



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Various Scripture Passages

A Review of *The Charismatic Chaos*

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we give Thee thanks again for the privilege of the study of the Scriptures. We thank Thee for those who have faithfully studied them in the past, and who are studying them today and who are teachers of the word of God teaching us. And we thank Thee for the fruitfulness of the ministry of those who have believed in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for the gifts that Thou hast given to the church.

And we pray, Lord, Thy blessing upon the ministry of those who have been gifted by Thee through the Holy Spirit to bring us to a deeper knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for him. We pray that our obedience and submission to him may grow and increase. And may Thy name be honored and glorified through us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] I must confess that the subject for this evening is something that is perhaps as much for me as it is for you because one of the reasons that I wanted to take a look at John MacArthur's *Charismatic Chaos* is that I had read the first book that he wrote of which this is a revision and an enlargement. But it's been a long time ago and so I

wanted to devote some time to it myself. Perhaps it's a little selfish to expose you to what I felt my needs were.

But the subject this evening is John MacArthur's *Charismatic Chaos*. And the *Charismatic Chaos* is the title of the book that past MacArthur has written not too long ago as a revision and enlargement of a previous work. I'd like to read three verses from 2 Corinthians chapter 12. Not for the purpose of expounding them this evening, but they do touch upon one or two points that will be brought up. And 2 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 11 through verse 13 are the verses. And I'd like to read them now. "I have become a fool in boasting. You have compelled me for I ought to have been commended by you. For if nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles though I am nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance in signs, wonders and mighty deeds. For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches except that I myself was not burdensome to you. Forgive me this wrong."

The thing, of course, that I'm interested in is the statement, "Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance in signs, and wonders and mighty deeds." Now, I'd like to make in an opening introduction two points.

Many Pentecostals and Charismatics are believing Christians. And many of them, I must add, are probably more obedient and submissive Christians than some of us. And so I'd like to make that point at the beginning. But I'd also like to add that almost always they are those believers who hold to an Arminian theology. So we're not trying to attack the Pentecostals and the Charismatics as if they are not Christians, although there are many of them that are obviously not Christians and I'm sure you will see that, at least I hope you will, as we finish up this evening.

One other thing I'd like to say right at the beginning is this, that very frequently when we stand up in the pulpit and we criticize others who make profession of Christianity, there are always those who like to say to us, "That's not a very good attitude to have to other Christians." And consequently the idea of criticism itself is something that

is thought to be a departure from the word of God. We are angry. We are not being the kinds of Christians that we ought to be when we criticize others. And I'd like to say I do not hold to that. I believe that it is valid for us to criticize providing we criticize in the right spirit, and providing we criticize with the Bible before us and seek to make our point. I even think it's perfectly all right for us to criticize even when we are wrong if we do it in the right spirit and we're willing to be corrected. So we are not suggesting in any way that criticism is not valid. It is valid and we think that the whole of the Bible supports that point. If you listen to the prophets, the apostles, or our Lord himself, it's very evident that criticism is not only valid but useful and desirable in many ways.

John MacArthur begins this book with introduction in which he makes reference to that point. He says, "In the year since the book's initial release I've gained a new understanding of why there is so much confusion about the charismatic gifts in the church. A power intimidation factor works against those who want to deal with the issues biblically. To critic Charismatic doctrine or practices commonly viewed as inherently divisive or unkind. Charismatic extremists can promote almost any idea they fancy on Christian television and radio, but those who attempt to examine such teaching critically in the light of Scripture are muzzled. I speak from firsthand knowledge. Our radio broadcast Grace to You is heard daily on a network of more than two hundred stations. Nearly all of them share our doctrinal perspective and commitment to the absolutely sufficiency of Scripture. Yet, most of them balk at broadcasting series that deal with 1 Corinthians 12 through 14, Acts 2, Romans 12 or other passages that confront Charismatic imbalances. Many espouse ministry philosophies explicitly prohibiting any teaching that might challenge the beliefs of their Charismatic constituents. One network executive wrote this to me, 'Please reconsider your policy of dealing with the Charismatic movement and other controversial topics on your radio broadcasts. Though we share your convictions on these issues many of our listeners do not. These people are dear brothers and sisters and Christ and we do not feel it is helpful to the cause of Christ to attack what

they believe. We are committed to keeping peace among brethren and unity in the body of Christ. Thank you for being sensitive to these concerns."

