



ral Topics :: John MacArthur Responds to Critics Who Believe His Strange Fire Conference Is Divisive, U

John MacArthur Responds to Critics Who Believe His Strange Fire Conference Is Divisive, Unloving - posted by proud

The Rev. John MacArthur, influential author, pastor and seminary president, responded to critics of the three-day Strange Fire conference at his Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, Calif., that many pastors believe is causing dissention among the faithful because he's teaching that the Charismatic movement is leading people astray and dishonors the Holy Spirit.

MacArthur commented that some of his critics have said that he's fixated on the Charismatic movement, a claim he countered by noting that in his 45 years in ministry, this was his first conference he's held on the movement, and believes it has come too late.

"In response to this conference, there have been some attacks, and we've been unable to escape them," MacArthur said to the more than 3,000 attendees at the conference Friday night. "I just want to address those, because I do think that it's important to answer the criticisms that have come."

He first said that he hosted the Strange Fire conference to help the Church, and people who believe the Bible is the word of God and that God has revealed Himself clearly and consistently and without contradiction.

"This is for the true church, so that they can discern; so that they can be protected from error; and so that they can be a source of truth for others outside the church," he said, adding that his book, *Strange Fire: The Danger of Offending the Holy Spirit With Counterfeit Worship*, can withstand the most intense scrutiny, when measured against the word of God in the Bible.

MacArthur also commented that the conference wasn't for nonbelievers within the Charismatic movement, for which there are many, he contends. "I don't expect nonbelievers to have a desire for the truth, a hunger for the truth or to search out the truth. That's not what unbelievers do unless they're being prompted by the Holy Spirit."

According to MacArthur, even before his conference started he was being accused of being unloving. He countered that assertion by saying that the most loving thing anybody could ever do, would be to tell someone the truth, because that's how love acts.

"It is unloving to leave people in darkness and error," he said. "In Acts 20 it says 'to warn you with tears,' knowing that perverse, deceptive men will rise up to lead you astray." He then added that Titus 1:4 outlines the duty of pastors and church elders to point out errors and give biblical arguments against them.

"We have also been accused of being divisive. I would agree with that. Truth by its very nature is divisive. That's why Jesus said, 'I came to bring a sword.' To divide people, to divide families. Truth by its very nature is separated from error. And it is far more important to be divided by truth than united by error."

He continued: "I remember years ago when I wrote the book, *The Gospel According to Jesus*, a leading evangelical preacher took me to lunch and said, 'You have divided the body of Christ.' And I said, may I ask you a question? And he said, 'Yes.' Is what I wrote true? That's the only question I have. Of course, the truth divides."

A third criticism of MacArthur's Strange Fire conference is that some believe the issue is not clear in the Bible, and even some well-known Bible scholars have demonstrated that the scripture is not clear on this issue.

"I would like to say, in response to that, that if the issue is unclear as some are claiming it has only become unclear under the influence of false teachers. It was clear to the apostles. It was clear to the early church fathers. It was clear to the reformers. It was clear to the puritans. It is clear in creeds like the Westminster confession. It has been clear to reformed theologians like BB Warfield. It was clear to Spurgeon. It was clear, in the more modern times, to R.C. Sproul. Has it now become unclear, because of Aimee Semple McPherson, Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker and Kenneth Copeland? That's a ludicrous idea."

Another accusation has been that MacArthur and cessationists are talking about something that is only true of the extreme, lunatic fringe of the movement, to which he contends is "patently not true." Because he believes there is error in the Charismatic movement that sweeps through the entire movement.

"Ninety percent of the people around the world connected to the Charismatic movement take ownership of the prosperity gospel," he said. "Twenty-four to 25 million of them deny the trinity. One hundred million of them are Roman Catholics. This is not some fringe; this is the movement. And it is growing at a rapid rate."

According to MacArthur, other critics feel that he's attacking a movement that has given Christians rich worship, and have said that the music is enriching the worship of the church.

"I'm convinced that the contemporary style of Charismatic music is the entry point for Charismatic theology into church. If you buy the music, the theology follows," he continued. "I think that the Charismatic movement has significantly diminished worship. It has taken it out of the area of truth, out of the mind, and reduced it to the feelings of the flesh."

For those who've told MacArthur that he's attacking his brothers in Christ, MacArthur responded that he "wished he could affirm that." In his opinion, he and his fellow speakers noted throughout the conference that the Charismatic movement is made-up largely of non-Christians.

"If reformed leaders who know the truth, Gospel and word of God don't police this movement, the spiritual terrorists will dominate," he said. "I hope that I told the truth with kindness and love, but when I open the word of God, it must speak. I do care about the feelings of people; I do care about offending them; but not nearly as much as I care about offending God."

According to MacArthur, the Charismatic movement is an "alien movement" whose roots can be traced back to 1966 when the hippies of San Francisco moved to Orange County and joined Calvary Chapel and the "barefoot, drug-induced young people told the church how the church should act." he said. "Hymns and suits went out. For the first time in the history of the church, the conduct of the church was conformed to a sub-culture that was born of LSD and marijuana."

MacArthur contends that the Charismatic movement is a culturally-bound, culturally-driven and seeker-driven church movement that depreciates and diminishes the glorious way the Holy Spirit worked in the foundation of the church.

"If the gifts practiced in today's Charismatic church are equivalent to those described in the New Testament, then those original gifts were nothing special," he said, adding that it degrades the true gifts God gave to the first century church.

He added that the movement dishonors the Holy Spirit by enticing people with counterfeits, and it makes people think they don't have what they need, and that there's something out there they need to chase.

MacArthur also pointed to those who call themselves continuationists as aiding the problem, because they want to give a place to the Charismatic movement, and said they are not helping to resolve the issues of false doctrine.

"The broader Charismatic movement has opened the door to more theological error than any other doctrinal aberration in this modern day," MacArthur added, noting that in chapter 12 of his book, he has written an open letter to his continuationist friends.

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/john-macarthur-responds-to-critics-who-believe-his-strange-fire-conference-is-divisive-unloving-107051/>

Re: John MacArthur Responds to Critics Who Believe His Strange Fire Conference Is Div - posted by dohzman (), on: 2

MacArthur: According to MacArthur, even before his conference started he was being accused of being unloving. He countered that assertion by saying that the most loving thing anybody could ever do, would be to tell someone the truth, because that's how love acts.

The Word of God declare that wisdom makes knowledge acceptable and we all know the fruit of wisdom as outlined in the book of James.

I do believe that he has a love for the Word of God and maybe even a real concern for the things he is seeing in the church and maybe even in charismatic circles, however in this one he stepped out of "grace to Us" who claim to be Pentecostals.

tal, at least. There is more going on here than what is being reported and what we personally will ever know. Good time to just let his words roll off our backs like water off a duck's back and keep him in our prayers.

Re: - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/10/26 15:33

Whoever this John MacArthur fellow is, and I am not familiar with his ministry, he certainly has missed some very critical aspects of the Charismatic movement by focusing on just some of the glitzy players. Would that he had met Derek Prince, Erne Baxter, Bob Mumford- to name a few who taught a generation of Pentecostal/ Charismatics genuine cross base d trinitarian, interceding, mission passionate Christians how to go to God, be filled with His Spirit, and walk in a manner worthy of the Lamb.

Sure there are nut-job charismatics who fit all his stereotypes, but he should be assured that in non Charismatic churches such as would welcome him there are nut-job baptists and unrepentant sinners who could easily be someone else's stereotypes as they criticize his ministry!

