1. Paul's purpose in writing 1 Corinthians was to answer a set of questions delivered to him in the form of a letter from the church (see 7 v 1; 16 vv 17). He had also received some information from 'Chloe's people' (1 v 11). When Paul proceeds to answer their questions about spiritual gifts, he does so in a sermon where he is dealing with questions related to when they gather together for church (11:27).

2. In Chapter 12, Paul encourages the activity of spiritual gifts when they gather together also, he also said that the church was Christ's body which was to be built up as spiritual gifts are exercised.

3. His admonition in chapter 13 is that they exercise disagreement in love. Herein lies the most important point of all as we press into the season that is upon us: without love it profits us nothing.

In chapter 3 Paul had already established that whoever co-labours to build on Paul's apostolic foundation will have his/her works weighted on the day of the Lord. One works will be labelled 'gold, silver and precious stones.' Others will be labelled 'wood, hay and stubble.' It is the quality of each person's work that will make the difference. How do we know that our work is the kind of quality that will pass the fire test on that day? I believe the answer is in the motive. In Chapter 13 Paul says that the motive must be love.

In Matthew 7:15-23, in a passage dealing with false prophets who would be known for their fruit, Jesus said 'Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly. "I never knew you. Away from me you evil doers.'" This passage allows for a category of person in the church that amazingly are able to move in spiritual gifts but at judgement day will be counted among those that do not know Jesus. The difference is that they are not doing the will of the Father. Their motive is not one of love for God or people, but is self serving. Jesus is clear; self serving activity, no matter how powerful, doesn't count.

4. Paul finishes his response to the Corinthian question of spiritual gifts in Chapter 14 where he says that the sign of a loving exercise of gifts is the building up of Christ's body. If the exercising of gifts does not, in the end, build up the church, it has been counter productive. Whether because of ill motive or because the leaders have not been facilitating the operation of the gifts in the meeting 'decently and in order' (14 v 40) the fact of the matter is that the gifts have not been allowed to work to build up the church for the common good.

5. The final word then, about the season that is upon us, belongs to the apostle Paul. He calls us to embrace the Holy Spirit's ministry in our midst. He exhorts us to exercise the gifts with a loving heart posture in such a manner that the church is edified. The leaders need to see that this is done in an orderly way. What counts in the end is not whether someone fell or shook or even was healed. No, what counts ultimately is whether they are loved and built up. What happens as a result of the Spirit's sovereign intervention is us to God. This is his work, not ours. Our job is to love and pray for the kingdom to come, watching as we do, for what the Father is doing so we can bless it.

Conclusions

So what has Father been doing during this season that has been upon us? As we conclude, we need to ask whether we are seeing any long term fruit. This is the ultimate test in determining if it is God. In Acts 3:19 Peter called his onlookers to repentance so their sins could be wiped out. The result in their lives was that times of refreshing would come to them from the presence of the Lord.

Refreshing

One of those seasons of refreshment is upon us now. John Arnott, the pastor of the Airport Vineyard in Toronto, reports that the overriding theme has been joy. This is thoroughly consonant with the New Testament which sees joy as a sign of the presence of the Spirit in the believer's life (there are over 60 references to joy in the NT). God's people are simply having fun in him. In the early days of the apostles, as they were searching for a word that would communicate to the Gentiles the ecstasy of having their sins forgiven and being in right relationship with God through the atoning blood of Christ Jesus, they choose the word *euangelion* which we now translate 'gospel' or 'good news'. It was a completely secular word that was used in reference to the emperor's birthday. It was a holiday, a day of good news. The apostles travelled throughout the ancient world preaching the day of God's party had come.

Joy

We are learning to party in God again because the Spirit of the Lord has come among us to teach us grace, mediate forgiveness and reveal the Father's love in Christ. The second characteristic of this renewal, then, is a return to our first love, Jesus. Reports are coming from every corner about people falling in love with Jesus in a whole new way, about a new love for the Bible, about being taken up into heaven in the form of visions and dreams. In the arms of Jesus is fullness of joy.

Healing

The third characteristic of the renewal is healing. Reports too numerous to count tell of physical healings, deliverance from demonic influences and deep emotional wounds being touched. It seems that as people spend 'floor time' with God, he meets them where they are, the

point of need. He is removing barriers that have kept us from moving forward with God.

Empowering

Much of the shaking has to do with empowerment for service. Spiritual gifts are being imparted through the laying on of hands. We have impartations for intercession, evangelism, healing, prophecy and pastoral care.

Recommitments

There has been a significant return of prodigals to the church. God is healing old wounds and drawing lost ones back into fellowship with himself and with the church.

Salvation

Numerous people have been saved but not enough to characterise this as a genuine revival. Revivals are characterized by masses coming to Christ. Those that have been on the vanguard of the move of the Spirit believe that its purpose is to refresh the church and to prepare it for the mighty and genuine revival that is on the horizon.

May God give us wisdom, faith and obedience in this time of his visitation.

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4 Catch the Fire

Dennis Plant



The Rev Denis Plant wrote as the rector at St Luke's Anglican Church, Sydenham, in Sydney and was principal of Vision International College.

***a deeper awareness and experience of God's love
infusing the heart with joy, wonder, love and praise,
and a greater desire to witness***

A group of five members of our church, St Luke's Sydenham, attended the *Catch the Fire Down Under* Conference in Sydney in June 1995. John Arnott from Toronto, Canada, led it.

For me it all started on the first night. We were in an overflow hall watching by video when the Holy Spirit fell on me as John preached on Divine Love. I wept in wonder and joy for the rest of his teaching. Afterwards we moved into a time of 'soaking prayer' when we were encouraged to focus on Jesus and worship him as people prayed for us. Some two hours later I was experiencing enormous waves of power coursing through my body, like bolts of electricity. Accompanied by tears and joyful laughter as I soaked in what seemed like a bath of God's love.

Afterwards I was carried out of the meeting overwhelmed by God's love, still trembling with his power on me that lasted most of the night.

John Arnott's theme was that he wanted us to be marinated in the Holy Spirit over the seven meetings. There was opportunity to soak in the Spirit for two to three hours each time. I took every opportunity including another time when John prayed for me after I had attempted to give testimony when experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit. That was a very funny experience.

The fruit

You might ask 'What was the fruit of all this?'

Firstly, all of us experienced a new and deeper relationship with God which has changed the way we worship, the way we live and the way we minister.

When we shared our testimonies with the congregation on our return, people were touched by God even as they listened, and many more were blessed through prayer ministry. In our evening service the preacher was prayed for before preaching and ended up on the floor for the next two hours, while we moved to plan B – witnessing and praying.

The manifestations vary: shaking, falling, laughing, crying, or just quietly resting in the Spirit. But the inner experience is a deeper awareness and experience of God's love infusing the heart with joy, wonder, love and praise, and a greater desire to witness.

As people focus on seeking more of God they later find they have received inner healing of life's hurts, physical healings (from sciatica, back pain, intestinal problems), deliverance from demonic bondages, and freedom from depression.

Some people who have been ministered to for years are now quite changed with healing, new life, and joy.

A new boldness to witness has entered some and we are seeing adults experience the process of becoming disciples of Christ as they turn to him. Two people who were unbelievers were dramatically touched by the power of the Spirit in our services. Two children also asked how they could invite Jesus into their lives. Many children have received ministry and have rested in the Spirit with the same blessing, and in some cases have had changed attitudes.

A steady stream of visitors from other churches are coming. Many arrive feeling very dry and are going home with a new and deeper experience of God's love, often returning next week with their friends. It certainly is a wonderful time of refreshing by God.

Now what?

Where do we go from here?

Throughout the world thousands of people have made new commitments or re-commitments to Christ when churches experience the 'Father's Blessing' as John Arnott calls it. I believe we are in a time when God is refreshing his church, recharging our spiritual batteries, and renewing our first love (Revelation 2:4). His love in us will spill over and we will see the prodigals returning in large numbers.

For now, what we need to do is to drink of the Spirit often and deeply, more and more, until we fall passionately in love with Jesus and love those that he loves. Then the world will see and know that Jesus is alive and the harvest will follow.

Reproduced from the August 1995 issue of 'Spirit Life', the bi-monthly newsletter of Anglican Renewal Ministries Australia in Victoria and Tasmania.

Websites

Vineyard: vineyard.org

Toronto: tacf.org

Brompton: htb.org.uk

Pensacola: brownsvilleag.org

Transformation: glowtorch.org

***The Renewal Journal gathers reports
of renewal and revival transformation***

***Renewaljournal.com and
<http://renewaljournal.wordpress.com>***

5 Reflections

Alan Small



The Rev Alan Small (with Robyn) wrote as the senior minister at Rangeville Uniting Church in Toowoomba, Queensland

***Distinctives between the charismatic movement
and the current 'Blessing'***

For those of us involved in what became to be known as the Charismatic Movement, its particular emphasis seemed to be a move of the Holy Spirit to bring renewal to mainline churches. The infilling of the Holy Spirit, and the gifts which resulted were nothing new to those in Pentecostal churches, but they were a bit askance to see God pour this same blessing out upon people they had always considered spiritually dead. We in those mainline churches were then amazed to see the same outpouring on the Holy Spirit taking place among people some of us did not even consider saved, the Roman Catholics.

Radical change of thinking

It was a radical change of thinking, and left many of us incredulous, floundering to rethink our theology, in the light of what we could see happening. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, a renewed love for God, and a desire to serve Him with a passion and total commitment were just some of the fruit which began to emerge.

But, in my memory, perhaps the most outstanding distinctive of the Charismatic Movement, which began in the 1970s was the love they had for each other. Denominational barriers melted away, and people who had experienced the touch of the Holy Spirit in their lives, began to enjoy coming together to praise and worship God.

There was a great emphasis on praise, and a change in the way that praise was expressed. It became more vocal, loud, earthy, and joyous. The traditional hymns, accompanied by the organ were replaced with simple songs of love, sung to guitar music. The words of Scripture became a prime source for these songs, many of them sung **TO** God, rather than simply about Him. There was also the freedom given to use the gift of tongues, and to sing in the Spirit, during the times of worship.

Naturally, not all within the mainline churches felt comfortable with this. So charismatic groups often met together outside of their regular church times. For some this was enough, and they happily returned to their own denomination on a Sunday while still meeting in interdenominational groups through the week. For others this was not possible, and it was a time of church splits, and new denominations being formed.

During this time there seemed to be an influx of teaching tapes available. The cassette recorder had just appeared on the scene, and this made it possible for those of us in outlying areas to hear the words of some of the great preachers then coming on the scene. David Pawson, David Watson, Bob Mumford, Ern Baxter and Derek Prince were just some of those who fed the hunger we all felt for learning about God.

Also, the availability of paperback books, opened up a new area of learning, and biographical books began to flood the market. Christian book shops opened up in many places, or for those already in existence,

the 'heretic section' began to be filled with books on the stories of what God was doing all over the world in peoples' lives. These books were very inspirational and some have since become Christian classics. "The Cross and the Switchblade", "The Hiding Place", and "Prison to Praise" were among these.

With the passage of time, some of the groups which had met for charismatic worship grew large enough to become self supporting. The need then to worship with others from different denominations was no longer there. They had reached a point where they did not need to come aside to meet with Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Uniting or whatever. They were now strong enough to set up their own renewal services within their own denomination, alongside the traditional service. My personal opinion is that something wonderful – the emphasis on reconciliation and unity despite our different viewpoints, was lost.

The renewal movement however, kept going under such influences as the Wimber decade. Renewal spread rapidly through the evangelical church. This present blessing, unfortunately labelled 'Toronto Blessing', erupted just as suddenly as the charismatic movement, and has caused the same consternation, and Bible searching for a theological base.

Soaking

From my perception, its distinctive emphasis seems to be more on receiving from God, in the form of an awareness of His love – rather than on doing for God. More of a 'Mary' response to God, rather than the 'Martha' one in which so many of us have been caught.

Within this blessing there is a desire to just spend time, *soaking* in the presence of God, and within that soaking, allowing Him to do any repair work on us that is necessary. In other words, *'His agenda, not mine'*.

For me this is quite new, as in the past we have always come to God with our list of requests. Now, we are more aware of allowing Him to show us exactly what is in need of His touch. This has produced some amazing examples of inner healing and restoration. Testimonies abound of people being set free from lifetime struggles, as they "soak in

His anointing". The bottom line seems to be an awareness for each individual of just how precious they are to God.

There is also an evangelical element to this blessing. We have seen unsaved people come to a service where this blessing is flowing. They have been touched by the anointing. They have experienced God's love and grace as they 'soaked' in His presence. Then they have been open to receive teaching on repentance and the need to make a personal commitment to Jesus.

The physical manifestations of this present blessing at first appear very odd, to say the least. Personally, this caused consternation and alarm, and caused me to again search the Scriptures, and to reread of the revival times in church history to see if there were any similarities. There were.

But, just as the beginning of the charismatic movement had shaken our comfortableness and preconceived ideas and set patterns of acceptable Christian behaviour, so this move has caused many of us to seek God. We were caught between not wanting to get carried away with deception and yet not wanting to miss out on anything God was doing.

For me a very strong proof of the pudding has been the change I have witnessed in my own life, and in the lives of those involved. Renewed love for God, commitment to him and an effectiveness in Christian living have manifested.

I have spent many years in Christian counselling and God has blessed that ministry, but it has been time consuming and slow. Now I am seeing similar results, but at a much faster rate, and to many people at the same time, as they simply 'soak in his anointing' (with varying degrees of outward physical manifestation).

Even though we are seeing some being saved I believe this is not revival. It is a time of refreshing. It is preparation for something more which is to come. In some ways this is a gentle rebuke to the Christians in the western world who have become so analytical in their Christianity. Our whole world view is so wrapped up in thoughts, concepts and ideas. It is as if God is now saying: 'It is time for you to *experience* my love'. To many, this is threatening – concepts seem safer.

