Subject: Strange Fire ??
Posted by Mark L on Sun, 06 Nov 2016 00:10:36 GMT
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John MacArthur's church did a conference several yrs ago called Strange Fire. Meaning the Charismatic. One of the talks was on cessationism

Meaning . . . the gifts and ministries have ceased (prophets/apostles)

A bro named Tom Pennington who I have never heard of did that particular talk I would like to do a point to point rebuttal to it. I don't want to reproduce the entire talk so I will just copy out the relevant points. Theirs in bold. Also I can't speak to every sentence. It would just take too much time. Besides that to some extent at least I'm preaching to the converted.

Before I say anything else let me say these people take extremely narrow definitions on things. An eg is â€œprophecy is speaking the very words of Godâ€• That can't be supported in either NT or OT. I'm not going to address some of these issues as it would just take too much time.

I'm going to sometime soon put up some of my opinions on
Apostles/Prophets so I'm not going to reply in depth to some of their points on this issue.

Here is a link to the talk. Has both the video and the text.

https://www.gty.org/resources/sermons/TM13-7/a-case-for-cess ationism

I'm going to put the Bro Pennington's words in bold print

So what is it that secessionists believe the Spirit has ceased. Letâ€™s be very clear. We only believe He has ceased one function and that is He no longer gives believers today the miraculous spiritual gifts, gifts like speaking in tongues, prophecy and healing.

So what do we mean by cessationism? We mean that the Spirit no longer sovereignty gives individual believers the miraculous spiritual gifts that are listed in the Scripture and that were present in the first century church. It is neither the Spiritâ€™s plan, nor His normal pattern to distribute miraculous spiritual gifts to Christians and churches today as He did in the times of the Apostles. Those gifts ceased as normative with the apostles.

All of us here of course would strongly disagree with that.

On the other hand, continuationists believe either that the miraculous gifts have continued

unabated since Pentecost or other sects would say, no, they have waned through much of the church age but have now been restored.

That is us to one degree or another right there.

The chief arguments that they put forward for the defence of their view, the ones that you will hear most commonly are these.
First of all, theyâ€™ll say the New Testament nowhere directly states that the miraculous gifts will cease during the church age. But that argument cuts both ways because the New Testament doesnâ€™t directly say they will continue either.

To my mind that is a silly argument. But to respond the bible does say they will continue. I will deal with that last

They counter with the second argument. There are a couple of New Testament passages that imply that the miraculous gifts will continue until Christ returns. Their favorite example of that is 1 Corinthians 13:10, â€œWhen the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.â€• They argue that that means that only when Christ returns will the partial gifts of tongues and prophecy cease.
Ask the average cessationist and he will turn you to 1 Corinthians 13, and I personally believe a case can be made there. But cessationism does not rise or fall on 1 Corinthians 13

In 1 Cor 13 Paul is making the same point 3 different ways. That this world is going to pass away. There is a flow of thought to the whole passage. Vs 10-12 flow out of vs 8. Chap 13 is giving balance to chap 12 & 14. I will speak more to this point later. In vs 8-12 he is saying in different ways that this world will pass away and the gifts will go with it. Because we won't need them anymore.

Their third main argument for the continuation of the miraculous gifts is that the New Testament speaks only of the church age and therefore the gifts that began this age must continue throughout it. They say that we artificially divide the church age into the apostolic and the post-apostolic.

That is exactly what they are doing. Making an artificial distinction between the apostolic and post apostolic age.

But unless they believe that there are Apostles today at the same level as Peter and Paul, and most Charismatics do not, they also divide the church age and they relate at least apostleship solely to the apostolic era. They have become defacto cessationismâ€¦secessionists, I should say, at least in part.

Why do all apostles have to be Peters and Pauls with world wide ministries. That wasn't true even

in the early church.

But by far the most common argument that continuationists put forward for their view, and this is the one Iâ€™m sure youâ€™ve heard, it is everywhere, and that is 500 million professing Christians who claim Charismatic experiences canâ€™t all be wrong.

That is a specious argument regardless of who is making it.

The first biblical argument for cessationism is the unique role of miracles. Many evangelicals, and I think most Charismatics, think that miracles litter almost every page of biblical history. In reality there were only three primary periods in which God worked miracles through uniquely gifted men. In other words, there were only three primary periods when God gave human beings miracle working power.

God gave human beings miracle working power.

Here again narrow incorrect definitions. I'm not sure where he is coming from here but just to make the point . . . We don't have any power nor did they. Even Jesus himself (while on earth) had no power to work miracles. It is and was the Holy Spirit.

Let me also say here that he uses his words very carefully. All through his talk. Normally I think that is a good thing. In his case it leaves too strict of a definition on his terms. So for eg I'm going to expand miracles to â€œthe supernaturalâ€• and speak to that issue.

So were there only 3 primary periods? Of men having miracle working power?