Don't call a conference, sir, call on God that you might have one of the many veils that cover the human mind and heart be removed. These Charismatics who love the Lord Jesus Christ are not your competition!

Re: Interesting quote from Tozer - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/10/27 15:07

â€œIf the Lordâ€™s people were only half as eager to be filled with the Spirit as they are to prove that they cannot be filled, the church would be crowded out.â€œ

- A. W. Tozer

Re: - posted by murrcolr (), on: 2013/10/27 17:15

Beware of the angry watchman.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PP1fjo9PGKU>

Michael Brown/Phil Johnson debate/talk on the radio about the Strange Fire Conference - posted by hulsey (), on: 2013

Here is a link to Micheal Brown's radio program where he interviewed Phil Johnson about the 'Strange Fire' conference.

<http://askdrbrown.org/portfolio/line-of-fire-dividing-over-truth-or-just-plain-divisive-dr-brown-interviews-christian-leaders-regarding-the-strange-fire-conference/>

Re: quote - posted by savannah, on: 2013/10/27 21:16

To attempt to apply this quote from Tozer to the issue shows just how much of a lack of understanding, at the least, of the issue.

Any and all who'd be favorable toward this conference are quite eager to be filled with the Spirit. None would be eager to prove to any that they cannot be filled.

And be not drunk with wine, in which is excess; but be filled with the Spirit - Ephesians 5:18

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/27 21:59

RE: ///To attempt to apply this quote from Tozer to the issue shows just how much of a lack of understanding, at the least, of the issue.///

I am not so sure that Sidewalk is lacking in understanding when he quote Tozer,

The problem is language and difference in definitions of the same words held by different camps.

It makes it confusing to understand who truly believes what. As all Christians are going to speak of being filled and walking and etc, but are they speaking of the same thing ?

John MacArthur says :

///.....I remember a chorus that we used to sing long time ago when I was a little guy. I almost said younger, young. But when I was a little kid I used to sing this song, Let Go and Let God. Now I thought that was nice song and I used to sing that little song, Let Go and Let God, have his wonderful way or something like that. You know, I began to think about that the other day. Let go, now wait a minute. Let go, I don't like that. The implication of the song is that you just sort of flop on the Holy Spirit and you say well there I am do it.

That's what we call the theology of quietism. If you want a term for it, quietist. Those are...incidentally, probably the quietists that you would be most familiar with would be the Quakers who are quietists. For years and years there were great Bible conferences called Kezicconferences. Kezicconferences were for the most part quietistic. Some of you, I'm sure, have read Hannah Smith's The Christian Secret to a Happy Life. That's a quietistic approach. That's sort of do nothing and He'll do it all kind of approach.

Charles Fenneytaught that. From time to time you find it in the writings of Wesley and others. This is the idea that all the believer has to do is just sort of flop on the Holy Spirit. The Spirit walk they say and this is fairly common to most quietistic views, the Spirit walk does not involve any effort on my part. In fact, wherever there is effort, I hinder the holiness that God wants to accomplish. So I absolutely must eliminate effort and surrender. That's the word. That's the word. If you read...I was reading the other day the convocation of 48 messages given my Kezic conferences, and I suppose as much as you see the word the, you see the word surrender. That was the word.

Now as long as we are in this attitude of surrender, we live virtuous holy lives. And normally the view continues to go on and teach us also a second work of grace. That you get so surrendered at one point in your life that the sin nature becomes eradicated. And at that point, you never sin again. Now I believe that it is true, and I want to get this right and God bless many of these quietists, because we're indebted to them, believe me. And some of them were nearly as extreme as others. But this is beyond Scripture. When you get to the place where you just don't do anything. Where you just sort of do nothing that because there's a problem here and the question I ask is this. Then let's say you're in a state of surrender and you're flopped and the Spirit of God is doing whatever He's doing. And then all of a sudden you sin. Who's fault is it? Well, that's a tough question. You say well it can't be my fault, because I surrender. Well, it can't be the Holy Spirit's fault, because He doesn't do that.

You say oh I know I took back my surrender. Well, that was sin too. Who prompted that? Who's fault was that? It's not that simple. Now the command to walk by the Spirit is very simple. But you see if it was all up to God, I'm not sure we'd need the command. The command is there to keep on walking in the Spirit, so I've got to have something to do with it. He says keep walking and that applies effort. This implies a moment by moment kind of commitment.....///
<http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/1668>

Re: Sidewalk lacking understanding - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2013/10/27 23:52

I must certainly say amen to that, if I had full understanding I sure wouldn't need Sermon Index and the banter that this forum generates!

I do think ProudPapa hit it on the head that the different camps use the same words with different meanings. Tozer's comment, which I found right here on SI, just seemed poignant to the conversation and the need for balance. I did not intend that the quote be used to generate another stream of thought.

I am actually a pretty simple guy who speaks no Hebrew or Greek, or even geek- I have a hard enough time wrestling my thoughts into English.

I did not want to weigh in on the Strange Fire issue, and I don't know MacArthur. But I do have some experience in loving God and ministering in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I would concur with what seems to be one of the Strange Fire concerns that there has been a lot of abuse. Prosperity doctrine has been the cause of too many shipwrecks, and I know names. My wife used to like a Christian nutrition counsellor named Gwen Shamblin? who decided to leave the doctrine of the trinity and led a bunch out into her own wilderness there. I wouldn't object to calling that some Strange Fire! But those two cited phenomena are downstream from the gifts of the Spirit as delineated in the New Testament.

Never-the-less the large number of people, thousands, who have gone off into these doctrines would by reason warrant investigation. But it seems unlikely that many would hear a loving call to return to orthodoxy if the caller is one who denies a modern Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Re: by proudpapa on 2013/10/27 21:59:04 - posted by savannah, on: 2013/10/28 7:14

proudpapa,

Please point out the specific error you're alluding to in the quote in your previous post. (by proudpapa on 2013/10/27 21:59:04)

Thanks.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/28 10:02

Hi savannah ,

savannah asked /// Please point out the specific error you're alluding to in the quote in your previous post.///

Instead of calling it an error, Lets just agree that different camps use the same words with different meanings.

Savannah, do you believe that Tozers teachings on the deeper life are more reflective to what Macarthur terms as "the theology of quietism" in which he seems to distance himself from, or do you feel that Tozers teachings on the deeper life are more reflective of Macarthur views of Walking by the Spirit ?

The issue at hand with Macarthur is that it feels that the "strange fire conference" has attacked a larger spectrum than just the charismatic prosperity gospel.

Re: Tozer's deeper life teachings - posted by savannah, on: 2013/10/28 10:47

It's best to let the man speak for himself.

A.W. Tozer wrote,

Again, the experience of the Spirit's fullness coming upon the believer's heart is often judged by the amount and quality of emotional charge that accompanies it. Some go so far as to declare bluntly that no one is filled with the Spirit who has not experienced certain physical phenomena, particularly the act of speaking in unidentified tongues. Others will settle for an increased degree of joy or more effectiveness in their service.

All this is wrong, both scripturally and psychologically. It is the result of a misunderstanding of the nature of man's soul and of the relation of the spirit of man to the Spirit of God.