MacArthur says that kind of thinking sacrifices truth for the sake of superficial peace. Down on a footnote on that same page he makes reference to Paul Crouch who is the leading figure the Trinity Broadcasting Network. Paul Crouch is scarcely more charitable. He's talking about their criticism of us. Of his critics Crouch has said, "I think they're damned, and on their way to hell and I don't think there's any redemption for them. I say to hell with you. Get out of my life. Get out of the way. And I want to say to all you scribes, Pharisees, heresy hunters, all of you that are going around picking little bits of doctrinal error out of everyone's eyes, get out of God's way. Quit blocking God's bridges or God's going to shoot you if I don't. Get out of my life. I don't want to even talk to you or hear you. I don't want to see your ugly face. Get out of my face in Jesus' name." [Laughter] That was a Praise the Lord broadcast on the Trinity Broadcasting Network April 2nd, 1991. So one, I think, can see that as far as criticism goes they've got us beat, at least in the manner of the criticism. [Laughter]

Now, some awfully bizarre claims you know are made by the Charismatics. For example, here's one item. I don't mention a couple here that -- well, I think I will mention them. [Laughter] He was criticized in the first edition for a couple of things that he put in his book because it was said that the design of them was really to mock those with whom he disagreed. This is what he put in the first addition.

"Recently on television I saw a lady tell about how her flat tire was healed. Not long ago I got a letter from somebody in Florida who had heard a wonderful testimony by a woman who had taught her dog to praise the Lord in an unknown bark. [Laughter] Granted both of these examples are bizarre. Perhaps it's unfair to characterize the Charismatic movement with illustrations like these. I wish that were true. I wish these two examples were rare but they are not. And the reason they are not is that in the Charismatic ranks no experience has to stand the test of Scripture.

Now, since that time in this addition he has a couple of other things that he has put in. Item, Jan Crouch here with her husband Paul leads Trinity Broadcasting Network. Told a live audience in Costa Rica that "God answered the prayers of two little twelve year old girls to raise our pet chicken from the dead". Mrs. Crouch has recounted that same tale on TBN broadcasts that air coast to coast and around the world.

One more item. *Charisma Magazine*, the movement's flagship periodical, runs full page ads and two page spreads for Raffa Ranch a Charismatic healing center that treats cancer patients with "subliminal Scripture tapes". "You don't have to die" is a title of a videotape you can buy from Raffa for \$29.95. A blurb describes the ranch as a place where cancer patients can "come and be healed". So you can see some of the bizarre claims that are made by the Charismatics.

Now, I'd like to make a distinction that we need to make in order to be accurate. Pentecostals and Charismatics should be distinguished. Now it is very true, of course, that Charismatics frequently are in Pentecostal churches. And it's generally true that people in Pentecostal churches are Charismatic in their belief in speaking in tongues. But the two movements should be distinguished.

The one, Pentecostalism, is traceable to Charles Fox Purim and the Topeka, Kansas outbreak in speaking in tongues in 1901. And then in 1906 shortly afterwards W.J. Symore, a Black Holiness preacher in the Azusa Street Methodist Church in Los Angeles, a man who was influenced by Charles Fox Purim, in that particular church there also broke out the same speaking in tongues. The other group, the Charismatics, are generally traceable to 1950 and the Episcopal Dennis Bennett of Van Nuys, California. So the earlier movement, the Pentecostal movement generally traceable to 1901 in Topeka and 1906 in LA. And the other traceable to Dennis Bennett's speaking in tongues and acceptance of Charismatic principles in 1950.

The Charismatic movement, the 1950 movement that began then, is a movement that has penetrated many of the mainline churches as you probably know. In

Presbyterian churches, and Methodist churches, and Episcopalian churches and in other kinds of churches there are many Charismatics. They're not Pentecostals but they are Charismatics. So we want to make that distinction. As a matter of fact, the Pentecostals like to make that distinction because the Charismatics, to the old line Pentecostals, are radicals and they like to be distinguished from them.

I attended a scholarly meeting in Chicago ten years ago in which one of the Pentecostal men spoke to the gathering of evangelical professor and teachers at our theology schools. And that was the point of his message to us, that we needed to make that distinction that they who were the old line Pentecostal didn't like to be identified with the Charismatics because they are characterized by extremism.

