

# The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit

## Session #7

All page numbers refer to J.I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1984)

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**“Christianity in North America is 3,000 miles wide and half an inch deep.” (10)**



### MAPPING THE SPIRIT’S PATH: THE CHARISMATIC LIFE (170–181)

#### A NEW SPIRITUAL FORCE (170–172)

1. Packer uses various terms: charismatic movement, neo-Pentecostalism, charismatic renewal. He doesn’t make clear the similarities and distinctions in these terms so let’s do that together.
  - **Pentecostalism:** the movement coming out of 19<sup>th</sup> century Wesleyan Holiness and Higher Life Movements (see ch. 4) culminating in the teachings of Charles Fox Parham in Topeka in 1900 and William Seymour in Los Angeles at the Azusa Street Revival in 1906.
  - **Charismatic Movement:** Also called “Neo-Pentecostalism,” was the infiltration of Pentecostalism into non-Pentecostal churches.
  - **Third Wave Pentecostalism:** Coming out of C. Peter Wagner’s (Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena) books that non only in speaking in tongues normative, but miraculous signs and wonders; hence his belief in “power evangelism” *a la* the apostles, in which a miracle is performed that leads to conversions.
2. Packer hints at, but it needs to be emphasized that this movement has an *eschatological* ethos: the apostolic churches exercised these gifts; they were lost for centuries; now they’re being restored.
3. In what ways do you see the influence of Pentecostalism throughout the American Church?

#### FIVE KEY DISTINCTIVES (175–181)

1. Post-conversion “Enriching” (176–177)

- The Pentecostal Version: tongues are *the* evidence of baptism with the Holy Spirit
  - The Charismatic Version: tongues are *an* evidence of baptism with the Holy Spirit
2. Tongues (177–178)
  3. Spiritual Gifts (178–179)
  4. Worship in the Spirit (179–180)
  5. Renewal (180–181)

## RESPONDING

1. To “post-conversion enriching” (i.e., second work of grace)
  - The “conversion-tongues” pattern in Acts
    - Acts 1:8 is an outline: **Jerusalem...Judea and Samaria...the end of the earth.**<sup>1</sup> In his first book, Luke traced the journey of Jesus *to* Jerusalem; now in his second volume he traces the journey of Jesus’ message *from* Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup>
      - Jerusalem (chs. 1–7): “Repent...be baptized...and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (2:38). Note that we never hear of the crowds speaking in tongues after baptism, only of their hearing the Lord’s work in their native tongues (2:5–11)
      - Judea and Samaria (chs. 8–12). With the Samaritans we read that “when they believed Philip as he preached good news...they were baptized” (8:12). When the apostles heard this they sent Peter and John who “prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them...then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit” (8:14–17). Why is the pattern is broken?<sup>3</sup>
      - The ends of the earth (chs. 13–28)

<sup>1</sup> See for example F.F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (1954; rev. ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 36–37.

<sup>2</sup> Dennis Johnson, *The Message of Acts in the History of Redemption* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1997), 14 n9.

<sup>3</sup> See Johnson, *The Message of Acts*, 96–98.

- The issue of whether what Acts says is *descriptive* or *prescriptive*
  - Pentecostal/Charismatic theology says tongues post-conversion is *prescriptive* for all believers everywhere.
  - Dennis Johnson explained that this principle should then be applied consistently: “If we did, we would have to conclude that all of the following should be found in every church: (a) apostles who had walked Galilean trails with Jesus, bearing eyewitness testimony to his resurrection; (b) the Spirit coming in an earthquake and the roar of the wind; (c) angels leading preachers out of prison; and (d) church discipline be instantaneous, divinely administered capital punishment.”<sup>4</sup>
  - Also important to note is the uniqueness of the apostles and the churches they founded. They were chosen by Jesus to witness to his resurrection, formed the foundation of the church, and had witness that was confirmed by signs and wonders.
- The completeness of Christ’s work of grace
  - E.g., Ephesians 1:3