This could be a dangerous and foolhardy thing God is doing as there is great potential for misuse and abuse. But I seem to remember thinking the same thing 25 years ago when God began to pour out His Spirit on Roman Catholics.

Distinctly different

However I am disturbed by the critical articles which link this move to the ministry of Rodney Howard-Browne, Benny Hinn and others and call the lot the Toronto Blessing. (The Airport Christian Fellowship at Toronto do not like the name and are not seeking the notoriety it brings). *What is coming out of Toronto is distinctly different from the 'super star' oriented ministry we are seeing from other parts of the world.*

The blessing which began in, and has flowed from the Vineyard Airport Church in Toronto, is a church based movement, involving teams of people drawn from many churches in the city of Toronto. The hundreds of people who make up these prayer teams are all involved in personal one-to-one prayer for those who are seeking. There is no emphasis on one particular person as the one who has all the answers, power, or anointing.

One obvious difference between this present move of God and the Charismatic move is the physical manifestations. They can appear very odd! It is often difficult to assess the manifestation by just watching what is going on. Our assumptions of what is decent and in order are often proved to be premature. Later discussion with the one involved in the manifestation will often reveal that they were experiencing a unique and specific touch from God.

In others the manifestation was of demonic origin, or from their own desire to be a part of what was going on. Wisdom is called for. Also we need to not jump in and judge too quickly. It is important to watch for the fruit.

I have also noticed there seems to be a progression in the physical manifestations. Some people seem to go through stages of pain, weeping, shaking, roaring, to joy, peace, laughter. It seems that healing is taking place at a deep level and it is of benefit not to give up too soon by rejecting what is taking place.

In answering this request to write my thoughts I am not seeking for a debate. While many people may disagree with my perceptions, as is their right, we must be careful we do not become like the philosophers on Mars Hill, endlessly discussing concepts and ideas rather than experiencing what God is doing.

Let us encourage one another to remain open to whatever He has for us, both to receive and to do.

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6 A Fresh Wave

Andrew Evans



Dr Andrew Evans wrote as the General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God in Australia and Senior Pastor of the Assemblies of God Church in Paradise, Adelaide.

***A fresh wave of the Holy Spirit
is transforming the lives of
people and churches***

Right across our nation, many of our churches are enjoying a fresh touch which is renewing their love for Jesus and his Word and inspiring the congregation to glorify and magnify him and reach out to others. This is a sign that what is happening *is* a move of God.

The New Wave

Over the last 12 months or so, thousands of churches have reported a fresh wave of the Holy Spirit which is transforming the lives of their people and churches. This, in particular, seems to be occurring in England where, we are told, there are around 5,000 churches of all Protestant denominations being mightily touched.

What has marked this new wave has been the unusual manifestations, such as falling, shaking, 'drunkenness' in the Spirit, weeping and

laughter. Perhaps the latter has caused the most concern among traditional Pentecostals.

Many are saying, and rightly so, 'Are these manifestations biblical?' Without presenting an exhaustive study, I suggest the following Scriptures for you to meditate on.

Falling

- * Saul fell when meeting the risen Christ (Acts 9:4).
- * John fell at his feet as though dead (Revelation 1:17). Ezekiel had a similar experience (Ezekiel 1:28), and so did Daniel (Daniel 8:17-18, 10:9).
- * A whole company were once overcome by Jesus and fell back (John 18:6).
- * The disciples evidently needed Jesus to 'touch them' after they fell down on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:6-7).

Shaking and 'Drunkenness'

- * When the Holy Spirit came on a praying company, the whole building began to move (Acts 4:31 cf 2:2; 16:26).
- * The Old Testament speaks of trembling in God's presence (Dan. 10:7; Ps. 99;1 Jer. 5:22).
- * The prophets experienced such shaking (Hab. 3:16; Jer 23:9).
- * Jeremiah, in the presence of the Lord and overwhelmed by his holy words, expresses that he is like a drunken man, overcome by wine (Jer. 23:9).
- * Paul exhorts ex-drunkards to drink instead of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18).
- * When the Holy Spirit fell in an incredible way on the Day of Pentecost, observers initially thought 120 disciples were drunk. Peter pointed out that it was a work of the Spirit and the church was born with 3,000 souls saved (Acts 2:13-18, 40-41).

Weeping

- * In the Old Testament, the people wept at God's Word (Neh. 8:9)
- * In the New Testament, listeners to Peter at Pentecost were 'cut to the heart' (Acts 2:37) – an emotional response.
- * Weeping is a needful, natural and a normal response to the movement of the Spirit.

Laughing

- * In the Old Testament, the freed captives' mouths were filled with laughter (Ps.1 26:1, see also Ecc. 3:4).
- * Jesus promised the disciples he would make their joy full (Jn. 17:13).
- * The word 'rejoice' used by Jesus in Luke 10:20-21 of both the disciples and himself literally means 'to leap for joy'. You can't do that soberly!

History

As you read the history of revival, you will discover that all of the above manifestations have occurred in the past. I would like to highlight a few excerpts from a revival in Tennessee in 1886 where God moved mightily and the record of that revival was placed in the archives in Washington by an act of Congress: 'The laughing exercise was frequent, confined solely to the religious. It was a loud hearty laughter, but it excited solemnity in saints and sinners.'

Dr Martin Lloyd Jones, a famous British preacher, in his book on revival, confirmed from his study of revival movements that this kind of manifestation occurred, although he himself would take a rather conservative view in his approach to the moving of the Holy Spirit:

'...always in a revival, there is what somebody once called a divine disorder. Some are groaning and agonising under conviction, others praising God for the great salvation. And all this leads to crowded and prolonged meetings. Time seems to be forgotten. People seem to have entered into eternity. A meeting may start at 6.30 in the evening, and it may not end until daybreak the next morning with nobody aware of the passing of the hours.'

Rodney Howard-Browne

One of the prominent personalities in this revival move is the 33 year old South African, Rodney Howard-Browne. There has been much misinformation circularised about this young man, so I submit the following from my own research, having talked to Assemblies of God leaders in the United States, including AOG pastors on his Advisory Board and other prominent charismatic and Pentecostal leaders.

Rodney Howard-Browne was brought up in a traditional Pentecostal home. He was saved at the age of five and baptised in the Holy Spirit at the age of eight. His uncle was for some years the moderator of a movement in South Africa which originated from the ministry of John G. Lake and was an offshoot from the Apostolic Faith Mission, the largest Pentecostal movement in that country, with 600,000 members and adherents.

At the age of 18, at a non-Pentecostal camp, he cried out to God in desperation that he would use him. He had an unusual visitation where he felt the power of God and, for the next four days, was immersed in that fire, alternatively crying and laughing as he enjoyed a touch from God.

He then began ministry as both an evangelist and a pioneer pastor, in South Africa, but never saw any particularly powerful results, but laboured faithfully to follow through the call that Christ had placed on his life. For two years, he was associated with Ray McCauley in his great church of 15,000 in Johannesburg. Part of Rodney's role was to teach in the Bible school.

In 1987, he felt a call to the United States and was sponsored, through immigration, to that country by an AOG pastor in Florida, called Bob Rogers. I spoke to Bob regarding Rodney and he told me of his early endeavours in USA as an evangelist.

For a couple of years, there was not a great deal of fruit for his labour, but approximately five years ago, while holding a crusade in a church of 200, he experienced an unusual move of the Spirit where people fell off their seats, some began crying and others were laughing. He was rather taken aback by this, but felt that it was of the Holy Spirit, and thus allowed it to continue.

The fruit of that move was that the church grew, lives were changed and people experienced a fresh touch which gave them a new love for the Lord Jesus. From that time on, his meetings have grown and his name has become known around the world as being synonymous with this new wave and, perhaps, reached its peak when he ministered in an AOG church, pastored by Karl Strader, where last year he held a nine week revival resulting in 6,000 people being baptised in water.

On another occasion, he ministered to 4,000 students in the Oral Roberts University, where the majority of them were slain in the Spirit. Many went outside and then, after prayer, literally hundreds were laying on the grass prostrate under the power of God.

I felt led to invite Rodney to Adelaide, after a great deal of prayer and research into his ministry, and we had a very successful crusade with him. Over 8,500 people, many from interstate, attended the meetings. We were forced to move out of our church and into the Adelaide Entertainment Centre.

There were over 500 decisions and reconsecration. Pastors from all over Australia were touched with the fire of God and our own church has been wonderfully revolutionised.

How to Handle the New Wave

Some of these manifestations have been in other churches of other fellowships and have resulted in decline, rather than growth. Some good people have left other churches feeling that there has been too much wildfire, without any order or control.

Due to our desire to channel this move and not lose by it, I questioned a number of people who were doing that successfully. Here are some responses.

1. Mike Rose

Mike is an AOG pastor in the largest city in Alaska, who had Rodney Howard-Browne minister in his church four years ago. At that time, they had a congregation of 200, but over the last 4 years, they have seen it grow to 600 in a community of 35,000.

The format that Mike uses is one which gives a balanced approach to church life, allowing for worship and the Word, ministry to the unsaved as well as impartation of the Holy Spirit.

To do this, he has followed a fairly traditional Sunday morning worship service with worship, communion and preaching of the Word, as well as all the other activities which occur in our morning services, such as dedications and so on.

If there are two or three people who are perhaps crying or laughing uncontrollably, the ushers will gently lead them into the prayer room where they can continue to enjoy the presence of Jesus without affecting those around them.

However, he is also open to the possible occasions when the Holy Spirit will just sweep over the service and the majority of the people will be either laughing, crying or worshipping at one time.

His Sunday evening service generally lasts for three to four hours, compared to the morning one of around two hours. At the conclusion of the evening evangelistic endeavour, people are invited to open up their hearts and hunger for a fresh touch of the Spirit. It was during these times that the powerful manifestations will take place and, having observed what has been happening in our Adelaide meetings over the last few weeks, these times have a great similarity to the old time Pentecostal camp meeting or tarrying services where people received a fresh touch of God.

Mike encourages his people to hunger and has taught them along that line. He helped them to understand and develop a new sensitivity to the ways of the Holy Spirit. His observations were:

- * You cannot sustain a move of the Spirit without hunger.
- * Corrections need to be made from time to time.
- * Don't just get fascinated by the move of God, but rather keep your eyes on Jesus.
- * Mission giving and outreach evangelism should be a prominent part of this move and the churches which don't reach out soon dry up.

He encourages us not to hype it up and that there needs to be a continual emphasis on holiness and that only qualified people should lay hands on those who have come for prayer.

Mike is also an adviser on Rodney Howard-Browne's Revival Ministries committee, along with three or four other AOG pastors in the USA. He informed me that he had sat in over 110 of Rodney's meetings and been impressed by the lack of pressure and hype, but by the powerful anointing of the Spirit which accompanies this young man.

2. John Lewis and Others

Our brother, John, who has been experiencing this move for some months now, has followed a similar format as Mike, and I have similar testimonies from Geoff Holdway (Brisbane), Brian Houston (Sydney) and Steve Penny (Melbourne).

The result has been that their churches have experienced the blessing without experiencing fallout from extremes. May the Lord help us to be wise master builders.

Helpful Advice

The following are a few tips from leaders around the world which may help you:

1. Do not seek to develop a ministry of manifestations out of what is a move of the Holy Spirit.
2. Create an atmosphere of faith, by giving opportunity for the Spirit to move. Rule out any manifestations of the flesh.
3. Be careful to maintain the focus on God himself and don't transfer people's faith to a man, place or a method.
4. Continue in both the Word and the Spirit and don't be caught in the trap of alternating between the two.
5. The best setting for people to receive from God is for them to come before him in the way the Scripture entreats us: 'Enter in his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise.' Testimonies can also prove an encouragement to others to respond to the Lord.
6. Remind people that Jesus invites us to come and drink, promising not only to quench our thirst, but also to release rivers of living water to flow out from us to others.

7. When people fall over, be open to keep praying for them. Encourage them to stay down and continue to receive from God. It is not unusual for people to stay down for several hours.

8. Have capable people available to catch those falling over. This removes the fear of falling and also avoids unnecessary collisions.

9. There is no need to cause people to fall to the floor by forcing them. The Holy Spirit is perfectly able to overwhelm people without your effort.

10. Allow God time to work with people. If some are not ready to respond, simply encourage them to remain open and in prayer to God. Return again to them when you have prayed for others.

11. Instruct the people while God is moving. Explain any unusual manifestations and try to settle unnecessary fears by giving understanding about what God is doing.

12. Deal with any carnal behaviour and do not allow it to hijack what God is doing. Take advantage of the opportunity that this can present to instruct people more fully on how to respond to God.

13. *Be open yourself, as it should be a time of refreshing for you too.*

Don't Miss This Hour of Visitation!

One of the saddest verses in the Bible records Jesus weeping over Jerusalem and saying, 'You did not know the hour of your visitation.' This failure to discern the seasons of God, resulted in the sombre declaration of Jesus' words, where he said, 'Your house will be left desolate.'

My cry to God is, 'Help me not to miss what you are doing. Give me wisdom to lead my church into the blessing. Help me, Lord, not to force it or make it happen and may I not just seek some formula, but out of a relationship with Jesus, guide my assembly into the fulness of the Spirit.'

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7 Waves of Glory

David Cartledge



Dr David Cartledge wrote as President of the Southern Cross Bible College and an Assemblies of God National Executive member.

people have been wonderfully changed

and drawn into a deeper consecration to the Lord

In November 1994 I was dramatically confronted by the power of God during ministry to a line of people who had come for prayer at Southside Assembly in Brisbane. About two thirds of the way along the line I reached my hand out over a lady on the floor to pray for her. She had been powerfully prostrated before anyone had prayed for her or touched her. As I reached out over her I was suddenly immobilised, unable to move or speak.

Incredible personal experience

I was not aware of any passage of time and thought that this was just momentary before crumpling to the floor. While on the floor I was still unable to move in any way. I could not open my eyelids or speak or move my hands at all. The pastor and congregation were concerned and mystified, and called a nurse to take my pulse and check if I was still alive!