It would be more correct to say that every time in the bible where it takes a close look at a man or a time we see lots of supernatural happening. Most of the bible is just a quick glimpse because to record everything would require a lot of libraries. Wherever it zeros in we see God acting supernaturally.

He gives 3 times. Moses/Joshua Elijah/Elisha Jesus/ Apostles.
All 3 of the times he gives were very important times. Which is why the bible zeros in for a close look at them.
Moses -set up the nation sacrifices and temple
Elijah turned the nation back to God. He dealt with the greatest threat the nation ever faced. Baal worship under Ahab/Jezebel
Jesus the messiah and his divinity
Paul set up the church

But what its doing there is giving a close look. Everywhere you look in the bible you see the

supernatural

Before the flood Enoch a prophet & Noah Abraham Issac Jacob all prophets
The Judges another good eg. A quick overview and when it takes a close look we see Samson. Lots of supernatural.
David Solomon the kings wherever there is a close look you see it. Look at Daniel.
The time between the testaments. Apocrypha Not scripture but no reason not to accept it as history.

Luke 2 / 25-38 Recorded in the NT but not part of the church age. Really in the time between the testaments. God speaking to men and the prophetic office.
According to early church historians like Eusebuis the gifts and ministries continued right up into the 3thd century.

It is seen right down through church history. Patrick of Ireland for eg. I think he and the men who followed after him stood in the apostolic office. John Knox Luther & Wesley all walked in the supernatural at least to some degree.
A.J. Gordon, Andrew Murray and A.B. Simpson were all well known 19th c. preachers who all believed in the supernatural and divine healing

George Fox (1624-91) autobiography. The person who edited the version I read said . . .

No reader of the Journal can fail to be impressed with the fact that George Fox believed himself to be an instrument for the manifestation of miraculous power. Diseases were cured through him; he foretold coming events; he often penetrated states and conditions of mind and heart; he occasionally had a sense of what was happening in distant parts (pg 24 intro)

Imagine that . . . an honest christian man. That is a big problem with some (many?) of these editors. They don't believe the supernatural stuff so they edit it right out of the biographies. In one of Jack Deere's â€œSurprisedâ€• books he gives a lot of info on this point

We see it in our day of course. Everywhere you go. I'm sure all of us reading this have seen things happen. We also see it at the end of the world. Book of Revelation. Supernatural stuff happening and God speaking.

Another response in regards to only 3 periods of miracles is this. They are making an arbitrary distinction again. But going only with their argument of 3 periods if God can do 3 periods why can't he do another? In the late 20th C for eg. Where do they get the authority to stop God from doing another? If the miracles were present in certain periods then waned then why cannot God do another period of miracles.

Because the primary purpose of miracles has always been to confirm the credentials of a divinely appointed messenger to establish the credibility of one who speaks for God, not one who teaches or explains the Word of God as Iâ€™m doing this morning, but one in whose mouth God has put His very words.

confirm the credentials

. That is certainly one purpose. Jesus said if you don't believe my words believe the miracles. But is that the only purpose? I would strongly disagree.

Because he cares about his people and wants to help us
To show his power ie. Pharaoh
To bring God's will out of the spiritual realm into this one
To strengthen and encourage Gods people
In response to our prayers
etc.

God has put his very words

again these very narrow definitions. Non charismatics and secessionists make a very big deal out of this. They teach the speakings of a prophet are Gods own words and equal with scripture.

And so here in Deuteronomy, Moses laid down three criteria for discerning a true prophet from a false prophet.If youâ€™ll notice in verses 21 and 22 of this chapter, he says that the true prophetâ€™s predictions just always come true. Thatâ€™s number one, criteria number oneâ€¦the true prophetâ€™s predictions must always come true.

Well I certainly agree with that. If a man is a prophet and he speaks by the word of the Lord it will come to pass. If it doesn't he isn't a prophet. I realize though I'm in disagreement with much of the current charismatic church on that.

In Deuteronomy 13 verses 1 to 5, God says that if he chose to authenticate a true prophet, He would do so by empowering him to work miracles, as He did with Moses.

That is not the intent of the passage. He is reading into it his own personal bias.

Also in Deuteronomy 13 He says that even if He works miracles, the third criteria thatâ€™s to be used is that the prophetâ€™s message must always be in complete doctrinal agreement with previous revelation.

Agreed. Actually strongly agreed.

A second related argument to that is the end of the gift of Apostleshipâ€¦ Most Christians and most evangelical Charismatics agree there are no more Apostles like the Twelve, or like Paul. Why is that? Because an apostle, to be a true apostle, you had to meet three qualifications.

The problem here is they are mixing up a number of things. The 12 were a unique group which is why one was added to take Judas place. This was unique group of witnesses to the entire ministry of Jesus. One problem here is that Paul didn't qualify. Another is that there were many apostles in the NT. There are over 20 men â€œnamedâ€• as apostles. Others referred to but not named.