Both of the groups, however, generally believe in the baptism of the spirit at an experience after salvation, and it is seen to be genuine in speaking in tongues. In other words, they do agree on the fact that there is an experience that we ought to have after we've been converted by believing in Christ. And the evidence that experience is real is when we are given by God the gift of speaking in tongues. In that sense they are the same.

What is the tendency of the Charismatic movement particularly? Well, someone likes frequently says, I think generally the average Christian will say something like this, "But they are very sincere believing people. One, I think, is impressed often by the sincerity because in many cases they're not very long in the Christian faith. There's a lot of immaturity in the movement. And I'm sure you know in any Christian circle a new Christian -- one of the things that does impress you about them is the sincerity that they manifest.

John Stott, however, spoke of them as being keen but clueless. In other words, sincerity is not itself an evidence of maturity in the faith. So the sincerity? Well, perhaps. But in many cases even that is not true.

A second thing characteristic of the Charismatics is -- and this is extremely important -- is that experience is a valid test of truth. In other words, the Bible is not our only test of truth but experience is a valid test of truth. To give you some illustrations of this from Dr. MacArthur's book I want to read a couple of statements. A woman wrote to me seething, "You resort to Greek translation and fancy words to explain away what the Holy Spirit is doing in the church today. Let me give you a piece of advice that might just save you from the wrath of Almighty God. Put away your Bible and your books and stop studying. Ask the Holy Ghost to come upon you and give you the gift of tongues. You have no right to question something you have never experienced."

On another page on page twenty-five he describes an individual who claims that he had a vision, and out-of-body experience it was, in which he went to heaven. In the midst of it he writes, "While Christianity abounds with accounts of glimpses of the other dimension from those who've had out-of-body experiences, Dr. Kilet's is unlike these. Obviously, he was caught up in the third heaven even as Paul was. The difference being Paul was not allowed to utter the things he saw and heard while Dr. Kilet almost two thousand years later was commanded to do so." [Laughter] Very interesting isn't it that Paul cannot tell what he has seen that but Dr. Kilet can?

There are a couple of pages of what he found up there. He has spoken around the country to standing room only audiences. He spoke about the experience that he had. And well, Dr. MacArthur goes on to talk about that to give you an idea of what one finds often in the Charismatic movement.

Gordon Fee who is a professor at Regent College, incidentally that's the college that Bruce Waltke is also a professor in now again. And Gordon Fee is a Pentecostal and Dr. Fee is a very learned man and has written a very well received book on 1 Corinthians in one of the series that almost all Evangelicals read. But speaking of his own people he said that Pentecostal tends to exegete his experience. In other words, not to exegete the

word of God to study the word of God and tell us what the word of God says, but to exegete his experience which of course is going about it just the wrong way.

Well, if the two tendencies of the movement includes sincerity and experience as a valid test of truth, is there anything else? Well, there is something else and it is simply this, the insufficiency of Holy Scripture as a guide for Christian living. I think that's very important and it's something, of course, that is expressed very specifically by them. But I don't know whether I can turn up one of these expressions immediately in the book. But it's something that over and over again is made. A claim that is made -- that is that Scripture itself is not sufficient for us, that we cannot get along with Scripture itself.

One of the places in which it is expressed -- here is a place. I do see it now. The reason so many Charismatics seem drawn to supposed visions of Jesus and tours of heaven is that they make the same error advanced by Henry Frost in his book *Miraculous Healing*. Now, this is what Mr. Frost wrote. "It may confidently be anticipated, as the present apostasy increases, that Christ will manifest his deity and lordship in increasing measure through miracles, signs; including healings.

Now, notice these words from Mr. Frost. "We are not to say therefore that the word is sufficient." In other words, we need more than the word of God. But the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy chapter 3 states specifically that the word is sufficient. It's sufficient in its provision to enable us to walk in a way that will be well pleasing to the Lord. Even in the Old Testament in Psalm 19 the same thing is stated. So to sum up then the tendencies of the Charismatic movement. Sincerity? Perhaps. Experience as a valid test of truth? Yes. The insufficiency therefore of Scripture as a guide for us in all of our Christian living.