After a while I became afraid, wondering what was happening to me. 'What has gone wrong. What is happening to me, Lord?' I cried out in my mind since there was no voice to speak with. He answered me straightaway, 'I just want you to see what I can do if I can get you out of the way.'

This overwhelming and uncomfortable experience was to get my attention and become the beginning of a process which has turned my heart towards the Lord in simplicity and sincerity more than ever before in my life.

The pastor later told me that when I reached out to pray for the lady on the floor I was instantly frozen like a statue for about fifteen minutes. Then I was violently thrown backwards through the air landing feet away from where I had been standing, and was paralysed for more than another hour. It was after 11 pm when that manifestation of the power of God lifted enough for me to sit up. There was an awesome sense of the presence of God in the room and we worshipped until midnight.

'Burning Bush' Confrontations

Through the rest of the weekend the power of God broke out in astonishing ways. There were manifestations of God's glory and power which I had not been familiar with. The majority of those coming for prayer were powerfully prostrated. No one had hands laid on them and most times these people fell to the floor without anyone catching them.

Many were crying and some were overcome with holy laughter. The senior pastor was so under the power of God that he could only be described as drunk in the Spirit.

The next weekend I was due to minister at Westside Assembly in Adelaide and once again the power of God broke out in the meetings in ways that astonished us all. The senior pastor was so powerfully touched by the Spirit that he was unable to drive home. Many were weeping, laughing and falling to the floor before they were prayed for. The reports since that time are of people who have been wonderfully changed, and have been drawn into a deeper consecration to the Lord.

These two amazing weekends had an even greater effect on Marie and me. We felt that we had been confronted by a 'burning bush' and, like Moses, needed to turn aside to see this great sight.

Pressing In

During December we travelled to Toronto and spent a week at the Airport Vineyard Church where multitudes have been wonderfully touched by the Spirit since January 1994. In one year more than 100,000 people have attended these meetings which have been conducted every night since then except Mondays.

It was challenging and impacting to see about 1,500 people each night pressing in for a visitation of God. The intense spiritual hunger amazed me. Hundreds stood outside the auditorium for up to two hours before the service started, to get a seat. Every night the temperature was below freezing and some nights it went as low as minus 21 degrees!

Although there were many things occurring in these meetings which were unusual and hard to explain we were mightily touched by the Spirit of the Lord, and our desire for a closer relationship with him was intensified during this week.

Early in January we travelled to Florida to attend the Rodney Howard-Browne camp meeting held in the 10,000 seat Carpenter's Home Church in Lakeland, pastored by Karl Strader. The camp meeting had taken up all the hotel facilities within the Lakeland area. Even though we had booked more than six weeks before, the closest motel we could get was 24 miles away. There were registrants from 49 US states and 32 foreign countries. No amount of words will do justice in reporting what we were to experience!

Manifested glory of God

We arrived at 5 p.m., two hours early for the Monday evening service and found it hard to get a seat. There were about 2,000 present as soon as the doors opened at 6 p.m. and by the time the service commenced at 7 p.m. the ground floor was filled with around 7,000 people. The worship was wonderful and there was an immediate and tangible sense of the presence of the Lord.

In his first message, Rodney declared that in the last days the supernatural will become normal and natural, *that it is not normal for Christians to be miserable, joyless and depressed*. At this point great waves of glory began to sweep over the congregation. There was a long period of people standing during the sermon and shouting to God. The atmosphere was electric with the presence of the Lord.

Rodney said that many have mocked and characterised these meetings as the 'laughing revival' and have missed the boat. Every genuine revival has had a stone of offence – *God provides a reason for people who want to find fault with what he is doing so they can save their conscience in resisting him*. While many are laughing, just as many are quiet or weeping. The real object is the manifested glory of God.

Awesome power and presence of God

There had been no altar ministry yet and we were still in the middle of receiving the preaching. There was an incredible sense of God's awesome power and presence. I have seen just about every possible manifestation before but had never been in a meeting remotely like this.

Rodney said that the majority of Pentecostals and charismatics had been baptised with the Spirit and had spoken in tongues, but now that is all they can do. And they do this by habit, and mechanically *without impact on their lives*. They know nothing about 'yielding' to the Spirit.

While he was speaking both the lady camera operator on the platform and one of the musicians went out under the power. He was not anywhere near either of them. They were just overcome through the preaching and fell to the floor.

In every evening service he gave a very strong, tenacious, specific and long altar call for salvation and restoration of backsliders. He was very bold and authoritative and *every time there was a huge response.*

No substitute

The manifestation of the Spirit in the meetings were quite incredible. There were many laughing in the Spirit with supernatural joy, but probably as many were weeping or struck with a holy quietness in the middle of the noise.

There were large numbers falling under the power of God, most of whom were not prayed for or touched by anyone. Often people would fall out of their seats during the preaching or other ministry and be prostrate on the floor for the rest of the service and sometimes for hours afterwards.

One of the most common manifestations we observed was to be so overcome by the Spirit that it both felt and looked like drunkenness. Often it was hard to stand or walk. On one occasion it was impossible for me to drive the car, and Marie had to be supported to the car at another time. We both experienced holy laughter and strong bouts of holy weeping, *but in it all the dominant feature was a renewed love for the Lord and his Word as well as a stronger desire for prayer and to be continually in his presence more than ever before in our lives.*

There is no substitute for this glory and anointing. We have been robbed so long by 'safe' and 'sterile' Pentecost which can only deliver words of human wisdom, but does not know anything about the demonstration of the Holy Spirit.

During these incredible meetings we felt that we were being drawn out to where we can never return. We decided to cross the line for the new wine and to drink so deeply of the Spirit that he would have full control of our lives.

There were many times during this week when Rodney could not continue to preach and was immobile and speechless behind the podium for a long time. I was impressed with his commitment to allow the Holy Spirit complete freedom in the services and to wait on him until he was sure of the direction the meeting was to take when anything out of the ordinary began to occur.

Glorious vision for Australia

One evening he invited all the international visitors to come for prayer and some of the Australian group stood together to pray for our country. As soon as he touched us we all fell to the floor. Not once during this week was there the slightest suggestion of anyone pushing people over in any of these meetings. Marie was totally overcome with the joy of the Lord, however I was totally silent and felt closed in with God. After a while I was aware that I was seeing something clearly.

It was as though I was up in the sky looking down and saw land wreathed in thick fog. As I peered into the fog I recognised that it was the coastline of Australia. There were some places where the fog was not so dense but it was still persistent and many years old. I could see through it over Brisbane, parts of Queensland and Adelaide.

The thickest fog was over Sydney which was almost black in density. Canberra and Tasmania and some parts of the inland regions and centre of the country were also very dense. Melbourne seemed to have equally dense fog over it but it was a different colour, like the thick smoke from bushfires and it was swirling around. I am still not sure what this means.

As I watched in the vision a small swirling wind like a cone (an upside down tornado) began in the sky high over Sydney and kept increasing in intensity and size as it descended closer to the earth. Soon the base of the cone was covering all of the greater region and the fog was sucked up by this swirling tornado and the entire Sydney region was cleared of fog.

Then all of the fog from every part of Australia began to be sucked up into this vortex of power and was destroyed. Strangely, the fog from some of the areas further away from Sydney seemed to be drawn into the vortex before that, covering areas closer to Sydney. As soon as all of the fog was gone, intensely bright sunshine began to shine on the entire country.

The sunshine was so bright that in the vision it was painful to my eyes and I was squinting to be able to endure this intense light. As the light struck the country, Australia began to radiate like a glorious jewel and flashes of coloured rays began shooting out from the country all over

the rest of the world which for the most part seemed to be in darkness. Wherever those beams of reflected and radiating glory touched other nations great swathes of permanent light were cut through the darkness.

This vision has not left me since and I believe that I was seeing the fulfilment of the prophetic promises that Australia is to be the 'Great Southland of the Holy Spirit.'

I do not think anyone has comprehended the glory that God intends for this entire nation. I cannot any longer settle for a little program which merely addresses the peripheral problems of our land. It is not just more churches we need but the manifested glory of God. More religion or more of the same may only deepen the fog.

Jesus must be exalted

During that week Rodney challenged those people who just come to his meetings to 'laugh and roll on the floor' but do not allow the Holy Spirit to change them.

He said the entire purpose of this move of God is change. He called these people 'drug addicts' looking for their next fix of spiritual cocaine. Unless they accept change and never be the same again they miss the whole point.

He specifically targeted smoking, drinking, cursing and immorality. He said that there are some ministers who think they have a free pass and do not have to live to the same standards as they preach. They freely indulge in the 17 works of the flesh instead of the 9-fold fruit of the Spirit.

He also took issue just as strongly with many of the religious routines that the church has substituted for the genuine work of the Spirit of God, and with pharisaic preachers who resist the work of the Holy Spirit of God in their own lives and in the churches they control.

The ministry was strongly exalting Christ, especially in the emphasis of the worship and ministry as well as the incredible results of a renewed relationship with Jesus and a deeper desire for holy living which was evidenced in everyone I spoke to during that week of divine visitation.

The yielding to the Holy Spirit certainly produced what Jesus in John 16:13-14 (NKJV) said it would: 'When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will take of what is mine and declare it to you.'

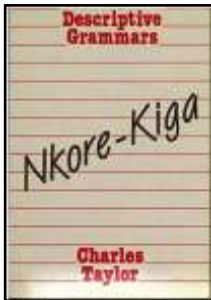
I have never seen or experienced any ministry which caused such a desire for Christ-likeness or confronted bondage and brought about deep and genuine repentance in so many people.

Let the waves of glory roll on!

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8 Balance

Charles Taylor



Dr Charles Taylor was a well known linguist, Bible teacher, author, and Christian magazine contributor. His Ph.D. research analysed the Bantu Nkore-Klga language in Uganda.

***I was privileged to receive a blessing
through the work of God in
the East African revival***

It is almost impossible to record faithfully the details of a true work of God. This is because the people involved in the work itself are so taken up with the move that they have neither the time nor the inclination to consider recording the events.

Those outside the move are often antagonistic and have no desire to probe further into the matter. Or they may just be biased and will tend to distort what they see. In all this there is also a great deal of human fear.

Looking for Lasting Results

Because of these things, the best source of truth is almost certainly the word of someone who was at the centre of the movement, recalling it sometime after it began.

For example, we can generally rely on the report by Jonathan Edwards of the revival that took place in his church and the surrounding areas in the 18th century as recorded by him about six years later, when, as it were, *the dust had settled and the lasting results could be seen*.

I was privileged to receive a blessing through the work of God in the East African revival, which began in 1936. I didn't arrive until 1952, but by that time the results were obvious.

When my family and I arrived, people, including missionaries, were still divided. There were those 'inside' and those 'outside.' We felt happy to be on the inside, and were remarkably blessed. I lost the fear of man, which had been a problem for me up to then.

The East African revival was not Pentecostal or charismatic, but it was what one might term a revival of repentance among Christians and also towards unsaved people they had wronged.

There was a clear cut difference between 'revived' and other Christians.

Worldly business people would employ 'saved' East Africans in their homes and businesses, because they could completely trust them and rely on them to work hard.

The best test of a movement of this kind is the same sort of test the Bible gives us for the genuineness of a prophet's word. Does the fruit correspond with the promise?

In Jonathan Edwards' case he stated that changed lives were the best confirmation that it had been a work of God, plus the fact that the work was continuing.

In East Africa the work was still ongoing twenty and more years later.

Blessings are for God's Glory

I would like to evaluate *some* of what has been happening in the light of Scripture, bearing in mind also what God has done in past revivals, particularly drawing on the reports of Jonathan Edwards who, as an intellectual, could hardly be biased towards the emotional events he witnessed in New England!

The word 'blessing' is currently being used extensively, especially in connection with the move in Toronto. I was struck by the fact that the first reference in Scripture of this word is to God's assurance to Abram that he will be a blessing to others.

This reminded me that blessings are not to be sought for their own sake, or for our own satisfaction, *but really for the glory of God.*

The word 'bless' itself comes earlier, in Genesis 1, where it shows God's attitude to his newly created humans and animals (v 22,28). He provided them with all necessary and pleasant objects and made life attractive for them. Blessings are not just scattered around in an indiscriminate way. In most cases they are conditional on obedience. John 7:37-39 is regularly quoted these days and clearly says that in order to receive Holy Spirit blessings of rivers of living water, we *have* to come to Jesus.

I'm not sure who it was that first gave this revival the label 'laughing revival', but I see it as unfortunate in that it stresses what is really a side-issue. Perhaps it was the media, in which case it means that those who were blessed didn't see the laughter as of great significance in itself.

The Bible contains only 40 references to laughing and laughter, whereas there are 169 references to weeping. The most positive reference I could find concerning laughter was in Psalm 126:2, where it is the accompaniment to release from captivity. The kind of laughter I have witnessed in connection with the present move has been a sort of 'laughing with glee,' undoubtedly triggering some kind of release.

In our local churches most leaders are wisely saying that the important thing is the inner spiritual blessing, so that's a healthy sign.

Distinguishing Marks of Revivals

As we look at the history of revivals we find that in most of them there have been strange phenomena, just as the first Pentecost was accompanied by great joy and by tongue-speaking, then a quite unfamiliar phenomenon for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The moves in England and America in the 1730s both involved occasional outbursts of laughter, as recorded in Wesley's *Journal* and in Edward's accounts. Both leaders allowed it but tried to keep it under control.

Because Jonathan Edwards went to some trouble to evaluate the New England part of the revival, it is helpful to note some of his considered remarks about revivals. What follows is a summary of Edwards' *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Holy Spirit of God*. Firstly, nine aspects he said we should not be disturbed about.

