

Focus / Editorial - September 1976

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Recently I was at a conference and heard the following description of someone's experience in a charismatic prayer group. 'He received the Spirit so quietly, without any emotion, and was released into a lovely prayer language, so beautiful and personal just as it should be'. Whereas I do not wish in any way to 'knock' any other persons experience of God, we must see things in their true perspective. If the above mentioned experience became accepted as a biblical norm' the church would be losing a great deal of the promise of the Father, and fail in her divine purpose.

The baptism with the Holy Spirit is more than a 'prayer language' an 'inner release' a 'quiet personal experience'. On the contrary Jesus in referring to the purpose of Pentecost and the receiving of the Holy Spirit linked it with 'witnesses to the ends of the earth'. It was definitely not quiet, nor unemotional, the Bible says it was 'noised abroad' and they were considered as 'drunken men'. The Father in heaven was sealing the redemptive sacrifice of His Son on earth. The wind and fire of God were responding to the breath and blood of Christ. There was unleashed on that generation of lost mankind, a people of power who brought light and life into the world's darkness and death.

They proclaimed the resurrection of Christ by continuing His dynamic ministry and life in the power of His Spirit and name. Satan's kingdom reeled backwards under the assault of this marching, thrusting, triumphing church of God. They were not content to run a 'Praise Rally' for three thousand in Jerusalem, they were intent on taking every nation for the kingdom of God. How much longer will the church read the book of Acts as merely a record of church history, another bible book destined for theological analysis, neatly packaged into background data, time period covered, purpose for writing, content, main theme, etc. etc.

It is in our Bible to stir our faith for such a people of God in our day whose quality of life, caring believing hearts, anointed preaching, teaching and healing will be their continued experience. The Acts of the Apostles is the opening chapter of an ongoing people of power who will release men from their chains and despair. Who will again storm the gates of hell, and raise shouts of glory in the heavens. The global stress of our day with its raging sea of confused and troubled people, its pain wracked millions, its forgotten multitudes of sick, hungry, dying mankind. Its pseudo-civilised nations, its perplexed political strategists, its hopeless empty future, its sterile religions, its intellectual vanity, all demand a church every bit equal, indeed more than the equal, of the church of the Acts of the Apostles.

We dedicate this issue of 'Restoration', to contribute to the stirring of our faith for a noisy emotional, powerful, corporate, Christ honouring baptism with the Holy Spirit for God's people. Just as it should be.