Now, I'd like to just make a brief survey of the book because it'd be good for you to understand precisely what it covers. And then I'd like to touch on three aspects of it in the time that we have. What Dr. MacArthur does it to begin with a chapter of his experience, a valid test of truth, and deals with that. He then deals with, "Does God still give revelation?" Revelation being the unfolding of new truth by dreams, visions, or

whatever. He discusses the Kansas city prophets who'd been rather prominent in Charismatic circles recently because of experiences that are broken out there. Under a chapter entitled Prophets: Fanatics or Heretics? And then ask the question: how should we interpret the Bible and deals with some errors that are manifest in the Charismatic movement. He asks the question: does God do miracles today? What are miracles? What about modern miracles? What happened to the age of the miracles when God has used miracles? And why and so forth.

And then he turns to the third wave, and we'll talk about that in a moment and define it, and asked the question: Where is the "third wave"? That's in quotes, "third wave", a term that's given to a movement. And where is it going? Talks about signs and wonders. How do spiritual gifts operate? What was happening in the early church, a close look at the important chapters where speaking in tongues experience is mentioned. Asked the question: does God still heal? Is the gift of tongues for today? And we'll talk about that.

And as you might expect, near the end of the book discusses the question what is true spirituality. Is it the kind of life that is seen on the TV screen? So the Charismatic types of programs that appear? And as a matter of fact that Charismatic Paul Crouch network, does God promise health and wealth. And with an epilogue: how should we respond to the Charismatic movement.

Now, I'd like to turn to the three things that I'd like to discuss for a moment, and first of all, the third wave and its weakness. Peter Wagner who was a Professor of Missions at Fuller Seminary has given the movement of John Wimber and the Vineyard Church the name the "third wave". Now what he means by the third wave is this, the first wave is the Pentecostal movement that I referred to a bit earlier. In 1901 and 1906 when the first speaking in tongues broke out in Topeka, Kansas and then in Los Angeles that was the first wave of the Pentecostal kind of experience. And then the second is the Charismatic movement which began in 1950, as I mentioned probably to be located in

Dennis Bennet's conversion -- Episcopalian minister -- to the Charismatic outbreak of gifts. And the third wave is the movement in John Wimber's Vineyard Fellowship Church in Anaheim, California. This has had a wide influence and is having a wide influence today. And probably as some of you, even professors of Dallas Theology Seminary become involved in it. Jackie D. or a former student of mine at the Seminary, and then on the faculty is today recognized as the theologian of the movement. I cannot help but smile. I'm sorry. Because he went through the seminary he was not interested in theology though he majored in the Old Testament. And as far as new, at the time had little interest in theology. But he's the theology of the third wave at the present time, the Vineyard Fellowship Movement, called the signs and wonders movement.

The stance of the third wave is very similar to Pentecostalism. Miracles, visions are characteristic of the movement. But the thing that's important about it is that they are regarded as essential supplements to the gospel. In other words, unbelievers must experience these miracles, and visions, signs and wonders in order to be brought to a full faith in the gospel of Christ. So characteristic of this movement is that when we preach the gospel we are not really preaching the gospel fully unless it is accompanied by the kinds of miracles, and signs and wonders that the Pentecostals or the Charismatics primarily have been claiming.

So if I stand up behind the pulpit here and tell you an exposition of the word of God that Christ died for sinners, that you're a sinner and he's offered an atoning sacrifice for sinners. And that you may come and believe in him and receive eternal life. That's incomplete preaching of the gospel. What I also should do is to raise someone from the dead or cause someone to begin to speak in tongues, or some other form of miraculous activity should accompany my preaching. If it accompanies my preaching then of course those who are converted will have a genuine conversion. If, however, they simply believe the message that I give that's not genuine. They should experience some of the signs and wonders that are expected.

It's amazing but nevertheless that is their stance. The shortcomings of that movement I'm sure are probably obvious to you in Believers Chapel. At least I hope so. The miracles that are claimed are very strange miracles because practically all of them are unproved miracles and improvable miracles. They are not fresh revelations from heaven as claimed. And in the midst of them, as we have been talking, they have denied the sufficiency of the word of God. And they are accompanied by very clear unsound theology.

I'd like to give you a couple of examples from MacArthur's book. There are many in this book and I found it very interesting to go through some of the new ones that particularly are mentioned. This is a reference to Jack Deere who is John Wimber's assistant in the Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Anaheim, at least at the time this book was written. A former professor of Old Testament in a leading Evangelical Theological Seminary. That's Dallas Seminary. At the 1990 Spiritual Warfare Conference in Sydney, however he distributed his printed notes that included a second titled, "A demonic doctrine illustrated, which said, "In order to fulfill God's highest purposes for our lives we must be able to hear his voice more than the written word and the word freshly spoken from heaven." Now, the word freshly spoken from heaven is the sign or wonder.