- * Unusual events
- * Physical phenomena
- * An increase in speaking of God.
- * An increase in 'ecstasy and imagination.'
- * The fact that some just imitate others.
- * The fact that some are unwise and 'unorthodox.'
- * Some interference by Satan.
- * Some small amount of bad doctrine and practice.
- * A trembling fear of hell.

Some of these objections were made by unbelievers. And here is a summary of what he regarded as positive signs:

- * The Lord Jesus is magnified.
- * There is strong conviction of sin.
- * An increase in regard for Scripture

- * An increase in truth and honesty.
- * Love, unselfishness and humility increase.

Finally, the marks of the 1735 revival itself were:

- * It was widespread.
- * All ages and types were affected.
- * People were convicted of the reality of the truth of God.
- * People's behaviour changed completely.
- * People subject to phenomena were sincere and did not lose their reason.
- * There was an increase in desire for others' salvation.

It was also recorded that the phenomena decreased as people became more established in the faith.

The Present Move

Can we apply any of this to the present move? First, we should not be unduly disturbed by phenomena, imitations and irregularities. We should look for the positive signs. As regards comparisons with 1735, and also with the East African revival, one thing that always seems to me to be a mark of God's activity is that when a move comes, it is found to have started independently in places far removed from each other. In older times, communication was not so good as now, so nowadays this criterion is harder to apply.

In at least two local churches to the north of Sydney, many children in their attached Christian schools were affected independently of the events in the churches. It's too early to look at behaviour changes or a renewed evangelistic thrust. However, in at least one case I know of, the laughter has accompanied a real character change for the better.

Should we then accept everything that comes? I suggest we follow the biblical advice: 'Test all things; hold fast what is good.' (1 Thess. 5:21 NKJV).

* Let us ensure that appeals to the Holy Spirit do not eclipse the worship of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Spirit typically prefers to stay in the background.

* Let's not confuse feelings with the genuine touch of the Spirit. Should the mind be switched off?

* Experiences can even be consciously 'faked'. It may happen now, and such things, if perceived, should be dealt with.

* Should we promote the term 'drunkenness?' The world may use it, but remember, a drunk is out of control. Peter denied the allegation!

Adjustments

I note with pleasure that lack of balance is being adjusted by wise leadership. Two generations ago Christians were over-intellectual and needed emotional outlets. Today, both in churches and in the world, cold rationalism is unpopular. Our present danger is to look to experience alone to solve problems. We still need a renewal of the mind (Rom. 12:2).

May the Lord be allowed to exercise *his* control over his people!

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9 *Discernment*

John Court



Dr John Court was Professor of Psychology in the Graduate School of Psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, and Director of Counselling at Tabor College in Adelaide.

Discerning between the emotional, the psychotic and the spiritual

*Where we see real and lasting change,
with maturity of spirituality
and a desire to know God more,
then I believe God is at work*

Discerning what is of God, and what arises for other reasons is no easy task. We may all see the same things but our interpretations will differ.

Objectively, all we have to go on is the observation of behaviour. But we also draw on experience, background, context and spiritual discernment to refine these observations. Behind all that we may carry some deeply-held convictions, both theological and psychological, which tell us what to expect as normal.

History and Scripture combine to tell us certain things are to be expected when the Spirit of God is at work, and this information can help us to some degree to discern the authentic from the counterfeit. Yet we then have to qualify that, since if something unexpected occurs,

fitting no known pattern, we have to choose between saying 'This must be counterfeit' or 'The Spirit blows where he will and we must not presume to limit God'. With guidelines like that, practically anything can be identified as the Spirit's work, or demonic counterfeit, or neither.

So far, I have not been very helpful. In part I think this arises because our dilemma may arise from asking the wrong questions, or the right questions in the wrong way.

Come with me and observe a scene. I see a large number of men and women, some sitting, some standing, some silent, others singing, others again talking apparently to themselves, and on coming closer we can make no sense of what they say. Some sway, others rock to and fro. Some put their hands in the air and leave them there for some time. Others lie on the ground and roll around. I try to engage them in conversation but they seem to be in a private world of their own, quite unresponsive to conversation.

What is it?

What are we to make of these unusual kinds of behaviour? Is this sick, is it demonic, is it theatrical pretence, is it ecstatic? Is God being honoured, and if so how can we know?

My picture is in fact a collage from experiences over the years. This description could well fit my time working in the chronic backwards of a psychiatric hospital before the new anti-psychotic drugs arrived – the snake-pit days, still within living memory for some. The picture might be of a Balinese festival, with extended ceremonies, prayers and fire-walking. In this case we can also add a good deal of colour and music and flowers. The fire-walkers are impressive, whether due to trance or the help of some drugs, I cannot tell.

The picture might also be that of a camp meeting with Rodney Howard-Browne, or the Toronto Blessing, but there, in addition to colour and music I would see many people falling on the ground and laughing uncontrollably. With these additions, we might also have been spectators in a large presentation of stage hypnosis by a skilled performer – a theatrical event in which these as well as other bizarre and unusual behaviours could be observed, strictly for entertainment.

My point in bringing these four together is that if we merely observe what is happening in a detached way, without a context, we shall witness a remarkable degree of similarity, but this will not answer the underlying questions of *meaning*. Seeking to sort experiences into the emotional *or* the psychotic *or* the spiritual by no means exhausts the categories of relevance.

Emotion may be the product of something physiological, like a natural biochemistry imbalance, or a drug trip. It may be more the product of inter-personal influences, such as openness to suggestion, persuasion and imitation. Spiritual can, of course, also be sub-divided to ask whether we are responding to a movement of the spirit or some demonic influence.

Even when we have identified all the categories, a sound answer will still elude us because interactions between all the categories can and do occur. To ask about 'either/or' when it is both – and is to set ourselves up for confusion. This has been a recurring problem for Pentecostals since the days of the Azusa Street revival to the Toronto Blessing, as many commentators have noted. 1.

In particular, Harvey Cox makes some interesting comments about the confluence of thinking from faith and science when he remarks,

A rush of research has appeared in scientific journals on the significance of the so-called placebo effect, as the recognition dawns that the improvement patients frequently experience after they have had 'nothing but a sugar pill may stem from the trust they place in the doctor. New research points to the possibility that certain ritual acts might actually trigger human endocrine and immune systems, and evidence has revealed the vital importance of a patient's perception of being loved and cared for in his or her recovery. A few medical researchers have begun to ask whether what they call 'altered states of consciousness or trances (which the Pentecostals called being 'slain in the Lord) can help release the body's inner healing mechanisms (1995:109).

You might want to argue that we can only discern the true nature of the events by abandoning the objective stance and being involved as participators. That argument is attractive at a Christian Convention, but I prefer not to adopt the strategy for understanding the alternatives

– like becoming psychotic to understand psychosis. Nor should we risk demonic involvement in order to discern. An objective position based on Biblical wisdom should suffice. I prefer, therefore, to confront such questions by asking some strategic questions.

1. Does it matter if the behaviour looks remarkably similar in these quite different settings?

I sense that some are bothered by the parallels, but for me the answer is ‘no’. I observe the Balinese at prayer and worship and know that they are not worshipping Jesus Christ, but that does not invalidate prayer and worship as human activities. I can observe someone raise a hand in the air – it may be to worship, but it may be for many other reasons too. Stage hypnotists love to demonstrate the phenomena of hand levitation- they are simply using naturally occurring phenomena.

In the past I might have raised the question whether the behaviour was voluntary or involuntary, favouring actions undertaken by choice and expressing concern over what might be beyond personal control. I now know that the distinctions between voluntary and involuntary are meaningless, as we have learned that it is possible to gain control over apparently involuntary behaviour. 2.

I might also have asked whether the behaviour was undertaken consciously or unconsciously, but here too the convenient separation we grew up with (due largely to Freud’s influence) has broken down³, so that today we speak of various states of consciousness – alert, asleep, drowsy, preoccupied, dissociated, anaesthetised, hypervigilant, etc. We can track the changes through monitoring brain function and find that some tasks are undertaken better by one part of the brain than another. The psychotic’s behaviour is modified by drugs which affect specific pathways and linkages, sometimes with striking results.

Listening to me now, you need your left brain to be active, to follow the logic of an argument strung together in sentences in linear fashion. However as we sing and worship together, we engage our right brains more fully, enlarging our experience to be open to beauty, spontaneity and creativity. Logic and reasoning become less important at such times, and we become more open to suggestion and group influence. Here we engage in rational thought, there we access our emotional world more readily.

2. Is one of these states more spiritual than another?

All those four settings I mentioned involve states of awareness that are different from our usual experience. Whether it be the escape from reality of the psychotic, the temporary collusion of the hypnotist and subject to dissociate, the frenzy of the religious festival, or the ecstatic response to word and music at a camp meeting, we can all recognise that an alteration occurs. Disinhibition, openness to suggestion, altered physiological states and a profound sense of things being 'different' are typical. The possibility of powerful change in response to an acceptable suggestion is such that many later report amazing benefits. In the Pentecostal context these benefits are attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit.

I repeat the question – is one state more spiritual than another? Is the highly right-brain focussed experience of tongues and slaying in the Spirit more scriptural than the left-brained activity of reading scripture or listening to a sermon? Are the left brained advocates of propositional truth more spiritual than those who expect signs and wonders?

I hope the answer to that set of questions is 'no'. When we try to box in that which is spiritual, and separate it from the intellectual, or the physical, or the emotional parts of ourselves, we cultivate the kind of dualism that has confused us for centuries. Just as our conventional categories of body, mind and spirit do not reflect the Hebrew view of mankind found in scripture, so too if we try to label one experience more spiritual than another, we risk similar problems. Evangelicals look down on charismatic phenomena because they are emotional and non-rational, while prizing purity of teaching and doctrine. Pentecostals meantime rejoice in a different kind of knowing which is experientially based, and sufficiently convincing of the presence of God that sound doctrine can afford to follow on behind.

3. If the behaviour is so similar, what questions should we be asking?

The really important questions relate not to the behaviour we observe, but the meaning of this behaviour, and its purpose. In the psychiatric hospital, bizarre behaviour occurs as deeply troubled people, who feel powerless, seek to escape from reality and the demands placed on them. They enter a private altered world where they make their own

rules, regardless of the wider world. Some cults do the same, collectively of course. It is not useful to ask whether this escape is chosen voluntarily, as I have already indicated that this is a problematic category. We can understand the escape behaviour a little better if we follow the view of illness that argues that the psychosis is not the problem, but it is the solution to the problem.

The stage hypnotist encourages people to explore experiences in a new way, thereby creating a form of entertainment which rewards the hypnotist not only financially, but also with a great sense of personal power. Stage hypnosis is something I stand firmly against, not because it is intrinsically evil, but because it is open to abuse of trusting people, and it carries hazards which are not justified for the sake of entertainment. The hypnotic state, or trance, is one powerful example of an altered state of consciousness, and one which is readily entered in a group setting without any formal induction being needed.

Patrick Dickson in *Signs of Revival* writes as a medical practitioner and one who has had a positive experience of the Toronto Blessing in England. He raises as cautions the possibilities of auto-suggestion, hysteria, group pressure of the crowd, and the disinhibition that suggestible people show in such settings⁴. I am fully persuaded that these concerns are well-founded, but they are no reason to reject the reality of spiritual blessing that also occurs. The dangers of group hypnosis have been expressed with regard to Billy Graham crusades also, even though the overt behavioural expression is less obvious⁵. What matters is not that this happens, but that we recognise and understand this so that false claims are avoided. This cannot be achieved if we simply deny that powerful suggestion is at work, and certainly not if we follow the view that hypnosis is intrinsically demonic⁶.

Nor do we need to fear these altered states. Not only can good clinical work be done using them, but scripture is clear that God speaks when people are in trance states. Peter's vision which occurred in a trance state at Joppa⁷ is a fine example of an experience that proved to be a major cross-roads for the early church. Some of the Jews might well have supposed that such a radical message of taking the gospel to the Gentiles could only be demonic in origin, as the traditional barriers and categories were shattered⁸.

Apart from the two uses of the word (*trance*) in Acts 10 relating to Peter's experience, the other usage is in Paul's experience (Acts 22:17) when he reports 'as I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance and saw Jesus.....' The terminology is from the physician Luke in each case, and might suggest a technical sense of the term. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* suggests that

As other elements and forms of the prophetic work were revived in 'the Apostles and Prophets' of the N.T., so also was this.....Though different in form, it belongs to the same class of phenomena as the gift of tongues, and is connected with 'visions and revelations of the Lord'. In some cases, it is the chosen channel for such revelations. To the 'trance' of Peter in the city....we owe the indelible truth stamped upon the heart of Christendom, that God is 'no respecter of persons', that we may not call any man 'common or unclean'.⁹

Money, Sex and Power

Just ten years ago, I was called to travel from Adelaide to Houston, Texas, to testify to the U.S. Attorney-General's Commission on pornography. As I left the hearings and walked back to my hotel, I paused at a secular bookshop, struck by the title in the centre of the window, *Money, Sex and Power*, by Richard Foster. They were actually the three temptations we had been addressing at the commission, as we discussed the pornography industry.

They are the three great temptations we always need to check out when we see something new and growing. In 1994, Harvey Cox delivered a lecture at Fuller Seminary based on his book *Fire From Heaven*¹⁰, his history of Pentecostalism from Azusa St to the present. These are among the cautions he raises as he sympathetically documents the phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism in recent years – he also mentions the oft-repeated charge that there is a demonic element at work.

While expressing cautions, he analyses the powerful positive reasons why there has been such a tremendous positive response around the world. He identifies some of the unmet needs of the urban society, such as loneliness, powerlessness, loss of meaning, a loss of transcendental spirituality, showing how these themes are addressed in pentecostal

theology. These appear to be equally powerful in Australia in understanding the response of many to the Toronto Blessing meetings.

So let us get behind the questions like 'Is this demonic or of God?' 'Is this real or counterfeit?', 'Is this spiritual or hypnotic?' As I have thought these issues through, the more have I realised that the questions are presented in the language of traditional pentecostal theology, which is not my tradition, so my own bias emerges as I advocate caution over such dualism.