The workings of God in the hearts of redeemed men always overflow into observable conduct. Certain moral changes will take place immediately in the life of the new convert. A moral revolution will accompany the spiritual revolution that has occurred within. As the evangelists tell us, even the cat will know it when the head of the house is converted. And the grocer will know it too, and the old cronies in the haunts where the man used to hang out will suspect that something has happened when they miss the new Christian from his accustomed place. All this is collateral proof of the validity of the man's Christian profession. But it is in no sense evidence to the man's own heart. It is not the witness of the Spirit.

Again, I'd emphasize that Tozer himself did not experience any of these extraordinary gifts and manifestations.

- posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/28 11:07

A.W. Tozer

Confining the Holy Spirit to a Footnote :

"The question being discussed by many these days--why religion is increasing and morality slipping, all at the same time --finds its answer in this very error, the error of religious intellectualism. Men have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof. The text alone will not elevate the moral life. To become morally effective, the truth must be accompanied by a mystic element, the very element supplied by the Spirit of truth. The Holy Spirit will not be banished to a footnote without taking terrible vengeance against His banishers. That vengeance may be seen today in the nervous, giggling, worldly minded and thoroughly carnal fundamentalism that is spreading over the land. Doctrinally, it wears the robes of scriptural belief, but beyond that it resembles the religion of Christ and His apostles not at all.

The mysterious presence of the Spirit is vitally necessary if we are to avoid the pitfalls of religion. As the fiery pillar led Israel through the wilderness, so the Spirit of truth must lead us all our journey through. One text alone could improve things mightily for us if we would but obey it: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5)."

Has John MacArthur drawn a clear line in his attacks between a radical prosperity gospel such as Benny Hinn teaches, and that of a genuine Christian such as A.B. Simpson's teachings on Divine Healing ?

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/28 11:11

Hi Savannah

Savannah wrote : ///Again, I'd emphasize that Tozer himself did not experience any of these extraordinary gifts and manifestations.///

A.W. Tozer :

"....I believe in the kind of miracles that God gives to His people who live so close to Him that answers to prayer are common and these miracles are not uncommon. John Wesley never lowered himself to preach miracles once in his life. But the miracles that followed John Wesley's ministry were unbelievable. On one instance he had to make an engagement, and his horse fell lame and could not travel. Wesley got down on his knees beside his horse and prayed for its healing. Then he got back up and rode, without the horse limping, to where he was going. He did not publicize the miracle and say, "We'll have a big tent here and advertise it." God just did those things for him. While C. H. Spurgeon did not preach healing, he had more people delivered in answer to his prayer than any doctor in London. Those are the kinds of miracles I am talking about."

Re: more notable quotes - posted by Savannah, on: 2013/10/28 11:37

proudpapa,

To the two quotes you posted from Tozer I'd give a hearty amen!

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/29 11:59

Hi savannah'

savannah wrote : ///To the two quotes you posted from Tozer I'd give a hearty amen!///

Yes, but I am a little confused as how you hear the same thing when you listen or read MacArthur and as that with Tozer.

Can we agree that even within the calvinist camp that there is a clear distinction in the understanding of "Illumination" between that of those, such as Martyn Lloyd Jones, Paul Washer, John Piper etc. vs those such as BB Warfield, John MacArthur, James White etc.

- posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/29 12:24

"It is perfectly clear that in New Testament times, the gospel was authenticated in this way by signs, wonders and miracles of various characters and descriptions ... Was it only meant to be true of the early church? ... The Scriptures never anywhere say that these things were only temporaryâ€”never! There is no such statement anywhere"

- Martin Lloyd-Jones

To hold such a view, as cessationist Martin Lloyd-Jones says : "is simply to quench the Spirit"

Re: agree - posted by savannah, on: 2013/10/29 20:25

proudpapa, you said,

"Can we agree..."

YES! We can. There obviously is a clear distinction between some of these men. The article I posted, "What Cessationism Is Not" in another thread I thought did very well clarifying these differences and misunderstandings. I would very much so agree with said article.

To quote David Martyn-Lloyd Jones, who was quite a gifted man of God, a pastor (Presbyterian) and theologian;

"My attitude to the question of Tongues and other gifts is this: I have never been able to accept the traditional teaching as stated particularly, perhaps, by Warfield, that all gifts came to an end at the Apostolic era. I cannot see any scriptural warrant for this teaching; indeed it seems to me to be a kind of dispensationalism which renders much of the epistles useless. For instance it implies that the teaching of 1 Thessalonians 5, verses 19 - 21 has no application today. All I say is, that while it is clear from the history of the Church that certain gifts seem to have been in abeyance over the centuries the Holy Spirit in His Lordship may give them at any time. Indeed there is clear teaching that towards the end of this age such gifts are likely to reappear in great power, and at the same time many counterfeits. The result of all this is that while I am very unhappy about this Charismatic Movement, and regard it as a real danger to the true Church and the Gospel, because it implies constantly that doctrine does not matter at all, I am equally concerned that we should not become guilty of "quenching the Spirit" and tying ourselves up in a dead orthodoxy."

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/29 21:16

Hi savannah

RE: ///"What Cessationism Is Not" in another thread I thought did very well clarifying these differences and misunderstandings///

I remember you posting it, but I can not seem to find it, what thread was that under ?

Edit add: I found it

Re: - posted by murrcolr (), on: 2013/10/29 22:30

Quote: I am very unhappy about this Charismatic Movement, and regard it as a real danger to the true Church and the Gospel.

What!!!!!!

At the time of my conversion as lay down on my bed after praying, a wind began to blow into me (yes a physical wind) and I sat up and spoke in tongues.

Am I a part of the Charismatic Movement or the true church?...

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/29 22:40

Hi savannah,

savannah wrote : /// There obviously is a clear distinction between some of these men. The article I posted, "What Cessationism Is Not" in another thread I thought did very well clarifying these differences and misunderstandings. I would very much so agree with said article. ///

I found the article you posted and reread it,

I personally did not find that it addressed the difference of understandings about "Illumination" between that of those, such as Martyn Lloyd Jones, Paul Washer, John Piper etc. vs those such as BB Warfield, John MacArthur, James White etc.

As far as I am aware : Martyn Lloyd Jones, Paul Washer, John Piper etc. did not and do not consider themselves Cessationist, and the reason seems to be because of their understanding of what it is to be Baptized or filled with the Spirit vs that of the BB Warfield understanding.

If I remember correct Paul Washer seemed to align himself with Len Ravenhill on such experience.

David Ravenhill seems to feel personally attacked by the "strange fire conference"

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/29 22:54

Hi Colin

Colin writes : ///Am I a part of the Charismatic Movement or the true church?...///

From what I have read of your post, I consider you a member of the true church.

Brother, I want you to know that I am very repentant of the hostility of some of my post towards you in the past.

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2013/10/30 4:38

PROUD PAPA hi ,,paul washer is a staunch Calvinist ,he does not believe in or practice sign gifts ,unlike my self ,,his love and respect for john MacArthur ,is very high he wont even call him my first name ,,but sir or mr ,,,,

paul washer is different to piper and lloyd jones in that respect regarding gifts of the spirit

but washer does believe in a baptism with the holy spirit as a second event ,but not entire sanctification

blessings

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/30 10:17

Hi brothagary

brothagary wrote : ///PROUD PAPA hi ,,paul washer is a staunth Calvinist///

I am aware that he is calvinist as is also Piper and Jones.

That is what I am speaking of, the division of understanding even within the calvinist camp.

I personally would not add the word "staunth" since he affirms his acceptance for men like Ravenhill.