Satan understands the strategic importance of Christians hearing God's voice so he has launched various attacks against us in this area. Ultimately this doctrine, the sufficiency of Scripture, is demonic even though Christian theologians have been used to perfect it. Now, you can see that what this man is saying is we must have these words of God from heaven, the miracles and signs, otherwise to just preach the Gospel as we do is demonic. This is from a former student of mine and a former professor at Dallas Theological Seminary. [Laughter]

The doctrinal statements and positions of the third wave are very interesting. We don't have time to talk about them in detail, of course. But John Wimber is an individual who claims that he began his Christianity with a Scofield Bible in his hand a conversion as

a dispensationalist. And as far as I know he still makes that claim. He's not interested in that kind of thing it seems any longer. "He's comfortable," John MacArthur says, "with Roman Catholic dogma and is as comfortable with that as he is with evangelicalism. As we noted Wimber defends the Catholic claims of healing through relics. He advocates the reunification of Protestants and Catholics. A former associate says, 'During a Vineyard Pastor's Conference he went so far as to apologize to the Catholic church on behalf of all Protestants.' In his seminar on church planning Wimber stated, (this was very interesting to me) 'The Pope, by the way, is very responsive to the Charismatic movement and is himself a born again evangelical. If you've read any of his texts concerning salvation you'd know he is preaching the Gospel as clear as anybody is preaching it in the world today.'" That's very interesting.

Now, here's a statement about the Pope who by Roman Catholic doctrine demands that an individual, in order to enter into eternal life according to the historic teaching of the Catholic church, must go through the sacramental system. He must be baptized in order that original sin may be removed and all of the other of the sacraments must be practiced in order to have any assurance of the future. And even then he has no assurance because he must enter into purgatory in order that the remaining sins may be burned out of him that he may finally enter into the presence of God.

Now, I would not call that preaching the gospel really clearly. As a matter of fact, I don't know of anyone who is a Christian man that preaches that kind of gospel. It could not be called a clear preaching of the Gospel. So what can we say about the third wave? Well, the third wave as far as I can tell is a very confused wave. And those who follow John Wimber and the signs and wonders movement are certainly following things that are not found in the word of God.

Now, I'd like to say a few things about healing and healers, or the gifts of miracles. Healing is a historical Christian practice. If you will turn to James chapter 5 verse 14 through verse 16. I think it'd be good to read that passage. In James 5: 14

through 16 we know from the teaching of the word of God that there is a such thing as Christian healing. James 5 verse 14 through verse 16 reads this way. I'm ready incidentally from the New King James Version in case you're wondering where I'm getting the word. "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed. The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."

We practice that in Believers Chapel as many of you know from the beginning. That is we do believe that there is such a thing taught in the word of God as Christian healing for healing is divine healing, but it's nevertheless the Christian practice of seeking God's healing power. And when individuals ask the elders of the church to pray over them we have done that, and we also have anointed them with oil. We feel that James' statement in verse 14 through verse 16 is something that is to be followed. And so consequently if you, or anyone in the audience, and anyone in the church desires to have the elders pray for you that you might be healed of sickness they have responded to that. The text has something to say about our responsibilities in the light of it. It's entirely possible, of course, that the reason for our sickness may be the fact that we are not in fellowship with the Lord as we should be. There may be some sin. In fact, he alludes to that in those verses. And so it's a very serious thing. But nevertheless, it's set forth in the word of God and so it's as far as I can historically true and it's true at the moment that there is such a thing as divine healing.

But now the question of whether there is such a thing as divine healers is something else. And as far as I can tell from the word of God there is no such thing as a divine healer. You can see some of the difference in the way that divine healers operate and the way that divine healing is be carried out. Divine healers arrive in the city. They maybe arrive by airplane. They may arrive by car. They may arrive with a coterie of

followers. They may arrive in various other ways, but they arrive and they call the people to them. The word of God, of course, says that person should go to the elders of the local church and ask them to pray for them. They never do that which is set forth in the word of God.

So at any rate there is such a thing as divine healing. And the gift of miracles is specifically set forth in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 10 as being a biblical gift. Charles Fox Purim, the one in whose presence the Pentecostal movement began, said healing was God's will for all believers. Well, the interesting thing about this is that many of the healers have been sick men. In fact, John Wimber is a person who has heart trouble and he's sick quite frequently with it. "Physician heal thyself," someone might say to Mr. Wimber. But many others have had the same experience.