The divine, the natural, the demonic

I am much more comfortable with a world view that embraces not only the divine and the demonic, but also allows space for the natural – our humanness, created by God, but distorted by sin. I confess my sympathy for the comments of Andrew Walker, who, in writing about Demonology and the Charismatic Movement, says throughout the Middle Ages, a sound psychology of the spiritual life developed that distinguished between God's acts, the devil's ploys, and the normal processes of the natural world.

A Christian world view that is divided into the tripartite arenas of the divine, the natural, and the demonic is unlikely to fall prey to a paranoia that dissects the world into 'us' and 'them'. Charismatic theologies and methodologies that do tend to divide the cosmos into God's kingdom of light and Satan's kingdom of darkness are in constant danger of first adopting a paranoid world view, and then becoming entrapped and socialized into the paranoid universe.¹¹

Discernment will not create artificial separations, but it can offer wisdom in knowing the balance of forces at work. Even the question of separating the godly from the demonic is not clear-cut since we should expect to find a mixture, like wheat and tares. The fruit will help us discern in due course, but it is risky to pre-judge the balance.

The fact is that God made us complex beings, innately spiritual so that we may relate to Him. If these unfamiliar experiences bring people into a more intimate relationship with God, then we should welcome them. At the same time there will be people attracted to the phenomena, seeking not God but the experience. Others will be attracted by the temptations of money, sex and power. To the extent these overshadow

the Godly purpose of the experience, they will compromise the gospel, yet without extinguishing it.

The most common question I hear is 'Are we dealing with something spiritual, or something psychological, and how can we know the difference?'

The question is impossible to answer because it comes from false assumptions. The dualism in the question, spiritual *or* psychological, comes from Greek thought, in contrast to the unified view of mankind expressed in Hebrew thought.

Plato had made a clear-cut distinction between mind and matter. Although Aristotle had recognised they were interdependent, he still insisted mind and matter were unlike. Even Descartes, who marks the beginning of modern psychology, held to a dualism...¹²

Wholeness and integration

Hebrew thought emphasises that wholeness or healing can only occur when the spiritual and the emotional come together as a total entity – the self.

Religious experiences are spiritual. They are also emotional, or should be. A response to the gospel is profoundly emotional in its significance. Worship, laughter, joy all bring changes which affect the emotions well as the endocrine system such that illnesses may be reduced or even cured. There is now a respectable literature on the effects of laughter in assisting cancer sufferers¹³.

We cannot automatically attribute the benefits of sustained laughter to the work of the Holy Spirit. Such phenomena are also seen in other religious contexts as well as totally secular ones. Nor should we dismiss benefits because they seem unusual, or because we find them hard to understand.

I believe in a God who cares as much about my emotional health and physical well-being as he does about my spiritual condition. And I believe that all these are inextricably entwined as one entity, the person, so that benefits to one affect all the rest, just as harm to one area also impacts the rest. I have found it helpful personally to follow these questions of interaction through with David Benner, who in his

book *Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest*¹⁴ develops a strong argument for embracing the Hebraic understanding of human nature, favouring the term psycho-spirituality as a challenge to our dualist categories.

The either-or question is the wrong one, so the question about how to discern which is which becomes moot. Graham Twelftree, writing on the demonic, remarks helpfully on the difficulty when he says

An increasing number of psychologists and therapists employ a multiple-causation approach, recognising that mental illness and the demonic are not mutually exclusive but that either, both or neither may be the cause of illness. However, there are those represented by John White, who consider that science is helpless in diagnosing the presence of the demonic: 'I can conceive of no demonic state which cannot be explained by a non-demonic hypothesis'. Therefore, because of the subtle, incoherent and devious nature of the demonic, the pastor or healer requires a God-given facility to discern the possible demonic dimensions of an illness.¹⁵

Although this paper was invited to have a primary focus on the current manifestations of the Toronto Blessing, it is clear that the question of discernment goes much wider than this. Quite apart from efforts to discern what is of God in major movements, there is also the personal question that presents when individuals show unusual signs of activity which may have similar ambiguity. Here too a broad range of opinions exists, from those who deny the demonic, to those who perceive this to be a very common phenomenon, all too often missed by secular and even Christian counsellors.

A ministry of discernment

Here too I would offer similar cautions to those above. While I have personally no doubt about the presence of the demonic in the experience of some who come for help, I could not be certain of this or more than a handful of cases in thirty years of practice. On those occasions, a time of prayer has been helpful but I have valued being able to call on those with specific gifts who have used their deliverance ministry to bring release.

On the other hand, I have met dozens who had been reported by their pastors as being possessed or demonized, whose condition had not improved with spiritual ministry, but who were benefitted by conventional psychological treatments. This suggests that a broader knowledge of alternative explanations would be helpful among those who exercise a ministry of discernment.

The most important area these days in which great care should be exercised lest people are actually made worse is in the area of what used to be called multiple personality disorder (now dissociative identity disorder)¹⁶. It is a common pattern for such persons to reject unacceptable parts of themselves as a key part of the disorder, even calling such parts evil or demonic, as their mode of trying to understand what is happening to them. This is particularly the case where Christians are struggling to understand the splitting which has occurred in their experience. Some are also able to recognise parts which are distinct or non-self, and not just unacceptable parts of the self. It is essential to distinguish between these two aspects, since the former parts need to be acknowledged and re-integrated into the whole person if healing is to be achieved, while the latter parts may be understood as evil influences needing deliverance.

Concerning discernment, the important questions are 'What is the outcome?' 'What is the fruit?' 'Is God glorified?' 'Are his works manifest?' 'Is there personal spiritual growth?' 'Is the body of Christ blessed?' This is not just a 'means justifies the end' argument. We need great sensitivity and respect for one another when altered states of consciousness occur. There is vulnerability and trust at stake, so manipulation of any kind in order to promote signs and wonders cannot be ethically justified. We all know that short term 'cures' can remit later and engender bitterness and disillusionment against God.

In some contexts, powerful effects lead people *away* from God – to seek power, or money, or self-aggrandisement or occultic involvement or, as with the psychotic, an escape from reality. Where we see real and lasting change, with maturity of spirituality and a desire to know God more, then I believe God is at work, even though we recognise that human failings complicate that truth.

Notes

1.e.g. The most obvious either-or polemical tract is Henry Sheppard's *A New Wave of the Spirit? Revival or Satanic Substitute?* Paradise, SA 1995.. For a solid historical commentary see Chap 2 of Harvey Cox *Fire from Heaven*. Addison Wesley, 1995. Specifically addressing the Toronto Blessing and RHB, see 'Is it Revival?' *Mainstream*, Summer 1994; Nigel Copsey, 'Touched by the Spirit', *Baptist Times*, Sept 15, 1994; Harry Westcott's Vision Newsletter No. 64; *Toronto Blessing-true or false?* PWM Trust, 1994; Geoff Strelan, 'Toronto Blessing: The Facts', *New Day*, Feb. 1995.

2. In the clinical area, the use of biofeedback, which grew out of psychological research in the sixties, especially through the work of Neal Miller, has been developed as a way of gaining control over functions such as heart rate, pulse and body temperature with tremendous health benefits. Pain management, muscle re-education and migraine treatment are among the striking benefits. This approach relies on technology. Other religions have taught such control, using meditation and relaxation techniques, for centuries, especially in Asia.

3. Not only is there greater complexity of thought in relation to conscious/unconscious experiences. In addition, the very negative understanding of the unconscious as the residual location for our evil impulses and secret sinful desires is giving way to recognition that the unconscious can also be the repository of creativity, appreciation of beauty and the capacity for much good that has remained hidden. This more Christian understanding challenges the negative view of the Freudians. See especially, Wanda Poltawska, 'Objectifying Psychotherapy', *Catholic Medical Quarterly*, May 1992, 18-23: and George Matheson's entry 'Hypnosis and Spiritual Experience' in Baker's *Encyclopedia of Psychology* (ed. D. Benner) 1985.

4. Quoted in S. A. *Baptist News*, April, 1995, p.1.

5. A good historical linkage between trance phenomena and religious experience, and with reference to experiences in crusades, see George Matheson, 'Hypnotic Aspect of Religious Experience', *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 1979, 7, (1), 13-21.

6. This argument was advanced by Nader Mikhael, *Slaying in the Spirit – The Telling Wonder* (self published, 1992). He makes a convincing case for showing that the phenomena of slaying in the Spirit are very similar to those found in hypnotic states, but then goes on to a guilt-by-association argument that hypnosis is intrinsically demonic, and therefore rejects what happens when people are slain in the Spirit. This association with the demonic is illogical and unwarranted. There really is no reason to fear the professional and ethical use of hypnosis for therapeutic purposes. Most of the objections to it arise from false stereotypes, second-hand misinformation and selective quotes from Christian authors. For an alternative view, see Court, J. H., 'Hypnosis revisited', *Interchange*, 1984, 34, 55-60; Court, J. H., 'Hypnosis and Inner Healing', *Journal of Christian Healing*, 1987, 9(2), 29-35, and Court J. H. (in preparation) *Hypnosis, Healing and the Christian*.

7. Acts 10:10

8. Acts 10:28; Gal.3:28

9. Smith, William (1863) *A Dictionary of the Bible*. London. pp. 1566-68.

10. Cox, Harvey (1995) *Fire from Heaven*. Addison-Wesley.

11. Walker, A. (1994) 'Demonology and the Charismatic Movement', In T. Smail, A. Walker and N. Wright (eds.) *The Love of Power and the Power of Love*. Minneapolis: Bethany House. p. 56.

12. Whitlock, Glenn (1983) 'The structure of personality in Hebrew psychology', in H. N. Malony (ed) *Wholeness and Holiness*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. p. 47.

13. The emerging specialisation of psychoneuroimmunology is proving very effective in bringing healing, and conceptually challenging the traditional dualism. Norman Cousins was a pioneer in showing that laughter can be therapeutic.

14. Benner, David. (1989) *Psychotherapy and the Spiritual Quest*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

15. Graham Twelftree, writing an entry 'The Demonic', in David J. Atkinson and David H. Field (eds.) *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics*

and Pastoral Theology. Leicester: InterVarsity Press. 1995. pp. 296-297.

16. Dissociative Identity Disorder is the term now used in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association, 1994 (known as DSM-IV).

(c) John H. Court, 1995.

10 Renewal Ministry

Geoff Waugh



Dr Geoff Waugh is the founding editor of the Renewal Journal.

Blessings abound where e'er he reigns;

The prisoners leap to lose their chains

I've been praying for people in meetings for over twenty years, but recently it's been different. Many now slump to the floor, or shake, or laugh, or sob, or feel heat in their hands or on their head, or have other surprises.

We were worshipping at the Renewal Fellowship recently when I prayed (with my eyes shut) for the Holy Spirit to come upon us. A person in the front row fell over and crashed into me. I quickly opened my eyes, guiding that person to the floor.

Those manifestations are not new. They have been there over the years at various times. Now, however, they happen more often and with greater intensity. I believe this is a time of refreshing and blessing in the mid-nineties.

I remember the early seventies when a wave of renewal swept the earth. Thousands were baptised in the Spirit, spoke in tongues, discovered spiritual gifts, and began to see more answers to prayer for healing or deliverance. That wave gave birth in Brisbane to movements

such as Christian Life Centre, Christian Outreach Centre, Bardon Catholic Charismatic meetings, Emmanuel Covenant Community, and some denominational charismatic congregations.

These strong manifestations now in the nineties are more varied and sometimes more surprising than I've known before. I believe it is part of a worldwide move of God's Spirit, and as always, it is mixed with our human reactions.

A fresh wave

This fresh wave started for us at the Renewal Fellowship during 1994. It seems to be part of our on-going journey.

We have been learning to be respond to the Spirit, as best we know. Our 'order of service had long given way to the immediate leadings of the Spirit. We still followed our usual pattern, however, of worship for over an hour (with great variety such as in prophetic music, free singing, Scriptures read and prophetic words or visions shared), Bible teaching, and ministry with prayer for one another in clusters, with further prayer for those who could remain later.

Sometimes in praying for people some were overwhelmed and rested on the floor, or slumped in their seats. No problem! We had seen that before from time to time. It just seemed to be more frequent from 1994.

The Christian Outreach Centres had experienced a strong move of the Spirit in 1993, beginning in Brisbane and spreading through their churches. We were blessed in Brisbane through a range of ministries including visits from John Wimber, Rodney Howard-Browne, leaders involved in the 'Toronto Blessing' now touching thousands of people and churches all over Canada, America, England, and across the world. We read reports of similar happenings in Australia among some churches touched by this blessing.

As in the seventies, the expressions of this blessing varied from group to group, from ministry to ministry. The essence, however, seemed to be similar everywhere – strong impacts from the Spirit, people being overwhelmed, new and deep love for Jesus, personal refreshing and blessing, catching the fire of a fresh zeal for the Lord, ministering more effectively to others.

As we kept praying for people the manifestations increased, especially with people being overwhelmed and resting in the Spirit.

To pray or not to pray

Problem! Do we actively encourage this? Do we avoid it – such as not praying so much? Do we stop praying for individuals? Do we wait till the end of the meeting, even though some people were being touched strongly as we worshipped? Do we copy methods from the Vineyard conferences, such as praying for people all over the place at the end of the meeting? Do we follow the Toronto example and make plenty of carpet space available? Do we ask people to stand and then ask the Holy Spirit to come, or do we just expect he will move upon us anyway?

In our prayer times before every meeting we declared the Lordship of Jesus, asked him to take over, and claimed his authority. The more we prayed, the more it kept happening!

We don't have all the answers yet – and maybe never will! Who can direct the wind? The whirlwind is even more unpredictable.

Where do we draw the line? Whose line? God's? Ours? Our traditions?

We all draw a line somewhere. Responsible leadership and pastoral care require some guidelines, even though these maybe quite flexible.