In Acts chapter 1 as theyâ€™re sorting through after the suicide of Judas, theyâ€™re sorting through whoâ€™s going to take his place. In chapter 1 verse 22 of Acts, beginning with the baptism of John until the day that he was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection. You had to be a witness of the life of Christ, and of His resurrection.

If Matthias hadn't already been an apostle they would never have considered him. This was a unique group witnessing to the life and resurrection of Christ. I am of the opinion that at least some of the 70 were apostles.

Secondly, to be an Apostle, you had to be personally appointed by Christ. . . . You have chosen.â€•

I actually agree with that. To be a prophet or Apostle you are set in the ministry by Christ himself. My question is â€œis Christ deadâ€• ? He appeared to people in the OT & NT in church history and today. I know several people who have seen the Lord. But it doesn't line up to their theology to have Jesus appearing or even speaking. If someone is a prophet or apostle he has seen the Lord.

Thirdly, to be an Apostle in the true sense, you had to be able to work miracles. In Matthew chapter 10 verses 1 and 2, Jesus summoned His Twelve disciples and He gave them authority over unclean spirits to cast them out, to heal every kind of disease, every kind of sickness, not lower back pain. Now these are the Twelve Apostles. You come to 2 Corinthians chapter 12:12, chapter 12 verse 12, it says, â€œThe signs of a true Apostle were performed among you with all perseverance by signs and wonders and miracles.â€• To be an Apostle, you had to be able to work miracles

Again in general I agree. I believe that a true apostle will have all the gifts operating. I don't think I am making a point they aren't but again they are making these narrow points. â€œeveryâ€• By that they mean these men had the power to heal â€•everyâ€• disease. And that this power as apostles was resident within them. As opposed to the gifts of the spirit operating when the HS

wills.

Look at those three qualifications and you realize immediately that there is no one alive today who meets those three qualifications.

It is common in the non charismatic to make statements like this. They simply have no way to back this up.

Itâ€™s also significant, I think, that the gift of Apostleship ceased without a crystal-clear New Testament statement that it would.

The truth is there is a crystal clear statement to that effect in Eph 4/11. I will refer to that later.

The third argument for cessationism is the foundational nature of the New Testament Apostles and prophetsâ€¦the foundational nature of the New Testament Apostles and prophets. You see, the New Testament identifies the Apostles and prophets as the foundation on which the church was built.

We would agree with that. But then he goes on to say that since the foundation has been laid there is no longer any need for Apostles and Prophets. Which he claims to have already proved. It shows a real misunderstanding of the work of Apostles/Prophets.
And if that is true why have all the other apostles in the NT? They were pretty much superfluous to the 12 and Paul. Again it shows a real misunderstanding of the work of these ministries.

A fourth argument for cessationism is the nature of the miraculous giftsâ€¦the nature of the New Testament miraculous gifts.
If the Spirit were still gifting believers today with the miraculous gifts, they would be the same gifts that we find in the New Testament. However, the Charismatic gifts claim today bear almost no resemblance to their New Testament counterparts

Again we have these huge statements that simply have no basis in reality.

. . . yet Luke still defines speaking in tongues as we hear them in our own language, or our own dialect. No mention of anything ecstatic. That was the New Testament, gift, speaking in a known language or a known dialect.

Yup I agree. Hef prayed for people to receive the HS and on many occasions they started speaking in tongues but he heard them speaking in Hebrew. Someone in Faith Assembly I knew had a Korean sister in law who attended on occasion. There was an utterance in tongues with the interpretation. The person spoke in tongues but she heard him speaking in Korean.

Lots of other eg's of that. Point is it isn't nonsense or gibberish or ecstatic.

Compare that with todayâ€™s tongues which are ecstatic speech. Itâ€™s not the same thing.

Again these big statements they have no way to back up. Which of course won't bother them in the least.

Also, the New Testament gift of tongues, including 1 Corinthians 14, was a public gift meant for at one level the edification of others. There had to be someone to interpret. Todayâ€™s tongues, on the other hand, are primarily a private prayer language.

Those are two different issues. Both are in the bible and both are present today. Examples abound.

Or consider the nature of the gift of prophecy. ... Contrary to Charismatic doctrine, nowhere does the New Testament distinguish the Old Testament prophets from the New Testament prophets.

I agree! The NT office of a prophet is exactly the same as the OT office of a prophet. Unfortunately much of the charismatic world today disagrees. Mostly because they don't meet the OT conditions but don't want to give up their prophets.

So New Testament prophecy then is direct, infallible revelation.

Again these strict narrow straitlaced definitions. What they mean and (they say this) is that NT prophesy is on a par with scripture. Paul said (speaking of disciples not a prophet) we know in part and prophesy in part. 1 Cor 13/9. There are two kinds of prophesy in the NT. 1 Cor 12 & 14. Prophesy by a prophet which comes by revelation & Prophesy by a disciple which comes by inspiration. 1 Cor. says all can prophesy and have the gifts & the gifts are given to each. Not just the ministry.