So there is such a thing as a gift or healing or the gift of miracles. The sad thing about it is that it is not carried out according to Scripture. John MacArthur has an interesting illustration which I knew about because I used to go to Grace Theological Seminary. And this man at one time taught on the faculty of Grace Theological Seminary. And I'm talking about Dr. Holberg Freeman. He wrote several books that were used as textbooks in theological seminaries, an introduction to the Old Testament prophets which Moody published twenty years or so ago. And he believed God had healed him of polio. Nevertheless, one of Freeman's legs was so much shorter than the other that he had to wear corrective shoes, and still he walked only with great difficulty. He was a pastor. He began his ministry as a Baptist and wrote some commendable works.

In the mid-sixties he became fascinated with faith healing and moved into the Charismatic movement and then further and further toward the fringe. He started his own church in Indiana known as Faith Assembly. Now, when I used to go to Grace Theological Seminary he was there in the church and well known to the people grace because he had taught on Grace Seminary faculty. The meetings were held in a building that he called "the glory barn". Church services were closed to non-members.

Freeman and the faith assembly congregation utterly disdained medical treatment believing that modern medicine was an extension of ancient witchcraft and black magic. To submit to a doctor's remedies, Freeman believed, was to expose himself to demonic influence. And so expectant mothers were told that they must give birth at home with the help of a church sponsored midwife rather than go to a hospital delivery room. Obedience to that teaching cost a number of mothers and infants their lives. In fact, over the years at least ninety church members died as a result of ailments that would have been easily treatable. No one really knows what the actual death toll would be if nationwide figures could be compiled on all those who followed Freeman's teaching.

After a fifteen-year-old girl, whose parents belonged to Faith Assembly, died of a medically treatable malady the parents were convicted of negligent homicide and sentenced to ten years in prison. Freeman himself was charged with aiding and inducing reckless homicide in the case and shortly afterward, December 8, 1984, Freeman died of pneumonia and heart failure complicated by an ulcerated leg. Some man who had the kind of theology taught by Grace Theology Seminary, which was dispensational theology but nevertheless he had become enamored with the claims of the healers and not only lost his own life or at least shortened his life, but shorted the lives of many others.

Mr. MacArthur in his book has a very interesting section in which he contrasts the methods of our Lord in his healing, and the manner of his healing with the methods of the Charismatics and the manner of their healing. I'd just like to make reference to it because it is, I think, a very good treatment of some of the differences. As you know, the healers come to town and they generally operate in a local church, whereas in the case of our Lord, his methods were publicly done. They were done in public. They were not done in a studio, of course, as is characteristic today. If you turn on the Charismatic radio broadcasts you'll find them doing these things in a TV studio. But our Lord's were different.

Mr. MacArthur mentions six noteworthy characteristics of Jesus' healing ministry. First, Jesus healed with a word or a touch. Secondly, he healed instantly. People often say I've been healed and I'm getting better. He says God through our Lord never did progressive healing. Third, Jesus healed totally. And fourth Jesus healed everyone. In other words, it was not just one person but all. Some of the texts make very plain, "All came to him." Further, fifthly, Jesus healed organic disease. He didn't go up and down Palestine healing lower back pain, heart palpitations, headaches and other invincible elements.

I was coming home from Birmingham on Sunday afternoon late and a man came, and sat by me and he spoke to me. And so we began to speak and he saw me reading *Charismatic Chaos*. And finally he said to me, "What authority does that man have to write that book?" I said, "Well, I happen to know this man and he at least is a graduate of a college and theological seminary, and he's ministry the word of God." And we got into quite an interesting conversation. And then I thought it might be interesting to develop it further because it turned out he was a member of a charismatic church in Fort Worth. He lives over near Fort Worth and goes to a church there. So we had an interesting hour's conversation on this. And he proceeded to tell me of the ways in which he had been healed, and there were things just like this, "Lower back pain." In fact, I think that was one of the things that he said he had been healed from. And so it's very characteristic to talk about that kind of healing.