What is regarded as 'decent' and 'in order' varies widely from church to church, group to group, culture to culture, revival to revival. We need to be spiritually sensitive, theologically insightful and culturally appropriate (as Jesus and Paul were) without quenching the Spirit.

The root and the fruit

Where the root of various experiences is Jesus himself in the power of his Spirit, and the fruit is clearly the fruit of his Spirit, we're glad.

Remember that Jesus' presence and ministry produced amazing effects in Scripture. Demons were expelled. People were set free and made whole. Lives were changed.

What are the results of these current blessings for us in the Renewal Fellowship?

Worship is richer, fuller and longer than ever. People comment on the blessing of a stronger, closer relationship with God, both in the meetings and beyond them in daily life. Many people tell about blessings in their service to others, in prayer for the sick and in home groups.

People report a deeper awareness of the reality of the Lord, closer fellowship with Jesus, stronger leadings by the Holy Spirit, increased anointing in their various giftings, and greater love for God. For many people it is already flowing over into sacrificial ministry to others with greater assurance, compassion, and willingness to be involved as they obey the promptings of the Spirit.

One person lay on the floor, overwhelmed, and began praying in tongues with a new love for the Lord and release of his gifts. Some report physical healings received while overwhelmed. Someone with Multiple Personality Disorder caused by childhood trauma had a vision of Jesus while resting on the floor; Jesus brought deep healing and integration, resulting in profound improvement. Many people have found a new zeal in serving the Lord and praying with and for others.

We need pastoral wisdom to avoid the extremes of foolish excesses on one hand or resisting and quenching the Spirit on the other. We need discernment between the true and the false, and that is not easy. We need grace to welcome the refreshing of the Lord even though it comes in different ways to different people. As with conversion, or being filled with the Spirit, or discovering spiritual gifts, some people have dramatic encounters with God while others experience deep and quiet peace.

Let everything be grounded in Scripture, illumined by the Spirit who inspired it. It is more radical than any of us really understand. A few biblical happenings would certainly enliven any church!

Jesus offended many people, such as in worship and teaching meetings. He welcomed outcasts, sinners, the poor and despised. He healed lepers. He banished demons. He sent the disciples off to preach, heal the sick and cast out demons. He told them to teach the rest of us to do the same (Matthew 28:20; Mark 16:17-18; Luke 24:49; John 14:12; 20:21-22; Acts 1:8 and so on).

People in the early church saw the power of God at work. They appeared drunk on the day of Pentecost. They clashed with traditions, as Jesus did. They prayed and witnessed amid the turbulence of light overcoming darkness, truth confronting error, and the kingdom of God invading the kingdoms of this world.

Expect the Spirit to move upon us all even more fully. Welcome his blessings, and pray that revival will yet sweep our nation. Perhaps a spark is being lit for revival in our land.

Praying for People

We found the following guidelines helpful in praying for people. They are adapted from material provided in Toronto. We prefer to pray in pairs if possible so that if someone is overwhelmed they can be gently helped to rest in the Spirit.

1. When praying for individuals, watch closely what the Spirit is doing (John 5:19). *Never make a person feel that they are unable to receive or are resisting the Holy Spirit just because they are not openly manifesting something. We are called to encourage and love, not speak words that will bring rejection or discouragement.*

2. Do not force ministry! Trust the Lord, knowing that he is doing something personal within an individual, so don't interrupt that special 'conversation'.

3. When you are praying for someone a strong anointing may rest on you also. Keep praying for the person without distracting them.

4. You may be able to help some people receive more in the following ways:

(a) Help them deal with a tendency to rationalise; or calm their fears of loss of control.

(b) Let them know what to expect; that even when the Holy Spirit is blessing them they will have a clear mind and can usually stop the process at any point if they want to.

(c) The Holy Spirit often moves in 'waves' similar to the blowing wind.

(d) Encourage them to be still and know that God is God (Ps. 46:10), and to stay focused on the Lord. He loves them intensely and longs for them to know him intimately.

5. Generally, it is helpful to have people stand to receive ministry. The Holy Spirit often rests upon people as they wait in his presence. Some people may fear falling, especially if they have back problems or are pregnant or elderly. If they are overwhelmed help them to sit down, kneel, or fall carefully.

6. When people fall or rest in the Spirit, encourage them to soak in the presence of the Lord. It seems that everyone wants to get up far too quickly.

7. It can help to pray and bless the person resting in the Spirit. Many feel very vulnerable while in that position and appreciate the loving care given. They also need to be guarded from others bumping into them and/or making comments around them.

8. Never push people over. Watch over-enthusiasm and a tendency to want to 'help God out' especially when you are sensing a strong anointing within you.

9. If you get 'words of knowledge', pray biblical prayers related to those words. Let prophetic encouragement flow from prayer ministry, and *always* for edification, exhortation or comfort. Remember, no 'direction, correction, dates or mates'.

10. You will seldom err if you pray biblical prayers such as:

(a) 'Come Holy Spirit.'

(b) 'Your kingdom come, Lord, Your will be done.'

(c) For a deeper revelation of the Father's love in Christ.

(d) For anointing for service.

(e) For release of gifts and callings.

(f) To bring light and expel darkness.

(g) To open their understanding so they will know the magnitude of their salvation.

(h) For peace, ruling and reigning in their hearts.

(i) 'More Lord' – How much more will the Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

11. Don't project what God has been doing with you onto the person you are praying with. Bless what God is doing for them.

12. If your hand or body is shaking pray with your hand slightly away from the person so as not to distract them. If a stronger manifestation begins to happen within you then withdraw from ministry for a while and let the Lord bless you.

13. Laying on of hands may be appropriate, not 'leaning on of hands'. Give a light touch only, generally on forehead, top of head, shoulder, or hands. No inappropriate touching.

14. Some people pray aloud while they are being ministered to. Encourage them to be quiet and just receive. It is difficult to drink in and pour out at the same time.

15. The person you are praying for needs to be assured that he or she is the most important one for that moment. Avoid the tendency to let your mind and eyes wander to other things or other people or other situations in the room. Don't become distracted with other issues.

16. Your own personal hygiene is important – clean hands, hair and clothes, deodorant, breath mints may help.

17. Don't step over anyone, or hold discussions near people resting in the Spirit.

18. Be led by common sense and by the Spirit. It helps to have men pray with men, women with women, married couples with married couples.

19. People who pray for others also need to be prayed for themselves, to receive ministry, to be refreshed and anointed anew.

20. Encourage people being prayed for to:

(a) Come humble and hungry. Forget preconceived ideas and what has happened to others.

(b) Experience ministry before trying to analyse it. The Holy Spirit will speak, teach, comfort and reveal Jesus personally. We need to know the Lord experientially as well as theologically.

(c) Face fears such as fear of deception, of being hurt again, of not receiving, of losing control.

(d) Focus on the Lord, not on falling. Give the Holy Spirit permission to do with you what he wants to do.

Above all, we need to seek the Lord. 'Your kingdom come.'

Reviews

Many books help us understand the current blessing. They include these.

Signs of Revival by Patrick Dixon (Kingsway, 1994),

Prepare for Revival by Rob Warner (Hodder and Stoughton, 1995),

Catch the Fire and ***Pray with Fire*** by Guy Chevreau (Marshall Pickering 1994, 1995)

These place the current blessing in the context of revival phenomena especially in the last 300 years.

A Breath of Fresh Air by Mike Fearon (Eagle 1994),

The Toronto Blessing by Dave Roberts (Kingsway, 1994),

The Impact of Toronto edited by Wallace Boulton (Monarch, 1995),
and

Keep the Fire by John Arnott (Harper/Collins, 1995)

These all describe the Toronto version of this blessing in detail and discuss its impact and significance.

Something Extraordinary is Happening by Andy and Jane FitzGibbon (Monarch, 1995) and

The Sunderland Refreshing by Ken and Lois Gott (Hodder and Stoughton, 1995)

Both of these detail the impact of this blessing in Sunderland in the north of England.

Videos/DVDs

Rumours of Revival is probably the best video around describing ‘The Toronto Blessing’. Leaders in England and America comment from various perspectives, including some negative ones. However the overall consensus is that God is moving in powerful ways in the earth through this blessing.

Let the Fire Burn offers an Australian Pentecostal perspective by Jeff Beecham (AOG) with testimony and description of the impact of this blessing in churches today.

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- 12: Harvest**
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Called to Community, by Dorothy Mathieson and Tim McCowan

Covenant Community, by Shayne Bennett

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House Churches, by Ian Freestone

Church in the Home, by Spencer Colliver

The Home Church, by Colin Warren

China's House Churches, by Barbara Nield

Renewal in a College Community, by Brian Edgar

Spirit Wave, by Darren Trinder

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Missionary Translator and Doctor, by David Lithgow
My Learning Curve on Healing, by Jim Holbeck
Spiritual Healing, by John Blacker
Deliverance and Freedom, by Colin Warren
Christian Wholeness Counselling, by John Warlow
A Healing Community, by Spencer Colliver
Sounds of Revival, by Sue Armstrong
Revival Fire at Wuddina, by Trevor Faggotter

No. 5: Signs and Wonders

Words, Signs and Deeds, by Brian Hathaway
Uproar in the Church, by Derek Prince
Season of New Beginnings, by John Wimber
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Worldwide Awakening, by Richard Riss
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Mentoring, by Peter Earle
Can the Leopard Change his Spots? by Charles Taylor
The Gathering of the Nations, by Paula Sandford

No. 12: Harvest

The Spirit told us what to do, by Cari Lawrence
Argentine Revival, by Guido Kuwas
Baltimore Revival, by Elizabeth Moll Stalcup
Mobile Revival, by Joel Kilpatrick

No. 13: Ministry

School of Ministries, by Pastor Peter Earle
Pentecostalism's Global Language, by Walter Hollenweger
Revival in Nepal, by Raju Sundras
Revival in Mexico City, by Kevin Pate
Interview with Steven Hill, by Steve Beard
Beyond Prophesying, by Mike Bickle
The Rise and Rise of the Apostles, by Phil Marshall
Evangelical Heroes Speak, by Richard Riss
Spirit Impacts in Revivals, by Geoff Waugh

No. 14: Anointing

A Greater Anointing, by Benny Hinn
Myths about Jonathan Edwards, by Barry Chant
Revivals into 2000, by Geoff Waugh

No. 15: Wineskins

The New Apostolic Reformation, by C. Peter Wagner
The New Believers, by Dianna Bagnall (Bulletin/Newsweek journalist)
Vision and Strategy for Church Growth, by Lawrence Khong
New Wineskins for Pentecostal Studies, by Sam Hey
New Wineskins to Develop Ministry, by Geoff Waugh
The God Chasers, by Tommy Tenny

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Vision for Church Growth by Daryl & Cecily Brenton
Almolonga, the Miracle City, by Mell Winger
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No. 19: Church

The Voice of the Church in the 21st Century, by Ray Overend

Redeeming the Arts: visionaries of the future, by Sandra Godde

Counselling Christianly, by Ann Crawford

Redeeming a Positive Biblical View of Sexuality, by John Meteyard and Irene Alexander

The Mystics and Contemporary Psychology, by Irene Alexander

Problems Associated with the Institutionalisation of Ministry, by Warren Holyoak

No. 20: Life

Life, death and choice, by Ann Crawford

The God who dies: Exploring themes of life and death, by Irene Alexander

Primordial events in theology and science support a life/death ethic, by Martin Rice

Community Transformation, by Geoff Waugh

Books by Geoff Waugh – summary

Details on ‘Geoff Waugh’ at amazon.com

Discounted on renewaljournal.com

eStore on <http://renewaljournal.wordpress.com>

Looking to Jesus: Journey into Renewal and Revival (2009)

Light on the Mountains: Pioneer Mission in PNG (2009)

Flashpoints of Revival (2nd ed., 2009)

Revivals Awaken Generations (Korean, 2006)

Revival Fires: History’s Mighty Revivals (2011)

South Pacific Revivals (2nd ed., 2010)

Transforming Revivals (2011)

Revival: I will pour out my Spirit (2011)

Renewal: I make all things new (2011)

Anointed for Revival: Histories of Revival Pioneers (2011)

Church on Fire (1991, 2009).

Living in the Spirit (2nd ed., 2009)

Your Spiritual Gifts (2011)

Fruit and Gifts of the Spirit (1992, 2009)

The Leader’s Goldmine (1990, 2009)

Kingdom Life in Matthew (1992, 2009)

Kingdom Life in Mark (1990, 2009)

Kingdom Life in Luke (1991, 2009)

The Body of Christ, Part 1: Body Ministry (2010)

The Body of Christ, Part 2: Ministry Education (2010)

Keeping Faith Alive Today (1977, 2010)

Exploring Israel (2011)

Discovering Aslan: High King above all Kings in Narnia
(2012)

Books by Geoff Waugh - details

Looking to Jesus:

Journey into Renewal and Revival

Autobiography of 70 years including exploring renewal and revival, 260 pages (2009).

Introduction – Waugh stories

1. Beginnings – state of origin
 2. Schools – green board jungle
 3. Ministry – to lead is to serve
 4. Mission – trails and trials
 5. Family – Waughs and rumours of Waughs
 6. Search and Research – begin with A B C
 7. Renewal – begin with doh rey me
 8. Revival – begin with 1 2 3
- Conclusion – begin with you and me

Light on the Mountains:

Pioneer Mission in Papua New Guinea

Pioneering mission among Enga tribes in the highlands of Papua New Guinea. 200 pages, with over 60 photographs (2009).

Introduction

Part 1: Pioneer Mission History

- 1. Beginnings of the Baptist New Guinea Mission**
- 2. The Church is born:** the first baptisms
- 3. The Church grows:** community transformation

Part 2: Pioneer Mission Teaching

- 4. Trails and trials:** mission life in the highlands

Conclusion

Enga revival
Min revival

Flashpoints of Revival: History's Mighty Revivals

2nd edition, enlarged, 213 pages (2009).