It should be noted here that often in the Prophets (OT) the Hebrew way of doing things was to just throw all the information in and expect the reader to sort it out. Hosea is a good eg of that. Paul came directly out of the OT Hebrew tradition and at times he acted that way 1 Cor 12 & 14. Jesus himself did that. Being of course an OT prophet. Matt 24 Mark 13 Luke 21 he goes back and forth from the near future to the far future and expects the reader to sort it out. If we as serious students of the bible expect to read and understand it we have to read it and interpret it properly. In other words set aside our 21st c. logical 123- ABC way of looking at things and see it and read it the way ancient Hebrews did.

Consider another example, the gift of healing. In the New Testament when someone with the New Testament gift of healing used his gifts, the results were complete, immediate, permanent,

undeniable, every kind of sickness, every kind of illness. The purported healings of todayâ€™s faith healers are the antithesis of those biblical miracles. They are incomplete. They are temporary, at best. And they are unverifiable.

The facts are that is simply not true. â€œcomplete, immediate, permanent, undeniable, every kind of sickness, every kind of illness.â€• That was not true even in the bible. Dr. Pennington should simply know better. (and probably does)

When Charismatics do claim that their miracles are on the same level as the New Testament gifts and there are those, such as the wild claims of limbs restored, or of resurrections, for example, they are almost always hearsay and if theyâ€™re not hearsay, theyâ€™ve not been verified.

Well here we go. Talk about wild claims!! When you challenge them on some of their statements the onus is put on us to prove it. Which I don't mind doing but I'm not the one making the â€œhearsayâ€• and â€œunverifiedâ€• statements. They are.

I'm not going to say anything here other than to point to John G Lake As I recall they had 100,000 medically verified healings in their healing rooms over a 1 (or maybe 3) yr period. Some of the medical reports were reproduced in his books. This won't sway the doubters though. I'll give my reasons why later.

A fifth argument for cessationism is the testimony of church history. Now letâ€™s start with New Testament church history.

The entire argument here is at best circumstantial. In other words nothing is directly said. They make a lot of hay out of the fact that the gifts aren't mentioned in the later epistles. Maybe because the NT writers didn't want to write a library and the subject was already dwelt with.

When we leave New Testament history, we discover that the testimony of the church after the New Testament era, was exactly the same, in both what was taught and practised. It was that the miraculous gifts ceased with the Apostles.
. . . continuationism provides no convincing theological explanation for the disappearance of certain gifts during most of church history. Thereâ€™s no way to explain it.

The truth though is that they didn't. You find throughout church history that while they may have waned the gifts and ministries were present in virtually all ages. Especially in times of great revival.

The sixth argument for cessationism is the sufficiency of Scripture.

Now we here in the faith camp would actually find a lot of agreement with these people on this point. As opposed to much of the charismatic church. We actually take a far stronger stand than

they do.

The New Testament teaches that the result of Godâ€™s completed revelation is an all-sufficient Scripture in many places. Second Timothy chapter 3 verse 16, â€œAll Scripture is inspired by God, itâ€™s profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be adequate equipped for every good work.â€• Thereâ€™s nothing left. The man of God needs no additional revelation from God, he has it all right here. . . . The Spirit speaks only in and through the inspired Word.

In many ways and here is a good eg they are arguing in a circle. Having â€œprovedâ€• God doesn't speak anymore outside scripture they point to these vs. Problem is they haven't proved their earlier point. That God doesn't speak anymore etc.

There is a seventh and final argument for cessationism, itâ€™s the New Testament rules laid down for the miraculous gifts. I want you to turn with me to 1 Corinthiansâ€¦1 Corinthians chapter 14â€¦1 Corinthians 14 where Paul lays out specific guidelines for how two of the miraculous biblical gifts were to be practised in the church.

Several responses here
If things in the early churches were so wild that Paul had to lay down some guidelines why is it not alright for us. If the early church had times in some churches where things were out of order and needed guidelines then why is it such a terrible thing for modern churches to need guidelines.

Secondly the guidelines are just that. Guidelines. Not hard and fast rules. If there is so much prophesy and public tongues in a church that rules need to be laid down then reasonable people would lay them down or apply them. Just like Paul did.

Thirdly this Bro calls them guidelines then applies them as hard and fast rules. He makes a lot of hay out of grieving the HS here.

Fourthly Pauls point is that things need to be done decently and in order with time for everything to happen. Reasonable people would agree with that.
Some non-charismatic authors write books about stuff like this. They take the worst eg's of charismatic issues and then present them as normal charismatic behaviour. Not very honest or Godly for that matter. I won't mention here that the book â€œCharismatic Chaosâ€• falls into that category.

If you're interested the vineyard did a response to the book several yrs ago. Somewhat lengthy but interesting to read
https://vineyardusa.org/library/position-paper-the-vineyards
-response-to-charismatic-chaos/

So what do I believe?
I'm not going to labour this point because I'm preaching to the converted here.