Sixth, our Lord raised the dead. People who taught the gift of healing today and do not spend much time in funeral parlors, funeral processions or cemeteries. The reason is obvious: they don't heal the dead. They do not raise them from the dead. In fact, it's one of the sad things isn't it that these individuals who have this great gift of healing which they advertise so much and from which they derive such vast sums of monies these days through the media, that these individuals you would think that they would be spending most of their time in our hospitals in order to heal the people who are in the

hospitals. That's what our Lord, I'm sure, would be doing. That's where he would be going. And but these individuals -- it's be very difficult to find them in the hospital because they know deep down within their hearts they don't have the power that they talk about and which they claim to have.

The manner of the healing -- well, he goes on to talk about that. The questions that arise are: for example, why then do believers get sick. That's an ancillary question, but of course that's because the sin principle that dwells within us. All of our ailments are ultimately related to the sin principle that dwells within us because ultimately we'll be claimed by that and everyone of us in this auditorium will ultimately be in the funeral parlor if our Lord does not come before then.

And then another question that arises as a result of that, the simply should we go to doctors. Our Lord evidently believed we should go to doctors because he made a statement in Matthew chapter 9 and verse 12 that would seem to indicate that. He said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick." In other words, in the very statement itself we have a suggestion that the person who's sick ought to be looking for a doctor. Matthew chapter 9 verse 12.

Well, I want to go on and say a few words now finally about the gift of speaking in tongues. The question we must ask at the beginning when we talk about the gift of speaking in tongues is, "What is speaking in tongues?" Is speaking in tongues speaking in ecstatic speech? Is it speaking in what we would regard as gibberish? Or is it speaking in known languages? If you're interested in a further exposition of the point you can go in the tape library and look up "Systematic Theology: The Ministry of the Holy Spirit." They devoted a considerable period of time to the gift of speaking in tongues, the gift of miracles and so on. And I don't have to talk about that now except simply to say this, that the gift of speaking in tongues is the gift of speaking in a known language. Not ecstatic speech. It's no real sign for an individual to stand up in a meeting and speak ecstatic speak. As a matter of fact that's a learned activity. You may learn to do that.

Charismatics teach their children that speech right from the beginning so that that comes natural to them. They learn it. They speak it. It's not miracle at all. But if I were to stand up in or meeting on Sunday night and suddenly speak in what apparently is an unknown language and someone in the audience who had just arrived in Believers Chapel from Stockholm should come up and should -- or perhaps when Mr. Pryor stands in a meeting, and visitors are introduced, and this man stood up and he would say, "My name is Sven so and so from Stockholm Sweden." And we welcomed him. And he might say, "I was so happy to hear the individual over there speaking my language." You'd be tremendously shocked. That would really be something because I've never had a single lesson in Swedish. That would be a true sign. If I were to speak in another language that would be a sign. That is what speaking in tongues was. It was designed to indicate that God was at work in the people. On the day of Pentecost and the other cases the same thing was true. So to speak in tongues is not to speak in ecstatic speech. It's not to speak gibberish. It's to speak in human languages that one has not learned.

Now, if I were to get up and say a few things in German that wouldn't be a miracle either. I can say a few things in German. *Wie Gbets?* [Laughter] So that wouldn't be a miracle at all. So what we are talking about is known language. We're not talking about ecstatic speech. We're not talking about the things that you learn.

Incidentally, in the book here Mr. MacArthur has a section in which he gives some of the things that are taught to children in order to begin to get them to speak in tongues. So we're talking about speaking known languages.

Now, secondly a question that arises are these permanent gifts. History and theology both teach us that the gifts -- these gifts that we are talking about, these spectacular gifts are not permanent gifts. I say history does because there are no individuals today who are speaking in known languages but they have never studied. Theology teaches the same thing. I think a careful study of the word of God would indicate that point. That's more difficult to prove. And as a matter of fact, when Acts

chapter 2 is -- the quotation from Joel -- studied it's entirely possible in my opinion that there will be speaking in tongues in the future at the time of our Lord's return, again, as a sign of the activity of the true God.

But in the history of the Christian church generally speaking it has been the opinion of the Christian church that the speaking in tongues was something that characterized the early church but does not characterize later periods of church history. John Chrysostom spoke that categorically to the effect that tongues had ceased by his time. Writing in the 4th Century he described tongues as an obscure practice, admitting that he was not even certain about the characteristics of the gift. "The obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred and by their cessation being such as then used to occur but now no longer take place."