"Calvinism Is Not The Issue!" - Paul Washer

<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/myvideo/photo.php?lid=210>

brothagary wrote : ///,he does not believe in or practice sign gifts ///

That could be, but this is what I am speaking about :

Paul Washer says : (1:26)

...but the thing about it is,, someone has to go out their in the wilderness and throw stones at the gates of heaven with b
oldness untill God comes down upoun his life.,,and how you really want to call that does not make me much difference a
s long as you keep it confined in the parameters of Scripture,,... I was amazed that I was at the founders conference sev
eral years ago,, Ian Murray spoke many many things on this, that I thought would never come out of his mouth,, Martin L
loyed Jones freed him on the Holy Spirit. read him on the Holy Spirit, very ,very beneficial.

Washer says : (4:50) Maybe I am telling you to much in my humbling myself before you, so that you can see that I am n
ot who you think that I am, the amazing thing is that the Lord in the last days has granted me a new to go out and believ
e him, I do not care for words, I do not care for only for correct theology,, but it is Power, Power of the Holy Spirit coming
down and converting men,, Healing People,, not like this silly television stuff..

But being in a conference with the Indians up in Puru,, reliezing that one of the Godly preachers there wife is in a Pig sty
dieing of Cancer,, making it across the mountains avoiding an avalanche,, running there Laying your hands apoun her,,
praying for her,, and she lives,, after 12 years and she is still serving the Lord.

These are real manifestations of the power of God,,((You think this has stopped ? it is just that we do not believe and w
e do not seek)) ,, and we are affraid,, because we think,,... and the Lord has free'd me from this,, we go into places and if
I don't dot every I and cross every T Theologicaly they are not going to want me back, I don't care.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-7Z2cQbb3k>

Re: , on: 2013/10/30 11:53

Brothers and sisters,

As a cessationist (who believes firmly in the need for Christians to be filled and more filled with the Holy Spirit and who b
elieves that God still works miracles and healings) I want to affirm everything Paul Washer said in that youtube clip. I ag
ree entirely. Be sure that you understand cessationism.

I fear many are rushing to judgment against MacArthur without actually hearing him out. Check out, for example, the foll
owing link:

<http://www.gty.org/Blog/B131028>

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/30 12:14

Hi Stephen2,

Stephen2 wrote ///As a cessationist (who believes firmly in the need for Christians to be filled and more filled with the Holy Spirit and who believes that God still works miracles and healings) I want to affirm everything Paul Washer said in that youtube clip. I agree entirely. Be sure that you understand cessationism.///

I think that is the point that Savannah, was trying to make, that one can consider himself a cessationist and still believe in being filled with the Holy Spirit and still believe that God still works miracles and healings.

The point that I am trying to make is regardless if one wants to call himself cessationist or continuationist, There is a clear difference even in the Calvinist camp between what those whom align themselves with Martyn Lloyd Jones vs BB Warfield on this subject.

As Washer said : "Iain Murray spoke many many things on this, that I thought would never come out of his mouth,"

"Martin Lloyd Jones freed him on the Holy Spirit. read him on the Holy Spirit, very ,very beneficial"

Washer is acknowledging the clear distinction, and that Iain Murray was not freed on the Holy Spirit until Martin Lloyd Jones freed him on the Holy Spirit.

Re: , on: 2013/10/30 12:30

Hi, proudpapa

I love and respect Paul Washer, but I'm not sure that he is right in his assessment of Iain Murray. Iain Murray has himself admitted repeatedly that he believes Martyn Lloyd-Jones was quite wrong about the Holy Spirit. See, for example, his biographies on Lloyd-Jones. Iain Murray is solidly reformed in his views and would hold to the position held also by the Puritans and the authors of the Westminster Confession.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/30 12:44

Hi Stephen2,

Stephen2 wrote : ///I love and respect Paul Washer, but I'm not sure that he is right in his assessment of Iain Murray. Iain Murray has himself admitted repeatedly that he believes Martyn Lloyd-Jones was quite wrong about the Holy Spirit. See, for example, his biographies on Lloyd-Jones. Iain Murray is solidly reformed in his views and would hold to the position held also by the Puritans and the authors of the Westminster Confession.///

I am not sure of the date of events of everything but remember Washer said : "Iain Murray spoke many many things on this, that I thought would never come out of his mouth,"

What Washer heard from Iain, seemed to have even surprised Washer, it was not what Washer had previously thought Iain had believed, Washer said "Martin Lloyd Jones freed him on the Holy Spirit. read him on the Holy Spirit, very ,very beneficial"

But regardless, that is not my point, My Point is that there is an understood difference in the understandings and experiences even in the Calvinist camp between those whom align themselves with Martyn Lloyd-Jones vs BB Warfield on being filled.

Re: Martin Lloyd-Jones' - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/30 13:22

"Lloyd-Jones has done more than any other man in this century, I think, to restore the historic meaning of the word revival.

A revival is a miracle ... something that can only be explained as the direct ... intervention of God ... Men can produce evangelistic campaigns, but they cannot and never have produced a revival (see note 12).

But for Lloyd-Jones it was a great tragedy that the whole deeper understanding of revival, as a sovereign outpouring of the Holy Spirit, had been lost by the time he took up the subject in 1959 at the 100th anniversary of the Welsh Revival. "During the last seventy, to eighty years," he said, "this whole notion of a visitation, a baptism of God's Spirit upon the Church, has gone" (see note 13).

He gave several reasons why (see note 14). But he says that the most important theological reason for the prevailing indifference to revival was the view that the Holy Spirit was given once for all on the Day of Pentecost, so that He cannot be poured out again, and prayer for revival is therefore wrong and needless (see note 15). This is where Lloyd-Jones begins to part ways with some standard evangelical interpretations of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He emphatically rejected the common view that equates the spiritual baptism of Acts 2 and 1 Corinthians 12:13. He describes the view he rejects like this:

Yes, was the baptism of the Holy Spirit. But we all get that now, and it is unconscious, we are not aware of it, it happens to us the moment we believe and we are regenerated. It is just that act of God which incorporates us into the Body of Christ. That is the baptism of the Spirit. So it is no use your praying for for some other baptism of the Spirit, or asking God to pour out His Spirit upon the church ... It is not surprising that, as that kind of preaching has gained currency, people have stopped praying for revival" (see note 16).

When a reformed theologian like Klaas Runia opposed Pentecostalism, Lloyd-Jones agreed that the insistence on tongues and the "claiming" of gifts was wrong, but he was just as disturbed by Runia's concept of the baptism of the Spirit. He wrote to him and said,

I still feel that you really do not allow for revival. You show this where you say, "Read all the passages that speak of the Holy Spirit and the Church. It is always: Become what you are, ALL of you." If it is simply a question of "Become what you are" and nothing more, then how can one pray for revival, and indeed how does one account for the revivals in the history of the church (see note 17)?

Revival is when the Spirit comes down, is poured out. Lloyd-Jones is crystal clear on how he thinks baptism with the Holy Spirit relates to regeneration.

Here is the first principle ... I am asserting that you can be a believer, that you can have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, and still not be baptized with the Holy Spirit ... The baptism of the Holy Spirit is something that is done by the Lord Jesus Christ not by the Holy Spirit ... Our being baptized into the body of Christ is the work of the Spirit, as regeneration is his work, but this is something entirely different; this is Christ's baptizing us with the Holy Spirit. And I am suggesting that this is something which is therefore obviously distinct from and separate from becoming a Christian, being regenerate, having the Holy Spirit dwelling within you (see note 18).