1 Cor 12/7,11 given to every man. Not just apostles.

1 Cor 12/28-30 these gifts are set â€œin the churchâ€• All the silly talk about the gifts today are not the original gifts are disingenuous at best and dishonest at worst.

Eph 4/11-14 these ministries are given UNTIL the church comes to the same maturity and perfection Jesus walked in.
That should settle it for the true xian. Unfortunately it probably won't for the reasons I give below.

Lastly . . . WHY do these people teach these things. Cessationism. I have several reasons. Let me say here with these reasons I am not pointing at Pennington or anyone else. These are just reasons why people believe these things.

I AM NOT POINTING AT ANYONE.

1. First it is possible there is someone somewhere in the world who simply believes this because they see it in the bible. Possible but not likely.

2. Unbelief. This is a spiritual substance in the same sense as faith is. Its something real in the heart. Its the reason why the heathen don't believe. It is a spiritual sickness. It renders you incapable of believing. Paul said in Heb 3/12 if there is too much of it in the heart of a xian it will walk you away from the Lord. As a xian ones own heart will take them away from the Lord. Hence the very strong warning.

3. Fear. This really is the legacy of this teaching. One man who is on 1000's radio and TV stations fasted for 40 days to get the Holy Spirit and couldn't because he couldn't overcome the fear. Someone I know who lives down under went to a charismatic meeting and came away terrified. Because people were singing and clapping and raising their hands.
Jesus said if you ask the Father for the HS he won't give you a snake. Luke 11

4. Demonic. This true a lot of times. I don't want to point fingers here but it is common. One well known preacher known for his ability to explain the scriptures can hardly even mention the word tongues. 1000's of radio and TV stations

5. Dishonesty. They are simply not very honest. One very well known minister who is a bastion or tower of opposition to the charismatic knows better but doesn't care. Simply. Doesn't. Care. Again 1000's of radio and TV stations.

6. Because they are Pharisees. Their doctrine or their place in church life or society is more important to them than forsaking all and following Jesus. Jesus gave scathing denunciations of these people. I'm not Jesus so I'm not going to point any fingers.

Last Word

1. Mat 25. Its the parable of the talents. If these people don't want their blessings then God will give them to someone who does.

2. 11 Tim 3/5 From such turn away. I didn't write this Paul did. Its interesting that the vs comes right out of a passage dealing with last days. Lots I could say here but I think I will just stick with the Word and leave it at that. Everyone can interpret it for themselves.

3. Heb 13/8Jesus Christ the same yesterday today and forever.

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by Mark L on Sun, 06 Nov 2016 14:51:24 GMT
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I don't generally read Charisma magazine but in googling around a bit I found this. So I thought I would just post it.

http://www.charismanews.com/opinion/41728-the-false-doctrine
-behind-the-strange-fire-of-john-macarthur

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by james on Sun, 06 Nov 2016 18:49:57 GMT
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Mark L wrote on Sun, 06 November 2016 08:51I don't generally read Charisma magazine but in googling around a bit I found this. So I thought I would just post it.

http://www.charismanews.com/opinion/41728-the-false-doctrine
-behind-the-strange-fire-of-john-macarthur

I'm not sure how others come to their 'opinions' although I'd imagine most of us do so in similar fashion. I have asked guys I meet with for Bible study (Baptist) their thoughts on various subjects well known among the charismatic crowd and they hadn't even heard of what I asked about. The

other night I was trying to use the Lakeland/Todd Bentley mess as an example in making a point; they had never heard of 'Lakeland revival' or Bentley(which in hindsight is a good thing, imo). I asked if anyone knew who William Branham was (a guy was talking of northern Kentucky and Jeffersonville, Indiana), they'd never heard of him. Everyone is influenced by the circles they run in and the company they keep and ideologies they're exposed to...as well as 'opinions'.
I remember the opinions expressed over the pulpit from FA had great influence over the minds of many of the followers of HEF.

It's the same within the Baptist denomination, they're influenced by people like John Piper and John McArthur. If they determine that tongues aren't valid today, those under their influence believe it also. If the leaders of the denomination decide that the ESV translation is better than the KJV, then everyone swaps over to the new version. If HEF had told us that we shouldn't wear Nike shoes then we probably wouldn't have...Oh wait! He did, and we didn't.

It's things like Charisma Magazine that enforce their opinions of just how kooky charismatics are, that plus all the TV charlatans passing themselves off as men of God teaching all these false doctrines and displaying 'signs' and 'wonders' that are not sent from God.

Am I defending John McArthur? Absolutely not! Just offering my thoughts on why people follow teachings straight from 'the bible', but explained through the lens of a man or a denomination and it's doctrinal understanding of scripture.

I do think this, when the Body of Christ comes into unity, and we're told it will, it certainly will be a miracle because left to come into agreement without God's working, the Church will continue to be splintered over what The Word says and how to live it out.

