

**IS IT  
CONFUSION  
OR IS IT  
THE  
HOLY SPIRIT?**



**A Strawberry Mountain View**  
"Unique - Challenging - Controversial!"



**"Berry Good News!"**  
by:  
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## Is it confusion or is it the Holy Spirit?

Your answer to the above question will undoubtedly depend upon your perspective. The material in this folder **is not meant** to be a put down of ether charismatic Christians or charismatic churches. What I desire to share relates to **some of the confusion** that I observe in charismatic circles. Please know that I share this in Christian love, not with any malice. However, it is my desire to share **some concerns** that I have. Though I am not overly fond of labels, yet I realize that some are necessary. I am open to the sovereign gifting of the Holy Spirit. Whether or not the label 'charismatic' is used is secondary. I prefer to think of myself simply as a **Christian**.

I am a Christian who believes that doctrine is foundational. Though I accept what is commonly referred to as charismatic, I *do not* identify myself with the modern Charismatic Movement for a number of reasons. I view myself simply as a believer [follower/disciple] of the Lord Jesus Christ. I've been part of the Body of Christ since I opened my heart and life to Christ while still in my teen years. I believe and accept the Bible as the divinely and uniquely inspired written Word of God. I also believe in and accept the Gospel, i.e., *that Christ died for my sin, was buried, rose bodily from the grave, ascended back to the Father in heaven and will one day come again to receive His spiritual Body, the believing Church, unto Himself for eternity.* (1 Cor. 15:1-5; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). I am a strong advocate and supporter of local church. Christ alone is **the head** of what we usually refer to as the Church, both local and universal. See - Col. 1:18.

Since receiving Christ I've been associated

with both charismatic and non-charismatic assemblies. **Contrary to what some might accuse me, I am not anti-charismatic.** I have experienced a number of gifts that the non-charismatic evangelical/fundamentalist Christians usually believe are no longer operating in the Body of Christ. I have a devotional prayer language and am a strong advocate of divine healing. I have a special affinity to the New Testament concept where there is **freedom** in allowing the Holy Spirit to move by sovereignly bestowing **a gift-mix** upon companies of Christians open to receiving God's gifting. See - 1 Cor. 14.

As a believer and a servant of God **I am leery of some of the confusion, disorder and hypocrisy that I see existing in some Charismatic groups.** What I have often observed taking place and attributed to the move of God I've come to the conclusion is little more than the result of **hype** generated by preachers and worship teams as they work-up congregations, often to near frenzy and then declaring, **"Wow, did we ever have church today!" or "The Holy Ghost moved mightily in our midst,"** and similar declarations. I am not opposed to enthusiasm nor do I take the position that emotions must be held in check provided these are the result of the move of the Holy Spirit, not worked-up hype.

You may also share some of my concerns regarding the disorder, confusion and false teachings that **appear to be increasing** in some charismatic circles. Let me share some of my concerns with you.

♦ **I am concerned with what is purported to be prophecy and 'words from the Lord'** when it is pretty obvious that what has been shared **is not** from God. It concerns me to see sincere, well-meaning Christians intently listening to and often gullibly accepting that which is

purported to be prophecy, 'heaven-sent' words, and messages with no one challenging them. There is a gift of prophecy continuing to operate, however all prophecy **must** be in line with Scripture and **must be edifying** the congregation. **All prophecy** and 'words/ messages' purported to be from God **must** be tested.

♦ **I am troubled by "Can you top this" testimonies.** Often we know that what is being said is not really true but is being said simply to impress. It disturbs me that so many Christians appear to be afraid to express concerns when they hear stories that they know are not true but **do not question** for fear of being rebuked. The person questioning is often labeled as **"not being spiritual", "not being full of the Holy Spirit" or worse yet, "not really saved!"**

♦ **I am repelled by the theatrics that seem to be necessary at every meeting.** *Why are Worship Team members required to always 'follow the format?'* Don't get me wrong, I personally like the concept of worship teams. Yet, I know that many worship teams **must perform** and must follow the format in such a structured way that gives little room for the Holy Spirit to operate. It often appears that the Spirit dare not move outside of the established format. What purports to be the move of the Holy Spirit is often orchestrated by the leaders.

♦ **Why do some preachers 'push' people down when praying for them and then 'claim' that the Holy Spirit did it?** If the Holy Spirit wants to give a believer 'rest' the Spirit does not need help from the one praying. The Spirit is capable of moving upon people. I believe that God periodically enables some to **'rest in the Spirit.'** On occasion I have rested in Him. However, God is not a violent God. God does not **'slay'** people with the help of the preacher's pushing, shoving and/or blowing on them. This experience **must not** be reduced to

showmanship theatrics.

◆ I reject what is said to be speaking in tongues that is nothing more than gibberish, babble and faked. There is a legitimate gift of speaking in tongues that **must always** be interpreted when believers assemble together. There is also devotional 'praying and/or singing in the Spirit' which is between the individual and God. It is for the ears of God solely. I reject that which is often passed off as tongues but is not.

◆ I am troubled by those who say that they are Spirit-filled yet continue to live lives that are subchristian. I believe that believers are to be filled with/by the Holy Spirit. However, when believers are truly Spirit-filled their lives will be **Christlike**. I did not say they will be perfect in the sense of never falling short, yet **they will know** when they fall short and will seek to be continually being filled with the Spirit. Spirit-filled believers **do not** spread rumors, vicious gossip, or backbite. They endeavor to **"keep in step with the Spirit"** in their daily walk manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. **See - Galatians 5:22-25.**

◆ Why do some Christians lift up their hands, clap, etc. without understanding why? There is a place for lifting up one's hands, clapping, shouting, dancing, etc. when it is unto the Lord, not because others are doing it or because it is expected if one is to be considered 'spiritual.'

◆ I am concerned by so-called pastoral authority. Some pastors expect, yea demand that their congregations obey them on nearly every matter. To question and/ or disagree with these pastors often brings rebuke, discipline or may even lead to excommunication from membership. This is all done in the name of an unscriptural teaching known as '**pastoral**

**authority!**' Rather than taking the New Testament position of **servanthood**, some of these pastors become '**little popes**', dictators and exert complete rule and power in '**their church.**' *Whatever happened to servant ministry? Why is the priesthood of all believers forsaken in some of these circles?*

I am convinced that heresy is infiltrating many charismatic churches. So-called '**faith**' and '**word**' movements have **infiltrated** and are **growing** among charismatics. These groups act as if God were their puppet. I am troubled by the so-called '**prosperity**' teaching which is little more than gross American materialism. Yes, God does supply the needs of believers, **but not the greed.** God is sovereign and not 'bullied' into doing what we demand. God is faithful to believers. **Some charismatics have veered away from biblical moorings.** There are many sincere, well-meaning followers of Christ. Yet, some are being deceived and deluded by **charlatans.** Much, *not all*, of what is declared to be '**signs, wonders and miracles**' is counterfeit. Christians must be careful. I believe that there is a need for a new move of the Spirit of God in all segments of the Body of Christ.

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