He laments that by identifying the baptism of the Holy Spirit with regeneration the whole thing is made non-experimental and unconscious. This is not the way it was experienced in the books of Acts (see note 19). So he spoke with strong words about such a view:

Those people who say that happens to everybody at regeneration seem to me not only to be denying the New Testament but to be definitely quenching the Spirit" (see note 20)."

<http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/biographies/a-passion-for-christ-exalting-power>

compare with What MacArthur teaches on the subject : <http://www.gty.org/resources/Sermon-Series/15>

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 2:23

Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones was a staunch Calvinist until one point in his life, and I cannot remember when it was exactly, he changed his views on when the baptism of the Spirit occurs and about tongues. After this, he was considered by his fellow Calvinists as having 'gone off it' though they continued to respect and love him. I attended a church at one time where there were a few people who had known him when he was alive. They were puzzled as to what had happened to him and I guess they just thought that he had met with charismatics and had been swayed by them and 'infected' by their demonstrations.

I did read somewhere that he had been fellowshipping with some charismatics but did not go all the way with them. My own impressions were that he was familiar with holiness teachings and the writings on revival, being Welsh but was waylaid by charismatic teachings, which are similar on some points but which also miss the mark by a mile, the mile gap which caused so much dispute between the two camps in the 19th - early 20th century.

As far as I know he continued to keep a foot in both camps.

Re: But Gentlemen, the scriptures please., on: 2013/10/31 3:24

I have asked repeatedly in this forum for scriptures that set forth cessationism. No one has yet produced those scriptures. I have seen cut and paste of articles. But I ask where are your scriptures? Is it quite possible that there is no New Testament warrant for cessationism?

Bearmaster.

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 4:23

bearmaster

Your question has been answered by Savannah previously, and you seem to have ignored it.

"What Cessationism Is Not

Cessationism is not anti-supernatural, nor does it deny the possibility of miracles.

When it comes to understanding the cessationist position, the question is not: Can God still do miracles in the world today? Cessationists would be quick to acknowledge that God can act at any time in any way He chooses. Along these lines, John MacArthur explains:

Miracles in the Bible occurred in three major periods of time. The time of Moses and Joshua, the time of Elijah and Elisha, and the time of Christ and the apostles. . . . And it is during those three brief periods of time and those alone that miracles proliferated; that miracles were the norm; that miracles were in abundance. Now God can interject Himself into the human stream supernaturally anytime He wants. We're not limiting Him. We're simply saying that He has chosen to limit Himself to a great degree to those three periods of time.

Cessationism then does not deny the reality that God can do whatever He wants whenever He wants (Psalm 115:3). It does not put God into a box or limit His sovereign prerogative.

But it does acknowledge that there was something unique and special about the age of miracles and miracle-workers that defined the ministries of Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, and Christ and His apostles. Moreover, it recognizes the seemingly obvious fact that those kinds of miracles (like parting the sea, stopping the rain, raising the dead, walking on water, or instantly healing the lame and the blind) are not occurring today.

Thus, cessationists conclude that:

The apostolic age was marvelously unique and it ended. And what happened then is not the normal thing for every Christian. The normal thing for every Christian is to study the Word of God, which is able to make us wise and perfect. is to live by faith and not by sight.

But can God still do extraordinary things in the world today? Certainly He can, if He chooses to do so. In fact, every time a sinner's eyes are opened to the gospel, and a new life in Christ is created, it is nothing short of a miracle.

In his helpful book, *To Be Continued?*, Samuel Waldron aptly expresses the cessationist position this way (on p. 102):

I am not denying by all this that there are miracles in the world today in the broader sense of supernatural occurrences and extraordinary providences. I am only saying that there are no miracles in the stricter sense—miracle-workers performing miraculous signs to attest the redemptive revelation they bring from God. Though God has never locked Himself out of His world and is still at liberty to do as He pleases, when He pleases, how He pleases, and where He pleases, He has made it clear that the progress of redemptive revelation attested by miraculous signs done by miracle-workers has been brought to conclusion in the revelation embodied in our New Testaments.

So, the question is not: Can God still do miracles?

Rather, the definitive question is this: Are the miraculous gifts of the New Testament still in operation in the church today—such that what was the norm in the days of Christ and the apostles ought to be expected today?

To that, all cessationists would answer *no*.

Cessationism is not founded on one's interpretation of *the perfect* in 1 Corinthians 13:10.

For that matter, it seems there are almost as many views of *the perfect* among cessationist scholars as there are commentators who write about 1 Corinthians 13:8-13. Space in this article does not permit a full investigation into each of these, but rather a cursory explanation of the major positions.

The Different Views

(1) Some (such as F.F. Bruce) argue that love itself is the perfect. Thus when the fullness of love comes, the Corinthians will put away their childish desires.

(2) Some (such as B.B. Warfield) contend that the completed canon of Scripture is the perfect. Scripture is described as *perfect* in James 1:25, a text in which the same word for *mirror* (as in v. 12) is found (in James 1:23). Thus partial revelation is done away when the full revelation of Scripture comes.

(3) Some (such as Robert Thomas) contend that the mature church is the perfect. This view is primarily based on the illustration of verse 11 and on the close connection between this passage and Eph. 4:11-13. The exact timing of the church's *maturity* is unknown, though it is closely associated with the completion of the canon, and the end of the apostolic era (cf. Eph. 2:20).

(4) Some (such as Thomas Edgar) see the believer's entrance into the presence of Christ (at the moment of death) as the perfect. This view accounts for the personal aspect of Paul's statement in verse 12. Paul personally experienced full knowledge when he entered Christ's presence at his death (cf. 2 Cor. 5:8).

(5) Some (such as Richard Gaffin) see the return of Christ (and the end of this age) as the perfect. This is also the view of most continuationists. Thus, when Christ comes back (as delineated in chapter 15), the partial revelation we know now will be made complete.

(6) Some (such as John MacArthur) view the eternal state (in a general sense) as the perfect. This explanation interprets the neuter of *to teleion* as a reference to a general state of events and not a personal return of Christ. This view overlaps with both numbers 4 and 5 above in that, according to this view: *For Christians the eternal state begins either at death, when they go to be with the Lord, or at the rapture, when the Lord takes His own to be with Himself* (John MacArthur, *First Corinthians*, p. 366).

Of these views, I personally find the last three more convincing than the first three. This is primarily due (I will confess) to the testimony of church history. Dr. Gary Shogren, after doing an in-depth study of some 169 patristic references to this passage, concludes that the church fathers overwhelmingly saw the perfect in terms of something beyond this life (most normally associating it with the return of Christ, or with seeing Christ in heaven). Even John Chrysostom (who was clearly a cessationist) saw it this way. While not authoritative, such historical evidence is difficult to dismiss.

In any case, my point here is simply this: The interpreter can take any of the above positions, and still remain a cessationist. In fact, there are cessationists who hold to each of the positions listed above (as the names I've listed indicate).

Thus, Anthony Thiselton notes in his commentary on this passage: "The one important point to make here is that few or none of the serious 'cessationist' arguments depends on a specific exegesis of 1 Cor 13:8. . . . These verses should not be used as a polemic for either side in this debate" (NIGTC, pp. 1063-64).

Cessationism is not an attack on the Person or work of the Holy Spirit.