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by william on Tue, 15 Nov 2016 05:20:03 GMT
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There's a lot here to digest Mark (great job!). I want to delve deeper into all that you posted but don't have the time just now. I will take the time to say one thing though, given that we've just experienced an election that doesn't have many parallels in modern history, I think there may be some spiritual parallels that seem appropriate.

We had an election where the establishment has been given a no-confidence vote. Populism prevailed. It remains to be seen whether or not this will make any fundamental changes to the nation, but there may be something we can take from it anyway.

Think about this. The average Christian isn't in lock-step with the established leadership in the organizational system any more than the average citizen is married to Washington.

I've talked with many Christians who, when you get through all of the shallow talk and move into deeper stuff, recognize the problems within organized religion. They are just as alarmed with the direction of the Church what with all of the hype and one-up-manship that they witness on any given Sunday.

If they are serious they KNOW that God is a supernatural miracle-working God and don't believe He's changed his fundamental method of working throughout history (as you pointed out, the doctrine of God's occasional working-supernaturally-to-make-some-point theology is devoid of Biblical merit!)

To be sure, they don't have all of the answers but they know that what we have IS NOT THE ANSWER!

Maybe it will require a sincere rising up of these nobodies (nobodies from the standpoint of the present so-called leaders of modern-day Churches).

If these Christians can get to the point where they begin to throw off the excessive bondage of the pay-to-play systems that their pharaohs have created we might see a real revolution in Christianity. These carnival hawkers are the ones that have managed to entrench, i.e. enrich themselves, at the expense of the sheep. They are the ones who have masqueraded true Christianity.

This could be a revolution that might begin to see just how much God can do supernaturally through yielded individuals.

If the impossible can happen in the political realm, why can't it happen in the Church?

Blessings,
William

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by Marilyn Crow on Tue, 15 Nov 2016 05:40:21 GMT
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Hi William,

There is a move of God I believe in the `streets & lanes,` of our cities. Check out `The Last Reformation,` video on utube by Torben Sondergaard.

Also great rallies in Times Square with Matt Redman, (English singer/songwriter) & speakers preaching salvation through the blood of Jesus. Many people came to know the Lord. I will look out the videos & get back.

1. The Last Reformation - The beginning (2016) Full Movie.
2. Matt Redman - 10,000 Reasons live in Times square.
3. NY CityFest at Radio City Music Hall, Times Square & Central Park.

regards, Marilyn.

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by Gary on Thu, 24 Nov 2016 15:00:09 GMT
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Mark,

Enjoyed what you wrote in the post.

Quote: Pennington said: Consider another example, the gift of healing. In the New Testament when someone with the New Testament gift of healing used his gifts, the results were complete, immediate, permanent, undeniable, every kind of sickness, every kind of illness. The purported healings of todayâ€™s faith healers are the antithesis of those biblical miracles. They are incomplete. They are temporary, at best. And they are unverifiable.

Mark wrote: The facts are that is simply not true. â€œcomplete, immediate, permanent, undeniable, every kind of sickness, every kind of illness.â€• That was not true even in the bible. Dr. Pennington should simply know better. (and probably does)

While reading this part concerning Tom Pennington's comment I was thinking about what he said, concerning modern day healings being "unverifiable".

The truth is we have no way of verifying what took place in the New Testament. Everything is a matter of "faith", we understand what took place and "believe" it actually happened from the words on a page.

Can you imagine something happened thousands of years ago and we believe every word of it.

Lepers cleansed, blind eyes open, the mute could speak, walking on water, the list goes on, etc. etc., It's through faith that we believe these things actually took place. Even if they had some medical statement stating it happened, we would have to believe the statement by faith as well.

Pennington's argument does not hold water.

Jesus made the statement in the parable of the sower that;

Quote:20 But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it,

As believers who hear the Word, we must "accept it", in order to bear fruit. On the contrary concerning what Pennington wrote, God is God and healing His people is found throughout the entire Bible. God is always the same: yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

The second problem is that "traditionalists who follow a weekly ritual" are unable to rightly divide the Word of God because of their "tradition".

Jesus said:
Mark 7:9
He said to them, â€œAll too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.

Mark 7:13
making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do.â€•

When a person can look at the Word of God and explain it away because of their traditions, the Word has no effect.

We serve a mighty God.

Gary

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??

Posted by Mark L on Sun, 15 Jul 2018 19:37:50 GMT
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I was reading recently on the Internets and ran across a post by John Macarthur waxing eloquent on his favourite subject. The subject interests me so I gave it a quick read. I didn't bookmark it so I can't give the site. My first thought was he must have been reading our notes here on the subject but then (sadly) reason took over and I realized many others have probably talked on this subject. Ah well fame as they say is fleeting. Please note I'm relying on memory here and not quoting.

Anyway he said two things I want to give some of my thoughts on.

1/ He acknowledged that God acted supernaturally throughout the bible and not just mainly in 3 different periods. But then qualified it by saying miracles were a â€œsub-categoryâ€• (his words) with different criteria. Or in other words yes God acts supernaturally but miracles are different.