## 2. Tongues

- Acts uses *dialektos* (“dialects”) while 1 Cor. 12–14 uses *glossolalia* (“tongues”)
- In 1 Cor. 12:1 Paul addresses “spiritual *things*” (*pneumatikōn*) not “spiritual *gifts*” (*charismatōn*; “gifts” is inserted in translations)
- Three view of the “tongues” in 1 Cor. 14:
  - Traditional view: known languages unknown to the speaker
  - Charismatic view: known language or heavenly language unknown to the speaker
  - Alternative view (Kim Riddlebarger, Christ Reformed Church, Anaheim): known language known to the speaker but not the hearers<sup>5</sup>
- 1 Cor. 14<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, *The Message of Acts*, 3–4.

<sup>5</sup> See Kim Riddlebarger, *First Corinthians*, ed. Jon D. Payne, The Lectio Continua Expository Commentary on the New Testament (Powder Springs, GA: Tolle Lege Press, 2013), 373–386.

<sup>6</sup> I’m utilizing sermon notes provided me by my colleague at the High Desert URC in Apple Valley, CA: Rev. Tom Morrison.

- The gift of prophecy was given to *some* (v. 24, “all prophecy,” is hypothetical): see ch. 12; Eph. 2; Eph. 4.
  - Prophecy could be foretelling (Acts 11; 21) or forth-telling, i.e., preaching. According to Ephesians 3, the mystery of the Gospel was revealed to the Apostles and Prophets. Sometimes they were forth-telling from the O.T.; sometimes they were given fresh revelation. Thus, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14:29 that people in the congregation must weigh what is being said by the Prophets.
  - Prophecy is better than tongues is that it revealed the Word so that all could understand.
  - Tongues were unintelligible at a minimum to the hearers unless they were interpreted.
  - In contrast, prophecy edifies all (vv. 3, 4).
  
- Tongues
  - Like prophecy, a supernatural Word-gift from God. The Corinthian congregation focused on it to the detriment of prophecy and detriment of unity (cf. ch. 1).
  - The one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit (v. 2). One who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. For if one prays in a tongue, his Spirit prays, but his mind is unfruitful (vv. 13ff.).
  - On the surface, it sounds like tongues are ecstatic either of an unknown or heavenly language.
  - Tongues are spoken mysteries in the Spirit not to men but to God (v. 2). As a person speaks tongues to God, something about God is revealed by the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - But the person won't understand unless enabled to interpret (v. 13). This makes sense when Paul says his spirit prays but his mind is unfruitful (v. 14). Therefore, tongues reveal the mysteries of God, which is good, but only if interpreted.
  - What Paul means by “my spirit” is not his own spirit or soul. He means *the Holy Spirit in him*. Remember, he the person speaking in tongues does so *in* or *by* the Spirit (v. 2).

- While under the power of the Spirit, the mind is “unfruitful”— not fully engaged. This is why interpretation is necessary.
- “Tongues” were existing languages: 1) Paul compares tongues to prophecy: like prophecy revelation comes through human language; 2) the only other place tongues are mentioned is in Acts, where they are existing languages.
- Look at how tongues and prophecy worked in Paul’s day:
- In v. 20 Paul quotes from Isa. 28 where the prophet judges the prophets and priests of Judah. They are proud drunkards who believed they were too mature for the “childish message of Isaiah,” i.e., God’s Word. Ironically, the drunken prophets and priests were the ones acting like children! Paul is exhorting them to act like mature adults. When the priests and prophets heard Isaiah’s word, they mocked it (Isa. 28:10).
- In response, Isaiah says they would be judged by the Assyrians. According to v. 13, the same incoherent babbling the priests and prophets said the Word of the Lord was like it would be with the foreign language of the Assyrians. Through this strange tongue, Israel would not be converted but judged.
- In Corinth, then, uninterpreted tongues to outsiders and unbelievers who did not understand God’s Word were being judged. Tongues are a sign to unbelievers.