In fact, just the opposite is true. Cessationists are motivated by a desire to see the Holy Spirit glorified. They are concerned that, by redefining the gifts, the continuationist position cheapens the remarkable nature of those gifts, lessening the truly miraculous working of the Spirit in the earliest stages of the church.

Cessationists are convinced that, by redefining healing, the charismatic position presents a bad testimony to the watching world when the sick are not healed. By redefining tongues, the charismatic position promotes a type of nonsensical gibberish that runs contrary to anything we know about the biblical gift. By redefining prophecy, the charismatic position lends credence to those who would claim to speak the very words of God and yet speak error.

This, then, is the primary concern of cessationists: that the honor of the Triune God and His Word be exalted and that it not be cheapened by watered-down substitutes.

And how do we know if something is authentic or not? By comparing it to the written testimony of Scripture. Does going to the Bible to define the gifts mean that we are bypassing the Holy Spirit? Quite the contrary. When we search the Scriptures, we are going to the testimony of the Holy Spirit Himself to discover what He has revealed about the gifts that He bestowed.

As a cessationist, I love the Holy Spirit. I would never want to do anything to discredit His work, diminish His attributes, or downplay His ministry. Nor would I ever want to miss out on anything He is doing in the church today. And I'm not the only cessationist who feels this way.

Because we love the Holy Spirit we are thankful to God for the Spirit's amazing and ongoing work in the body of Christ. His works of regenerating, indwelling, baptizing, sealing, assuring, illuminating, convicting, comforting, confirming, filling, and enabling are all indispensable aspects of His ministry.

Because we love the Holy Spirit we are motivated to study the Scriptures that He inspired to learn how to walk in a manner worthy, being characterized by His fruit. We long to be filled by Him (Eph. 5:18), which begins by being indwelt with His Word, which is the Word of Christ (Col. 3:16-17), and being equipped with His sword, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17).

Finally, it is because we love the Holy Spirit that we long to rightly represent Him, to understand and appreciate His purposes (as He has revealed them in His Word), and to align ourselves with what He is doing in this world. This more than anything else gives us reason to study the issue of charismatic gifts (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7-11). Our goal in this study has to be more than mere doctrinal correctness. Our motivation must be to gain a more accurate understanding of the Spirit's work such that we might better yield ourselves to Him in service to Christ for the glory of God.

Cessationism is not a product of the Enlightenment.

Perhaps the easiest way to demonstrate this final point is to cite pre-Enlightenment Christian leaders who held to a cessationist position. It is, after all, difficult to argue that John Chrysostom's fourth-century theology was a result of 18th-century European rationalism.

In bringing this blog post to a close then, here are ten leaders from church history to consider:

1. John Chrysostom (c. 344–407):

This whole place is very obscure: but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to and by their cessation, being such as then used to occur but now no longer take place.

(Source: John Chrysostom, Homilies on 1 Corinthians, 36.7. Chrysostom is commenting on 1 Cor 12:1–2 and introducing the entire chapter. Cited from 1–2 Corinthians, in the Ancient Christian Commentary Series, 146.)

2. Augustine (354–430):

In the earliest times, the Holy Spirit fell upon them that believe and they spoke with tongues, which they had not learned, as the Spirit gave them utterance. These were signs adapted to the time. For there was this 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 sign, and it passed away.

(Source: Augustine, Homilies on the First Epistle of John, 6.10. Cf. Schaff, NPNF, First Series, 7:497–98.)

3. Theodoret of Cyrus (c. 393–c. 466):

In former times those who accepted the divine preaching and who were baptized for their salvation were given visible signs of the grace of the Holy Spirit at work in them. Some spoke in tongues which they did not know and which nobody had taught them, while others performed miracles or prophesied. The Corinthians also did these things, but they did not use the gifts as they should have done. They were more interested in showing off than in using them for the edification of the church. . . . Even in our time grace is given to those who are deemed worthy of holy baptism, but it may not take the same form as it did in those days.

(Source: Theodoret of Cyrus, Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians, 240, 43; in reference to 1 Cor 12:1, 7. Cited from 1–2 Corinthians, ACCS, 117).

Note: Proponents of continuationism, like Jon Ruthven (in his work, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*), also acknowledge cessationist views in other church fathers (like Origen in the 3rd century, and Ambrosiaster in the 4th century).

Additionally, to this list, we could include the most well-known name of the middle ages, the 13th-century scholastic, Thomas Aquinas.

But let's jump ahead to the Reformation and Puritan eras.

4. Martin Luther (1483–1546)

In the early Church the Holy Spirit was sent forth in visible form. He descended upon Christ in the form of a dove (Matt. 3:16), and in the likeness of fire upon the apostles and other believers. (Acts 2:3.) This visible outpouring of the Holy Spirit was necessary to the establishment of the early Church, as were also the miracles that accompanied the gift of the Holy Ghost. Paul explained the purpose of these miraculous gifts of the Spirit in I Corinthians 14:22, "Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not." Once the Church had been established and properly advertised by these miracles, the visible appearance of the Holy Ghost ceased.

(Source: Martin Luther, Commentary on Galatians 4, Trans. by Theodore Graebner, pp. 150-172. This is from Luther's comment on Gal. 4:6.)

5. John Calvin (1509–1564):

Though Christ does not expressly state whether he intends this gift to be temporary, or to remain perpetually in the Church, yet it is more probable that miracles were promised only for a time, in order to give lustre to the gospel while it was new or in a state of obscurity.

(Source: John Calvin, Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels, III:389.)

The gift of healing, like the rest of the miracles, which the Lord willed to be brought forth for a time, has vanished away in order to make the preaching of the Gospel marvellous for ever.

(Source: John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, IV:19, 18.)

6. John Owen (1616–1683):

Gifts which in their own nature exceed the whole power of all our faculties, that dispensation of the Spirit is long since ceased and where it is now pretended unto by any, it may justly be suspected as an enthusiastic delusion.

(Source: John Owen, Works, IV:518.)

7. Thomas Watson (1620–1686):

Sure, there is as much need of ordination now as in Christ's time and in the time of the apostles, there being then extraordinary gifts in the church which are now ceased.

(Source: Thomas Watson, The Beatitudes, 140.)

8. Matthew Henry (1662–1714):

What these gifts were is at large told us in the body of the chapter ; namely, extraordinary offices and powers, bestowed on ministers and Christians in the first ages, for conviction of unbelievers, and propagation of the gospel.

(Source: Matthew Henry, Complete Commentary, in reference to 1 Corinthians 12.)

The gift of tongues was one new product of the spirit of prophecy and given for a particular reason, that, the Jewish pale being taken down, all nations might be brought into the church. These and other gifts of prophecy, being a sign, have long since ceased and been laid aside, and we have no encouragement to expect the revival of them; but, on the contrary, are directed to call the scriptures the more sure word of prophecy, more sure than voices from heaven; and to them we are directed to take heed, to search them, and to hold them fast, 2 Peter 1:29.

(Source: Matthew Henry, Preface to Vol. IV of his Exposition of OT & NT, vii.)

9. John Gill (1697–1771):

Now these gifts were bestowed in common, by the Spirit, on apostles, prophets, and pastors, or elders of the church, in those early times: the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin version, read, "by one Spirit".

(Source: John Gill's commentary on 1 Corinthians 12:9.)

No; when these gifts were in being, all had them not. When anointing with oil, in order to heal the sick, was in use, it was only performed by the elders of the church, not by the common members of it, who were to be sent for by the sick on this occasion.

(Source: John Gill's commentary on 1 Corinthians 12:30.)

10. Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758):

In the days of his flesh, his disciples had a measure of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, being enabled thus to teach and to work miracles. But after the resurrection and ascension, was the most full and remarkable effusion of the Spirit in his miraculous gifts that ever took place, beginning with the day of Pentecost, after Christ had risen and ascended to heaven. And in consequence of this, not only here and there an extraordinary person was endowed with these extraordinary gifts, but they were common in the church, and so continued during the lifetime of the apostles, or till the death of the last of them, even the apostle John, which took place about a hundred years from the birth of Christ; so that the first hundred

years of the Christian era, or the first century, was the era of miracles.

But soon after that, the canon of Scripture being completed when the apostle John had written the book of Revelation, which he wrote not long before his death, these miraculous gifts were no longer continued in the church. For there was now completed an established written revelation of the mind and will of God, wherein God had fully recorded a standing and all-sufficient rule for his church in all ages. And the Jewish church and nation being overthrown, and the Christian church and the last dispensation of the church of God being established, the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were no longer needed, and therefore they ceased; for though they had been continued in the church for so many ages, yet then they failed, and God caused them to fail because there was no further occasion for them. And so was fulfilled the saying of the text, "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." And now there seems to be an end to all such fruits of the Spirit as these, and we have no reason to expect them any more.

(Source: Jonathan Edwards, Sermon entitled, "The Holy Spirit Forever To Be Communicated To The Saints, In The Grace Of Charity, Or Divine Love" on 1 Corinthians 13:8.)

"Of the extraordinary gifts, they were given in order to the founding and establishing of the church in the world. But since the canon of Scriptures has been completed, and the Christian church fully founded and established, these extraordinary gifts have ceased."

(Source: Jonathan Edwards, Charity and its Fruits, 29.)

* * * * *

To this list, we could add other names: James Buchanan, R. L. Dabney, Charles Spurgeon, George Smeaton, Abraham Kuyper, William G. T. Shedd, B. B. Warfield, A. W. Pink, and so on. But, admittedly, they are post-Enlightenment historical figures.

by Nathan Busenitz"

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2013/10/31 6:46

by bearmaster on 2013/10/31 8:24:09

"I have asked repeatedly in this forum for scriptures that set forth cessationism. No one has yet produced those scriptures. I have seen cut and paste of articles. But I ask where are your scriptures? Is it quite possible that there is no New Testament warrant for cessationism?"

Bearmaster you and I know there are no scriptures which state this, that is why you get a replies with many words that only confuse the plain testimony of the bible.

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 9:51

Krautfrau said: ///So, the question is not: Can God still do miracles?

Rather, the definitive question is this: Are the miraculous gifts of the New Testament still in operation in the church today "such that what was the norm in the days of Christ and the apostles ought to be expected today?"

To that, all cessationists would answer "no."///

Very well said - and glad to see some names I recognize and trust.

Heydave said: ///Bearmaster you and I know there are no scriptures which state this, that is why you get a replies with many words that only confuse the plain testimony of the bible.///

I am sorry to see a response like that to the careful and thoughtful answer supplied by krautfrau. I realize there is debate about this even among cessationists but 1 Cor. 13.8-10 is one clear example of a Bible text that clearly teaches these t

things will cease. Perhaps more important is Hebrews 2.4: "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" As MacArthur points out, this text would be meaningless if the gifts continue as they did in the days of the apostles.

The question is this: is the canon closed? Is the Scripture our only and sufficient rule of faith and practice? If these revelatory gifts have continued then the canon is open and we must abandon the principle of the reformers that Scripture alone is our rule.

He may have already been quoted, but its worth hearing Walter Chantry again: "It is an inescapable conclusion of Biblical study that no true servant of Christ will be given the power to work miracles, unless he is directly associated with prophecy. Whenever we see men working miracles by the Spirit of God, we will expect an inspired communication of God's Word to attend them."

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 10:23

Quote:
----- I realize there is debate about this even among cessationists but 1 Cor. 13.8-10 is one clear example of a Bible text that clearly teaches these things will cease. Perhaps more important is Hebrews 2.4: "God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" As MacArthur points out, this text would be meaningless if the gifts continue as they did in the days of the apostles.

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Excellent points Stephen. By the way I was quoting a post by Savannah. If continuists say the canon is open, they have moved outside of Protestantism and traditional Christianity.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/31 10:27

RE: ///The question is this: is the canon closed? Is the Scripture our only and sufficient rule of faith and practice? If these revelatory gifts have continued then the canon is open and we must abandon the principle of the reformers that Scripture alone is our rule.///

The Bible says :

1 Tim 3:16

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

But the Bible also says :

Romans 7:6

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

2 Corinthians 3:6

Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

I would be slow to say that "Scripture alone is our rule."

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/31 10:45

Hi Stephen2

Stephen2 wrote : ///I realize there is debate about this even among cessationists///

The line between what we define as cessationists vs continuous seems to be very cloudy.

RE: ///1 Cor. 13.8-10 is one clear example of a Bible text that clearly teaches these things will cease.///

Including knowledge ? brother that is a bit desperate to use that Scripture as a proof text to support cessationism

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away

Verse 10 is the Key, and it is clearly not speaking about the closing of the canon!

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2013/10/31 10:48

Stephen2 said: " I realize there is debate about this even among cessationists but 1 Cor. 13.8-10 is one clear example of a Bible text that clearly teaches these things will cease."

Yes it does, but it also says that 'knowledge' will vanish away. I'm sure you don't think that knowledge has been done away with yet.

1 Cor 13 v.8 "Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away."

Nobody disputes all these things will cease....it's just a question of when. In the context it is clear that the 'perfect' is at that time when we know perfectly, "just as we are known". Unless you think you are already perfect, then the gifts cannot have ceased yet.

Those who think they are already 'perfect' and have all knowledge let them tell that to God. I don't buy it!

Edit: I posted at same time as Proud papa, so didn't realise we were addressing the same point, but it IS the point.

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 11:15

///Yes it does, but it also says that 'knowledge' will vanish away. I'm sure you don't think that knowledge has been done away with yet.///

Heydave, I don't of course think that knowledge in the way that you are defining it has passed away. I think the word has to be understood in context. Here's Charles Hodge on that verse and that word: "It is the same word as that used above in reference to prophecies. It is not knowledge in the comprehensive sense of the term that is to cease, but knowledge as a gift; as one of the list of extraordinary endowments mentioned above, 12, 8-11." Of course, knowledge as you are understanding cannot be passed away in heaven either!

Matthew Henry cites 1 Cor. 14.6 to explain the knowledge here described.

Keep in mind that Bearmaster was asking for a Bible text and it has been supplied. We can debate the meaning of the text, but please don't go on making the claim that the cessationist has no Biblical ground for his/her position.

Proud papa, what makes us protestant is our conviction that the Bible is our only rule. Now that only rule can only be understood with the help of the Holy Spirit, and we may even want the help of teachers/pastors from this generation and pr

evious generations... but there is only one rule and that rule is the Bible.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/31 11:34

Hi Stephen2,

Lets put Hodge and Henry to the side, What is verse 10 revealing that the context is for the ceasing of these things ?

"But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

Are you saying that : "which is perfect" came by the closing of the canon ?

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 12:08

Mark 16:17-18

These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues, they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick and they will recover.

Romans 15:17-19

Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Hebrews 2:1-4

For this reason we must pay much closer attention, to what we have heard so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard. God also testified with them both by signs and wonders, and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his own will.