My response to that is they are simply making artificial distinctions again. Miracles and the supernatural are just what God does every day.

2/ When Jesus or the apostles did a miracle the results were complete, immediate, permanent, undeniable. Again going by memory.

This was spoken to in above posts but I had some more thoughts I wanted to add.

So I guess the question here is . . . were Jesus (and by extension the apostles) miracles and healings complete, immediate, permanent, undeniable?

So several responses here.

First there is no evidence in the NT I can think of that shows healings or miracles in the NT were permanent or not. I think they probably were but there is much teaching in the bible on how we are to live so evil and sickness doesn't come upon us. Or that we keep the healings and answers to prayer we have. One eg here would be John 5/14. So unless we can come up with some evidence from the NT permanent (pro or con) is going to get tossed out.

Well how about complete and immediate! Some thoughts!

Well most of Jesus recorded miracles were complete and immediate for several reasons.

One is he had an abundance of spiritual gifts operating. I think it was the 40 day fast at the start of his ministry after his water and HS baptism that brought them into his life. There is absolutely no evidence that he did miracles etc prior to that and no one credible (charismatic or not) believes he did.

Another reason is there were times in his ministry that the anointing wasn't there. In that case he just used his faith. Mark 8/22-25
Exactly the same thing happened to both Elijah and Elisha when they raised the boys from the dead. No anointing and had to use their faith. Unfortunately Elisha didn't learn from that as he died from being sick.

I think aside from the gifts and anointing the reason he was so successful in prayer healing and miracles was because he had 30 yrs of preparation. It says in no uncertain terms in Heb. 4/15 and 5/8 that he had to learn!!! How to overcome sin and trial how to use his faith how to overcome the devil etc. He did not come out of the womb with all this knowledge.

He started with the same measure of faith we all have and went on from there. I'm not going to bog down with detail here but one can see in the NT mistakes Jesus made at the start of his ministry that he was able to he avoid later on.

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by Mark L on Sun, 15 Jul 2018 20:00:02 GMT
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Some more notes on the same subject. That being that Jesus had some kind of divine power to do miracles. Divine power as in something resident in himself as he was God in the flesh. Special miracle working power because of his divine nature.
I would be very surprised if MacArthur Pennington et al believed this as for the most part they are good theologians and orthodox in their theology. There are people that believe it though.

The point here is . . . did Jesus do miracles because he was God/divine and had access to power no else had?

The main biblical response to that is to point to the Kenosis. Most of us here would have a good understanding of that but for completeness sake . . .

The Kenosis of course is Christs self-empting. Phil. 2/6. KJV â€œmade himself of no reputationâ€• Greek is â€œemptied himselfâ€•

Jesus as God with all his power glory attributes wisdom authority etc. Everything you would expect God to have and be. He left it all behind. He temporarily laid aside the use of them. Emptied himself when he took on a human body. When he entered the womb and took on a human body there was nothing divine about him except his divine nature. Which was impossible to leave behind as that was who he is.

He was as human as us with all the human frailties we all have. The need to eat breathe

procreate laugh cry have feelings. As a first born baby I'm sure there was all the usual comments when diapers were changed. As a toddler learning from mun and dad what the word â€œnoâ€• meant.

In short there was no difference between him and us except that divine nature and being born without the taint of original sin.

The point here is â€œhe had to learnâ€• How to walk how to eat how to work what spiritual things were all about. In short he had learn how to live a life just like we do.
He had to learn how to use his faith. He didn't come out of the womb with a strong faith he got it same way we do. Starting with a measure of faith.

He lived a complete normal ordinary human life with no access to anything special. No special powers or abilities. Totally human in every way. In his ministry he ministered with exactly the same power and abilities we have. Faith in his heart and baptized in the HS.

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by Mark L on Sun, 15 Jul 2018 20:23:04 GMT
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I'm on roll here so a few more thoughts. Contrary to everything I have just said there were times when Jesus divine nature actually manifested itself. Jesus had two natures divine and human. He was the only one like him.

Two egs.

1/ Matt. 5/21-22 The sermon on the mount. He pointed to the scriptures then said now here is what I have to say. No prophet or apostle would do that.

2/ Mark 1/41 Obviously this just my opinion but having said that it is my opinion that what is happening here is more than the anointing or a gift or faith in Jesus heart. I think this was the Godhead (Father Son and HS) That one divine essence with three separate personalities reaching out through the visible manifestation of itself to the man. God moved with compassion to a hurting human. Probably couldn't help himself. I think this is one of the more precious verses in the bible.

The reason I'm including this in this discussion is because the visible manifestation of the Godhead we call Jesus had no power in himself to heal the man. He had left all that behind. It had to be the HS doing it. Jesus had no special power to heal or do anything else supernatural. He had faith and gifts. Obviously this is a subjective opinion but as I said my opinion is it was the the

Godhead reaching out through the visible manifestation of itself.