Foreword: by C Peter Wagner

Preface and Introduction

1. Eighteenth Century

- 1727 – Herrnhut, Germany (Zinzendorf)
- 1735 – New England, America (Edwards)
- 1739 – London, England (Whitefield, Wesley)
- 1745 – Crossweeksung, America (Brainerd)
- 1781 – Cornwall, England

2. Nineteenth Century

- 1800 – America (McGready)
- 1801 – Cane Ridge, America (Stone)
- 1821 – Adams, America (Finney)
- 1858 – New York, America (Lanphier)
- 1859 – Ulster, Ireland (McQuilkin)
- 1859 – Natal, South Africa (Zulus)
- 1871 – New York, America (Moody)

3. Early Twentieth Century

- 1904 – Loughor, Wales (Roberts)
- 1905 – Mukti, India (Ramabai)
- 1906 – Los Angeles (Seymour)
- 1907 – Pyongyang, Korea
- 1909 – Valparaiso, Chile (Hoover)
- 1921 – Lowestoft, England (Brown)
- 1936 – Gahini, Rwanda (East African Revival)

4. Mid-twentieth Century

- 1947 – North America (Healing Evangelism)
- 1948 – Canada (Sharon Bible School)
- 1949 – Hebrides Islands, Scotland (Campbell)
- 1951 – City Bell, Argentina (Miller)
- 1962 – Santo, Vanuatu (Grant)

- 1965 – Soe, Timor (Tari)
- 1970 – Wilmore, Kentucky (Asbury College)
- 1970 – Solomon Islands (Thompson)
- 1971 – Saskatoon, Canada (McCleod)
- 1973 – Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Burke)

5. Late Twentieth Century

- 1975 – Gaborone, Botswana (Bonnke)
- 1979 – Elcho Island, Australia (Gondarra)
- 1979 – Anaheim, America (Wimber)
- 1979 – South Africa (Howard-Browne)
- 1988 – Papua New Guinea (van Bruggen)
- 1988 – Madruga, Cuba
- 1989 – Henan and Anhui, China

6. Final Decade, Twentieth Century

- 1992 – Argentina (Freidson)
- 1993 – Brisbane, Australia (Miers)
- 1994 – Toronto, Canada (Arnott, Clark)
- 1994 – Brompton, London (Mumford)
- 1994 – Sunderland, England (Gott)
- 1995 – Melbourne, Florida (Clark)
- 1995 – Modesto, California (Berteau)
- 1995 – Brownwood, Texas (College Revivals)
- 1995 – Pensacola, Florida (Hill)
- 1995 – Mexico (Hogan)
- 1996 – Houston, Texas (Heard)

Conclusion

Addendum: Revival in the 21st Century

Revival in the South Pacific: Vanuatu, Solomon Islands
Transforming Revival: Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu

Revivals Awaken Generations

Korean translation of *Flashpoints of Revival*.

See web version on www.renewaljournal.com and Blog.

Revival Fires: History's Mighty Revivals

Expanded academic version of *Flashpoints of Revival*, 392 pages (2011) including footnotes, published by Global Awakening – see Blog on www.renewaljournal.com. Chapters 6 and 7 as follows:

6. Final Decade, Twentieth Century: River of God Revival

- 1992 - Buenos Aires, Argentina (Claudio Freidzon)
- 1993 - May: Brisbane, Australia (Neil Miers)
- 1993 - November: Boston, North America (Mona Johnian)
- 1994 - January: Toronto, Canada (John Arnott)
- 1994 - May: London, England (Eleanor Mumford)
- 1994 - August: Sunderland, England (Ken Gott)
- 1994 - November: Mt Annan, Sydney, Australia (Adrian Gray)
- 1994 - November: Randwick, Sydney, Australia (Greg Beech)
- 1995 - January: Melbourne, Florida, North America (Randy Clark)
- 1995 - January: Modesto, California, North America (Glen Berteau)
- 1995 - January: Pasadena, California, North America (Chi Ahn)
- 1995 - January: Brownwood, Texas, America (College Revivals)
- 1995 - June: Pensacola, Florida, North America (Steve Hill)
- 1995 - October: Mexico (David Hogan)
- 1996 - March: Smithton, Missouri, North America (Steve Gray)
- 1996 - April: Hampton, Virginia, North America (Ron Johnson)
- 1996 - September: Mobile, Alabama, North America (Cecil Turner)
- 1996 - October: Houston, Texas, North America (Richard Heard)
- 1997 - January: Baltimore, Maryland, North America (Bart Pierce)
- 1997 - November: Pilbara, Australia (Craig Siggins)
- 1998 - August: Kimberleys, Australia (Max Wiltshire)
- 1999 - July: Mornington Island, Australia (Jesse Padayache)

7. Twenty-First Century: Transforming Revival

Snapshots of Glory: *Mizoram, Almolonga, Nigeria, Hemet, Cali*
Global Phenomona: *Kenya, Brazil, Argentina*
Transforming Revival in the South Pacific: *Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji*

South Pacific Revivals

A brief survey of historical and current revivals in the South Pacific islands, 182 pages, with over 30 photographs (2nd edition 2010).

Introduction: Timor, Australian Aborigines

1 Solomon Islands

2 Papua New Guinea, Bougainville

3 Vanuatu

4 Fiji

Conclusion

Appendix 1: Revival Examples

Appendix 2: Books

Transforming Revivals

Community and ecological transformation, 137 pages (2011)

Adapted from ***South Pacific Revivals*** and ***Flashpoints of Revival*** including over 30 photographs.

Preface

Introduction: Australian Aborigines

1 Solomon Islands

2 Papua New Guinea

3 Vanuatu

4 Fiji

5 Snapshots of Glory, by George Otis Jr

Conclusion

Appendix: Revival Books

Revival: I will pour out my Spirit

Summary of historical and current revivals, 143 pages (2011)

Compiled from *Renewal Journal* articles. A condensed version of *Flashpoints of Revival* (213 pages) and *Revival Fires* (392 pages)

Foreword

- 1. Revivals to 1900**
- 2. 20th Century Revivals**
- 3. 1990s – Decade of Revivals**
- 4. 21st Century Revivals**

Resources

Renewal: I make all things new

Renewal Journal articles on renewal and revival, 139 pages (2011)

Compiled from *Renewal Journal* articles.

Foreword

- 1 Renewal Ministry**
- 2 Revival Worship**
- 3 New Wineskins**
- 4 Vision for Ministry**
- 5 Community Transformation**
- 6 Astounding Church Growth**

Resources

Anointed for Revival: Histories of Revival Pioneers

Articles edited by Geoff Waugh, 132 pages (2nd ed., 2011)

Introduction

1 Revival Fire, by Geoff Waugh

2 Community Transformation, by Geoff Waugh

3 John G. Lake, by Liz Godshalk

4 Aimee Semple McPherson, by Geoff Thurling

5 T. L. Osborne, by Grant Lea

6 David Yonggi Cho, by Peter Allen

7 The Birth of Christian Outreach Centre, by Anne Taylor

8 The Beginnings of Christian Outreach Centre, by John
Thorburn

Appendix: Revival Books

Church on Fire

Australian reports and testimonies, 176 pages. (1991, 2010)

Introduction: Renewal

Aboriginal Renewal

1. Pentecost in Arnhem Land - Djiniyini Gondarra (Uniting)
2. Fire of God among Aborigines - John Blacket (Uniting)

Personal Renewal

3. Pilgrimage in renewal - John-Charles Vockler (Anglican)
4. A testimony of renewal - Owen Dowling (Anglican)
5. The disquieting presence of the Spirit - Charles Ringma (AOG)
6. A different view - Dorothy Harris (Baptist)
7. Ingredients for unity - Gregory Blaxland (Anglican)
8. New dimensions - David Todd (Presbyterian)
9. Renewal in the Holy Spirit - Barry Manuel (Baptist)
10. Love song - Ruth Lord (Uniting)

Church Renewal: examples

11. Renewal in a country parish - Barry Schofield (Anglican)
12. Renewal in a diocese - John Lewis (Anglican)
13. Renewal in a city prayer meeting - Vincent Hobbs (Catholic)
14. Renewal in a regional centre - Brian Francis; David Blackmore
15. Renewal in a small assembly - Bob Dakers (Brethren)
16. Renewal in a large congregation - Geoff Waugh (Baptist)

Church Renewal: observations

17. Building with God - Barry Chant (Christian Revival Crusade)
18. The cost of renewal - Hamish Jamieson (Anglican)
19. Charismatic renewal in the Roman Catholic Church - Tom White
20. An Orthodox comment on renewal - Lazarus Moore (Orthodox)
21. A Lutheran perspective - Glen Heidenreich (Lutheran)
22. Charismatic renewal: myths and realities - Rowland Croucher
23. Charismatic renewal: pastoral issues - Arthur Jackson (Uniting)
24. Ministering in renewal - Don Drury (Uniting)
25. God's new work - Don Evans (Uniting)
26. Future directions for charismatic renewal - Peter Moonie (Uniting)
27. Get your surfboard ready - Dan Armstrong (Uniting)

Conclusion: Revival

Living in the Spirit

Personal and group studies, 2nd ed., revised and enlarged, 126 pages (2009).

1. Father, Son and Holy Spirit

God is One

The Father's heart shows God's love

Jesus reveals God's love

The Spirit imparts God's love

2. Born of the Spirit

The Spirit creates

The Spirit re-creates

God acts

We respond

3. Filled with the Spirit

The Spirit in God's people

The Spirit in Jesus

The Spirit in the early church

The Spirit in us

4. Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit in us personally

The fruit of the Spirit in us together

Growth in the Spirit personally

Growth in the Spirit together

5. Gifts of the Spirit

Power for mission

Gifts for mission

Unity for mission

Love for mission

6. Ministry in the Spirit

Body ministry

Mutual ministry

Wholeness ministry

Freedom ministry

7. Led by the Spirit

The Spirit leads us
The Spirit leads gently
The Spirit leads personally
The Spirit leads corporately

8. The Spirit of the Lord

The Spirit of the Lord in Israel
The Spirit of the Lord in Jesus
The kingdom of God
The king: Jesus Christ is Lord

Appendix 1: Voices from history

Appendix 2: Spiritual gifts questionnaire

Your Spiritual Gifts: to serve in love

Personal and group studies, 47 pages. (2011)

Introduction

- 1 Your spiritual gifts
- 2 The manifold grace of God
- 3 Motivational Gifts from God our Father
- 4 Ministry Gifts from Christ Jesus
- 5 Manifestation Gifts from the Holy Spirit
- 6 Make love your aim
- 7 Spiritual gifts questionnaire

Fruit and Gifts of the Spirit

Personal and group studies, 63 pages. (1992, 2010)

Foreword

Part I: Fruit of the Spirit

1. The Spirit of Jesus
2. Fruit of the Spirit
3. Fruit of the vine
4. Fruit and growth
5. Fruit and gifts
6. The way of love

Part II: Gifts of the Spirit

1. God gives – we receive
2. Gifts to serve in power
3. Gifts to motivate us
4. Gifts to minister in unity
5. Gifts to manifest the Spirit
6. Gifts to use in love

Appendix: Gifts checklist

The Leader's Goldmine

Ideas for Christian groups, 63 pages (1990, 2010).

Introduction: How to use this book

Ideas for building relationships

Deep - ideas and attitudes

Deeper - ideals and values

Deepest - ideologies and commitments

Ideas for Bible studies and prayers

Bible passages

Bible study methods

Bible reading and relationship building

Bible readings and prayers

Ideas for church activities

Program emphases:

Devotional, Educational, Creative, Serving, Social, Sporting

Witness and Sharing Weekend

Commitment Indicator

Interests Indicator

Gifts Check List

Ideas for all ages together

Activities involving young children and others

Activities involving older children and others

Family and church family questionnaires

Useful teaching activities

ABC of resource ideas

Simulation activities. Simulation Game: Build my Church

Ideas for integrated studies on themes

The Great Experiment, Prayer, Relationship, Good News, The Church, Mission, Finding New Life, Living New Life, Faith Alive

Great Chapters - Old Testament

Great Chapters - New Testament

Jesus

Kingdom Life in Matthew

Common Lectionary group studies, 72 pages (1992, 2010)

Introduction

PART I THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS

Preparation: The coming of Jesus the Messiah

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. The coming of the Lord | Matthew 24:36-44 |
| 2. John the Baptist | Matthew 3:1-12 |
| 3. The Messiah | Matthew 11:2-11 |
| 4. Mary's Son | Matthew 1:18-25 |
| 5. Infancy and childhood of Jesus | Matthew 2:13-23 |
| 6. Reflections on the birth of Jesus | John 1:1-18 |

Commencement: The figure of Jesus the Messiah

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 7. The baptism of Jesus | Matthew 3:13-17 |
| 8. The witness of John the Baptist | John 1:29-34 |

Christ's design for life in God's kingdom

Narrative:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 9. The call of the first disciples | Matthew 4:12-23 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|

Discourse:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| 10. The sermon on the mount (1) | Matthew 5:1-12 |
| 11. The sermon on the mount (2) | Matthew 5:13-16 |
| 12. The sermon on the mount (3) | Matthew 5:17-26 |
| 13. The sermon on the mount (4) | Matthew 5:27-37 |
| 14. The sermon on the mount (5) | Matthew 5:38-48 |
| 15. The sermon on the mount (6) | Matthew 7:21-29 |

The spread of God's kingdom

Narrative:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 16. The call of Levi | Matthew 9:9-13 |
|----------------------|----------------|

Discourse:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 17. The mission sermon (1) | Matthew 9:35-10:8 |
| 18. The mission sermon (2) | Matthew 10:24-33 |
| 19. The mission sermon (3) | Matthew 10:34-42 |

The mystery of God's kingdom

Narrative:

20. The revelation to the simple Matthew 11:25-30

Discourse:

21. The parable sermon (1) Matthew 13:1-23

22. The parable sermon (2) Matthew 13:24-43

23. The parable sermon (3) Matthew 13:44-52

God's Kingdom on earth and the Church

Narrative:

24. The feeding of the five thousand Matthew 14:13-21

25. Jesus walks on the water Matthew 14:22-33

26. The Canaanite woman Matthew 15:21-28

27. Peter's confession Matthew 16:13-20

28. Discipleship Matthew 16:21-28

Discourse:

29. The community sermon (1) Matthew 18:15-20

30. The community sermon (2) Matthew 18:21-35

Authority and invitation: the ministry ends

Narrative:

31. The parable of the labourers Matthew 20:1-16

32. The parable of the two sons Matthew 21:28-32

33. The parable of the tenants Matthew 21:33-43

34. The parable of the marriage feast Matthew 22:1-14

35. Paying tribute to Caesar Matthew 22:15-22

36. The greatest commandment Matthew 22:34-46

37. Hypocrisy and ambition Matthew 23:1-12

Discourse:

38. The final sermon (1) Matthew 25:1-13

39. The final sermon (2) Matthew 25:14-30

Conclusion: God's kingdom fulfilled

40. Christ the King Matthew 25:31-46

PART II THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Preparation for the passion of Jesus

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. The transfiguration | Matthew 17:1-9 |
| 2. The temptations | Matthew 4:1-11 |
| 3. The meaning of the cross | John 3:1-17 |
| 4. Signs of the resurrection (1) | John 4:5-42 |
| 5. Signs of the resurrection (2) | John 9:1-41 |
| 6. Signs of the resurrection (3) | John 11:1-45 |
| 7. Palm Sunday & Crucifixion | Matthew 21:1-11
26:14-27:66 |

Resurrection appearances of Jesus

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 8. The empty tomb | John 20:1-18 |
| 9. The leaders react | John 20:19-31 |
| 10. The Emmaus road | Luke 24:13-35 |

Observations about Jesus

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 11. Jesus the Good Shepherd | John 10:1-10 |
| 12. Jesus the way, truth and life | John 14:1-14 |
| 13. Jesus present among his people | John 14:15-21 |
| 14. Jesus prays for his people | John 17:1-11 |

The coming of the Holy Spirit

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 15. The day of Pentecost | John 20:19-23;
John 7:37-39 |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|

Conclusion: The Godhead

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 16. The Trinity | Matthew 28:16-20 |
|-----------------|------------------|

Appendix 1: Studies arranged according to lectionary readings

Appendix 2: Studies arranged according to gospel readings

Kingdom Life in Mark

Common Lectionary group studies, 72 pages (1990, 2010).

Introduction

PART I THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS

Preparation: The coming of Jesus the Messiah

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. The coming of the Lord | Mark 13:32-37 |
| 2. John the Baptist | Mark 1:1-8 |
| 3. The Messiah | John 1:6-8, 19-28 |
| 4. Mary's Son | Luke 1:26-38 |
| 5. Infancy and childhood of Jesus | Luke 2:22-40 |
| 6. Reflections on the birth of Jesus | John 1:1-18 |

Commencement: The figure of Jesus the Messiah

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| 7. The baptism of Jesus | Mark 1:4-11 |
| 8. The call of Andrew and his friend | John 1:35-42 |

The mystery of the Son of God

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 9. The call of the first disciples | Mark 1:14-20 |
| 10. A Sabbath day in Capernaum (1) | Mark 1:21-28 |
| 11. A Sabbath day in Capernaum (2) | Mark 1:29-39 |
| 12. The cure of a leper | Mark 1:40-45 |
| 13. The cure of a paralytic | Mark 2:1-12 |
| 14. The question of fasting | Mark 2:18-22 |
| 15. Violation of the Sabbath | Mark 2:23-3:6 |
| 16. Serious criticism of Jesus | Mark 3:20-35 |
| 17. The parables of the kingdom | Mark 4:26-34 |
| 18. The calming of the storm | Mark 4:35-41 |
| 19. Jairus' daughter; a woman's faith | Mark 5:21-43 |
| 20. Jesus rejected at Nazareth | Mark 6:1-6 |
| 21. The mission of the twelve | Mark 6:7-13 |
| 22. Compassion for the crowds
(interlude) | Mark 6:30-34 |

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 23. The feeding of the five thousand | John 6:1-15 |
| 24. The bread of life (1) | John 6:24-35 |
| 25. The bread of life (2) | John 6:35,41-51 |
| 26. The bread of life (3) | John 6:51-58 |
| 27. Incredulity and faith | John 6:55-69 |
| 28. Jewish customs | Mark 7:1-23 |
| 29. The cure of a deaf mute | Mark 7:31-37 |

The way of the Son of Man

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| 30. Peter's confession | Mark 8:27-38 |
| 31. Passion & resurrection prophesied | Mark 9:30-37 |
| 32. Instructions for the disciples | Mark 9:38-50 |
| 33. What God has joined together | Mark 10:2-16 |
| 34. The problem of wealth | Mark 10:17-3 |
| 35. The sons of Zebedee | Mark 10:35-45 |
| 36. The cure of Bartimaeus | Mark 10:46-52 |
| 37. The first commandment | Mark 12:28-34 |
| 38. The scribes; the widow's mite | Mark 12:38-44 |
| 39. The last things | Mark 13:24-32 |

Conclusion: The fulfilment of the mystery

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| 40. Christ the King | John 18:33-37 |
|---------------------|---------------|

PART II THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Preparation for the Passion of Jesus

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The transfiguration | Mark 9:2-9 |
| 2. The temptations | Mark 1:9-15 |
| 3. The meaning of the cross | Mark 8:31-38 |
| 4. Teaching about the cross (1) | John 2:13-22 |
| 5. Teaching about the cross (2) | John 3:14-21 |
| 6. Teaching about the cross (3) | John 12:20-33 |
| 7. Palm Sunday and the crucifixion | Mark 11:1-11; 15:1-39 |

Resurrection Appearances of Jesus

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| 8. The empty tomb | Mark 16:1-18 |
| 9. Easter evening | John 20:19-31 |
| 10. Emmaus postscript | Luke 24:35-48 |

Observations about Jesus

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 11. Jesus the Good Shepherd | John 10:11-18 |
| 12. Jesus the true vine | John 15:1-8 |
| 13. Jesus present among his people | John 15:9-17 |
| 14. Jesus prays for his people | John 17:11-19 |

The coming of the Holy Spirit

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|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 15. The day of Pentecost | John 15:26-27; 16:4-15 |
|--------------------------|------------------------|

Conclusion: The Godhead

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 16. The Trinity | John 3:1-17 |
|-----------------|-------------|

Appendix 1: Studies arranged according to lectionary readings

Appendix 2: Studies arranged according to gospel readings

Kingdom Life in Luke

Common Lectionary group studies, 72 pages (1991, 2010)

Introduction

PART I THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS

Preparation: The coming of Jesus the Messiah

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. The coming of the Lord | Luke 21:25-36 |
| 2. John the Baptist | Luke 3:1-6 |
| 3. The Messiah | Luke 3:7-18 |
| 4. Mary's Son | Luke 1:39-55 |
| 5. Infancy and childhood of Jesus | Luke 2:41-52 |
| 6. Reflections on the birth of Jesus | John 1:1-18 |

Commencement: The figure of Jesus the Messiah

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 7. The baptism of Jesus | Luke 3:15-17,21-22 |
| 8. The marriage feast at Cana | John 2:1-11 |

Luke's program for Jesus' ministry

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| 9. The visit to Nazareth (1) | Luke 4:14-21 |
| 10. The visit to Nazareth (2) | Luke 4:21-30 |

The Galilean ministry

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 11. The call of the first disciples | Luke 5:1-11 |
| 12. The sermon on the plain (1) | Luke 6:17-26 |
| 13. The sermon on the plain (2) | Luke 6:27-38 |
| 14. The sermon on the plain (3) | Luke 6:39-49 |
| 15. The cure of the centurion's servant | Luke 7:1-10 |
| 16. The widow of Nain | Luke 7:11-17 |
| 17. Jesus' feet anointed | Luke 7:36-8:3 |
| 18. Peter's confession of faith | Luke 9:18-24 |

The travel narrative: part one

- 19. The journey to Jerusalem begins Luke 9:51-62
- 20. The mission of the seventy-two Luke 10:1-12,17-20
- 21. The good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37
- 22. Martha and Mary Luke 10:38-42
- 23. The importunate friend Luke 11:1-13
- 24. The parable of the rich fool Luke 12:13-21
- 25. The need for vigilance Luke 12:32-40
- 26. Not peace but division Luke 12:49-56
- 27. Few will be saved Luke 13:22-30
- 28. True humility Luke 14:1,7-14
- 29. The cost of discipleship Luke 14:25-33

The Gospel within the Gospel

- 30. The lost coin, sheep, and son Luke 15:1-10 (11-32)

The travel narrative: part two

- 31. The unjust steward Luke 16:1-13
- 32. The rich man and Lazarus Luke 16:19-31
- 33. A lesson on faith and dedication Luke 17:5-10
- 34. The ten lepers Luke 17:11-19
- 35. The unjust judge Luke 18:1-8
- 36. The Pharisee and the tax collector Luke 18:9-14
- 37. Zacchaeus Luke 19:1-10

The ministry in Jerusalem

- 38. The resurrection debated Luke 20:27-38
- 39. The signs announcing the end Luke 21:5-19

Conclusion: The fulfilment of the ministry

- 40. Christ the King John 12:9-19

PART II THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Preparation for the Passion of Jesus

1. The transfiguration Luke 9:28-36
2. The temptations Luke 4:1-13
3. The meaning of the cross Luke 13:31-35
4. Teaching about repentance (1) Luke 13:1-9
5. Teaching about repentance (2) Luke 15:1-3,11-32
6. Mary anoints Jesus John 12:1-8
7. Palm Sunday and the crucifixion Luke 19:28-40; 14:23:56

Resurrection Appearances of Jesus

8. The empty tomb Luke 24:1-12
9. Easter evening John 20:19-31
10. Jesus and Peter John 21:1-19

Observations about Jesus

11. Jesus the Good Shepherd John 10:22-30
12. Jesus the way of love John 13:31-35
13. Jesus present among his people John 14:23-29
14. Jesus prays for his people John 17:20-26

The coming of the Holy Spirit

15. The day of Pentecost John 14:8-17,25-27

Conclusion: The Godhead

16. The Trinity John 16:12-15

Appendix 1: Studies arranged according to lectionary readings

Appendix 2: Studies arranged according to gospel readings

The Body of Christ:

Part 1 – Body Ministry

Exploring ministry in the Body of Christ, 121 pages (2010).

Prologue: Change Changed
Accelerating Church Growth
Accelerating Social Change

Section 1. Body Ministry: *from few to many*

Chapter 1. *From meetings to ministry*

Kingdom Authority

1. Church and Kingdom
2. Signs of the Kingdom

Chapter 2. *From making decisions to making disciples*

Obedient Mission

1. Empowering
2. Discipling

Chapter 3. *From spectators to participants*

Mutual Ministry

1. Clergy
2. Laity

Chapter 4. *From limited to unlimited*

Spiritual Gifts

1. Unity
2. Diversity

Chapter 5. *From programs to growing churches*

Body Evangelism

1. Program Evangelism
2. Power Evangelism

Section II. Body Organisation: *from some to all*

Chapter 6. *From figurehead to functional head*

Divine Headship

1. The Written Word
2. The Living Word

Chapter 7. *From firm to flexible structures*

Body Membership

1. The Organism
2. The Organization

Chapter 8. *From management to equipping*

Servant Leadership

1. Servanthood
2. Equipping for Ministry

Chapter 9. *From passive to active*

Body Life

1. Concern for People
2. Concern for Task

Chapter 10. *From maintenance to mission*

Expanding Networks

1. Congregational Structures
2. Mission Structures

Conclusion

The Body of Christ:

Part 2 – Ministry Education

Education for ministry in the Body of Christ, 171 pages (2010).

Education for Ministry in the Body of Christ

from traditional to open ministry education

Chanter 1. *From narrow to wide*

Open Education

1. Theological Education by Extension
2. Open Ministry Education

Chapter 2. *From centralized to decentralized*

Unlimited Education

1. Advantages
2. Problems and Solutions

Chapter 3. *From classrooms to life*

Continuing Education

1. Increasing Change
2. Increasing Choice

Chapter 4. *From pedagogy to self-directed learning*

Adult Education

1. Principles
2. Practices

Chapter 5. *From competition to co-operation*

Mutual Education

1. Aims and objectives
2. Implications

Keeping Faith Alive Today

Personal and group studies on Christian living, 33 pages (1977, 2010)

Two Sessions on Prayer

by Nevin Vawser

1 New Ways to Pray

2 What Did I Discover?

Two Sessions on Using the Bible

by Colville Crowe

3 Try Reading the Bible

4 Share Your Experiences

Two Sessions on Life in the Spirit

by Geoff Waugh

5 Faith Alive in Personal Life

6 Faith Alive in Community

Exploring Israel

Reflections on our family visit to Israel, December-January, 1981-1982, 99 pages, with coloured photos (2011)

Part 1: Journey

Included in Looking to Jesus:

Journey into Renewal and Revival (2009)

Part 2: Journal

Reproduced from Our Trip, handwritten journal, with daily notes and photos on each double page

Discovering Aslan: High King above all Kings in Narnia

Exploring the Story within the Stories

100 pages (2011)

Introduction

1. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

Aslan is on the move

2. Prince Caspian

Each year that you grow you will find me bigger

3. The Voyage of the Dawn Treader

By knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there

4. The Silver Chair

Aslan's instructions always work: there are no exceptions

5. The Horse and His Boy

High King above all kings in Narnia

6. The Magician's Nephew

I give you yourselves ... and I give you myself

7. The Last Battle

Further up and further in

Conclusion