Augustine later on spoke of tongues as a sign that was adapted to the Apostolic age. In the earliest times the Holy Ghost fell upon them that believed and they spake with tongues which they had not learned as the spirit gave them utterance. These were signs adapted to the time for there behooved to be that betokening of the Holy Spirit in all tongues to show that the Gospel of God was to run through all tongues over the whole earth. That thing was done for a betokening and it passed away. In other words, he sees in it an evidence not only of the miraculous but a suggestion of the fact that the Gospel also would go out to the gentiles as well.

So what do we say then about present day tongues? Well, if tongues give health and happiness the market is unlimited. But in Charismatic Churches it's hard to find one focusing on spiritual growth and biblical understanding. Note the peace of mind of some of the tongue speakers. Take, for example, Jimmy Baker. Take, for example, Swaggart. Take, for example, Robert Tilton. If it is true that the Charismatic ministry is designed to give us peace of mind, health and happiness these individuals are not very good illustrations of what they are claiming. Ecstatic speech incidentally is common to false religions. In Africa many of the peoples of that continent speak unknown tongues;

ecstatic speech. The same is true for Mormons who have as one of their doctrinal statements they believe in speaking in tongues.

What about then the ecstatic speech that we see today? Well, it may be satanic. Mr. MacArthur says it surely is in many cases a learned behavior. Or it may be psychologically induced. The point, however, is it's not the biblical speaking in tongues. What is really at stake? Well, in my opinion the Gospel of Christ is at stake because the Charismatics do not have a doctrine of the person of Christ that is biblical. Let me give you one or two of the things -- we don't have time for much -- that demonstrate the fact that their doctrine of the person of Christ is not the doctrine of the word of God.

Jesus Christ is described as "a born again man who defeated Satan." Our Lord a born again man? "Jesus was the first man to ever be borned" -- they don't use the English too well either do they? Teaching too much ecstatic speech ruins your English. [Laughter] "Jesus was the first man to ever be borned from sin to righteousness." You know what he did? The very first thing that this reborn man did? He goes on, "He was reborn in the pit of hell." The kind of doctrine of the person of Christ found among the Charismatics is not the doctrine of the word of God. Our salvation is also just as poorly understood.

On page two seventy-eight of this book we have such statements as this. This is MacArthur writing, "Moreover, Copeland and the Word of Faith teachers move outside the orthodoxy with their teaching that Christ actually died spiritually." He goes on to explain that further. "We sometimes refer to Christ's separation from the Father on the cross as spiritual death. It's error to teach, however, that Christ's spirit ceased to exist. The term "the light was turned off" is used by them, or that the Trinity somehow was broken up. He separated from his God and in that moment he's a mortal man."

These are people who are explaining what they say is the gospel of the Lord God. What's at stake? The gospel is at stake in many cases. One other thing I think is at stake and I close with this, what the Charismatics give us affects the nature of the church. In the Charismatic movement, in the electronic church, the central focus us the focus of

individuals and some of the things that are done in the auditorium or in the room where their broadcast takes place. So will the Charismatic church meetings be simply that kind of meeting? In the New Testament we are told that the early church met and their meetings were characterized by a continuance in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayers. These three things: apostles' doctrine; in other words, the sufficiency of the word of God. In the fellowship of -- I feel certain that the Greek text indicates this precisely -- in the fellowship of the breaking of the bread and prayers. Those three things: the apostles' doctrine, the breaking of bread, prayers, characterized the meetings of the early church. The Charismatic movement, Pentecostal movement as far as I can tell are aberrations from the early church and the things that were taught by the apostle. Well, our time is up let's close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for the word of God. And we thank Thee Lord for the fact that Thou hast shown us in Holy Scripture its sufficiency; sufficiency for our life, for our salvation, for our life to come. We thank Thee for the Gospel found in the word of God. We thank Thee for the way in which through the preaching of the Gospel we have been brought to the knowledge of Thee and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and to the possession of the forgiveness of our sins and a hope for all eternity.

Deliver us Lord from the things that are bipeds that cause us to move away from the central features of the Christian faith, the word of God, the meetings of our fellow believers in which we remember him who loved us and gave himself for us and made it possible for us to have all of the things that are ours in Christ. And Lord inculcate within us by Thy grace submission to the word of God and a desire to truly have communion with Thee moment by moment in all of our hours of life remaining to us. We pray for each individual this meeting. If there are some here who do not know the Lord may they be brought to the knowledge of him. For those of us who do.