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by william on Tue, 17 Jul 2018 03:12:57 GMT
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Yeah, you're on a roll; keep it up!

I heard once Jack Deere describing his life as a Dallas Theology Professor and how he used the major-epoch theory to destroy those who were tempted into believing in modern-day miracles. He admits that he was steeped in pride and thought he had an answer for everything. Then, like brother Freeman described it, he lowered his spectacles, and begin to actually look at the scripture, and saw that there was no such doctrine to be found. That experience took Mr. Deere down the road less traveled!

Blessings,
William

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by james on Tue, 17 Jul 2018 19:38:02 GMT
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william wrote on Mon, 16 July 2018 22:12 Then, he lowered his spectacles

Ahhh yeah! Those glasses, made to improve sight, yet often distorting what we see.(we usually only 'see' what we want to see) Remember John Conlee and the song, Rose Colored Glasses? "... Show only the beauty, cause they hide all the truth."

Someone once said that "Everyone sees the world through their own lens..." Not to mention almost every denomination has scripture to back up their beliefs.

Some say that we need The Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us into the truth (and that's Biblical); yet most all believers say they have The Holy Spirit; so what do we do with that? We divide ourselves into camps, the speak in tongues camp vs the not speak in tongues camp. The miracles are for today camp vs the camp that believes they ceased with the apostles. And all believe with all their heart that they're right and are rightly dividing the word of truth at the direction of The Holy Spirit.

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by william on Tue, 22 Sep 2020 05:03:39 GMT
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I wanted to bump this back to the top. It's important!

Blessings,

William

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by Mark L on Wed, 03 Apr 2024 17:42:01 GMT
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I had a few more thoughts on this I thought I would post.

Back when I was a truck driving man I used to listen to a lot of christian radio. There was a show out of Chicago that used a panel format of several well known ministers. Some of it quite good. I remember the one minister commenting about hearing God speak. He didn't believe God did it and it was obvious he found it rather distasteful.

I think a lot of those opposed to the charismatic see it as something rather low class. Especially speaking in tongues. The roots of the Pentecostal/charismatic movement at least in the last century or so really did come out of "lower" classes and often through colored people. The newspapers reporting on it at the time deliberately made it out to be crazy emotionally moved people rolling around on the floor making strange noises. Some of which was probably true.

The upper classes, upperly mobile, formally educated and those that aspire to be upper really saw it as something beneath them and really distasteful. I think that attitude persists in some quarters even to today. Even in Jesus day it was mostly the upper class and religious leaders that rejected him.

My response to that is:
1. It is primarily the poor that hear the gospel. Matt. 11/5
2. We are a peculiar people 1Peter 2/9
3. Its those who hunger that are filled Matt. 6/5

When the charismatic movement started it really leveled the playing field. It just swept right through all demographic racial monetary and age classes. Churches colleges seminaries. Even the Roman Catholics weren't immune.

That distasteful attitude still persists. Some of course is demonic. One well known minister I heard could hardly get the words "speaking in tongues" out of his mouth. I heard another on on Youtube recently telling his people "just don't talk to them" Meaning charismatics. Probably because he was afraid they would catch it. Maybe like the flu. :)

I believe there is a lot of Christians and ministers who may be sincere and well meaning and for whatever reason won't go near it. ie: the baptism and speaking in tongues. But from my perspective there is a line you can't cross.

That line is Matt. 12/31-32 The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Paul said he was a blasphemer but was forgiven because he did it in unbelief. It is something expressed by someone knowledgeable (as opposed to educated). Calling the works of the Holy Spirit unclean or possibly beneath them. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit speaking in tongues healing deliverance etc. Or saying speaking in tongues is from the devil like I heard one baptist say.

I don't know where that line is. I do know its not something you can do accidentally. Or stupidly. It is the action of a knowledgeable person who can see it in the word know its true and despise it anyway. And have no issues with expressing it.

I don't know where that line is. Its a sin that has no forgiveness so you simply don't enter into the kingdom.

It's not something one does accidentally. Or makes a stupid remark. I think if a christian said something stupidly or in anger and is concerned about it then they haven't crossed that line. If someone is concerned about someone making statements like that and is concerned and worried then the fact one is praying and interceding is (to my mind) assurance they haven't crossed that line. There is a great deal of mercy, loving kindness and long suffering with God. The fact one is concerned for yourself or someone else shows you/they are still on the right side of that line.

Subject: Re: Strange Fire ??
Posted by Mark L on Sun, 07 Apr 2024 17:15:06 GMT
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I wasn't sure whether to post this or not. But in the interest of completeness and because I'm speaking almost entirely to a very mature group who sat under a deep word I'll include it.

I think that "sometimes" the reason a person falls away from the faith (for whatever reason) is because they blasphemed the Holy Spirit and God simply let them go.

There is no reason why Jesus would have said this and the Holy Spirit included it in the NT if it had no bearing in the lives of Christians.