.....

One is going to have to ask are the above verses still true or has God stopped operating in the above dynamic. The cessationist will say God no longer operates in a signs and wonders way to authenticate the gospel truth. The cessationist will say the Holy Spirit only confines Himself to the boundaries of the written scriptures. For this is what the cessationist sees in N.America and Western Europe. For that is the cessationists only frame of reference. Since no signs and wonders are accompanying gospel preaching. Cessionism must be true. At least in the west.

One slight problem. No one told the 10/40 window that. In what we do the third world the gospel is going out in signs and wonders. There are credible reports of people coming to Christ in the gospel being preached in power. The power of signs and wonders through the Holy Spirit. Evidently the 10/40 window has not heard from their Calvinistic brethren that gifts of the Spirit and signs and wonders are no valid. My, my. Something is amiss here.

One of the astounding things happening in the 10/40 window are Moslems by the hundreds and possibly the thousands coming to Christ by dreams and visions of Jesus. Moslems all throughout Islamic countries report seeing visions of the man in white. This will often result in them picking up a New Testament and reading it. And they come to Christ. All through a dream or vision. But the cessationist says this is not supposed to happen. God does not operate that way. So someone going to tell the Holy Spirit that.

I read of healings and even the dead being raised in third world nations where the gospel is being preached. The cessationist will be hard pressed to find an answer in their theology to explain what is happening in the 10/40 window. To say these events are demonic run the risk of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. To say these reports are false or fabricated run the risk of calling Gospel for Asia and VOM liars.

Bottom line the cessationist has no explanation for explaining the Spirit moving in the 10/40 window because they can't. And their theology fails. It fails because the New Testament nowhere supports cessation of spiritual gifts or signs and wonders.

So why do we not see this happening in America. That will be another post.

Bearmaster.

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2013/10/31 12:20

Stephen wrote: "Heydave, I don't of course think that knowledge in the way that you are defining it has passed away. I think the word has to be understood in context."

Here is the context in verse 12...

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

So the ability (of gift) to know the things of God will be done away with when we "Know, even as (we) are known". i.e. full knowledge. Are you now saying we don't even need a gift of knowledge? Really??

All knowledge of God is a gift from God, not just what we may consider the 'special' gift of knowledge as in 1 Cor 12.

The other problem you have in trying to use 1 Cor 13 to say the sign gifts have ceased is there is no mention here of miracles. Is that just pure conjecture on your part?

One thing I have noticed from all those who push the cessationist view is that a lot of references are given from the teachings of men and church fathers and experience, etc. Funny that these are the ones to claim 'sola scriptura', but don't want to use scripture alone to make their case. Maybe the Charismatics are more 'sola scriptura' than they are!!

I don't consider myself a Charismatic BTW, I just want to take scripture as it is and not force my 'doctrine' into it.

Isn't cessationism just another 'ism'?

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/31 12:28

RE: ///So why do we not see this happening in America. That will be another post.///

We do not see it in America with the exception of a few sick folk occasionally being healed, for the same reason that Jesus could do no mighty work, in His own country.

because of the unbelief.

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 12:41

I think that we are talking past each other. I would encourage you to go back and read Savannah's post as it was cited later by krautfrau.

///Cessationism then does not deny the reality that God can do whatever He wants whenever He wants (Psalm 115:3). It does not put God into a box or limit His sovereign prerogative.

But it does acknowledge that there was something unique and special about the age of miracles and miracle-workers that defined the ministries of Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha, and Christ and His apostles. Moreover, it recognizes the seemingly obvious fact that those kinds of miracles (like parting the sea, stopping the rain, raising the dead, walking on water, or instantly healing the lame and the blind) are not occurring today....

So, the question is not: Can God still do miracles?

Rather, the definitive question is this: Are the miraculous gifts of the New Testament still in operation in the church today?—such that what was the norm in the days of Christ and the apostles ought to be expected today?

To that, all cessationists would answer “no.”///

When I was a missionary kid we saw miracles... I don't for a moment doubt that God still heals, that men still dream dreams and see visions but not in the same normative way that was true at the time of the apostles. To say that a man has the gift of healing or prophesy is different than saying that God healed someone. To say that I had a dream that I believed came from the Lord and that I checked with Scripture and benefited from is very different from taking the dream and saying to the people in my life, "Thus says the Lord..."

Sola scriptura means that the Bible is our only rule, but that doesn't mean that we don't need help to interpret it. We need the Spirit of God to open our eyes, we need pastors and teachers and that is why we quote men like Hodge and Henry. You want me to hear your take on the Scripture, and I want to weigh what you are saying and what I am thinking against what the godly pastors and teachers from past generation said.

I hope no one will mind me saying there is nothing per se wrong with an "ism". The question is: is that "ism" true. We needn't be opposed at isms as if giving something a nickname makes it suddenly false.

I appreciate you brothers and your zeal for the Lord. Many of us in the cessationist share that zeal. But you are right at least on this: There is great unbelief in the church today and there is a tremendous problem with complacency.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/31 14:27

RE: ///Sola scriptura means that the Bible is our only rule, but that doesn't mean that we don't need help to interpret it. We need the Spirit of God to open our eyes, we need pastors and teachers and that is why we quote men like Hodge and Henry. You want me to hear your take on the Scripture, and I want to weigh what you are saying and what I am thinking against what the godly pastors and teachers from past generation said.///

Charles Hodge was a Systematic Calvinist,

I believe that when we become willing to lay our traditions and preconceived views down, and start to believe in God's Sovereign hand in inspiring the Words of the Bible. We will start to realize that the Scripture is not to be read so much from a systematic perspective and that the calvinistic view has applied a lot of selective blindness to a lot of Scripture in order to make its doctrines and its lineage fit.

Edit add : When we start realizing this we need to start laying the commentaries aside, and going in and by faith claiming the promises of Scripture :

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

Theology and the Worship of it, has greatly harmed the church

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 14:58

proud papa, I love your zeal for the Bible. We obviously share the conviction that the Bible is sufficient... but if we need to put away our commentaries than we need to put away seminaries and teaching and preaching.

Also, I thought the following should be included in any list of systematic Calvinists:

Charles Spurgeon
Martyn Lloyd-Jones
AW Pink
Robert Murray M'Cheyne
George Whitefield and most of the men used of God in the Great Awakening (Wesley being one of the only exceptions)
Asahel Nettleton and most of the men used of God in the Second Great Awakening
John Newton
JC Ryle
Jonathan Edwards
most of the Puritans
John Knox
John Calvin

Duncan Campbell was a Calvinist, though he was certainly not reformed in every way. His biography is called Channel of Revival.

Re: - posted by proud papa, on: 2013/10/31 15:54

Hi Stephen2

Stephen2 wrote ///I thought the following should be included in any list of systematic Calvinists:

Charles Spurgeon
Martyn Lloyd-Jones
AW Pink
Robert Murray M'Cheyne
George Whitefield and most of the men used of God in the Great Awakening (Wesley being one of the only exceptions)
Asahel Nettleton and most of the men used of God in the Second Great Awakening
John Newton
JC Ryle
Jonathan Edwards
most of the Puritans
John Knox
John Calvin

Duncan Campbell was a Calvinist, though he was certainly not reformed in every way. His biography is called Channel of Revival.///

I Believe that God has and does use men whom hold to calvinistic theology, I personally believe that they are more likely to be anointed while preaching than when they are setting down writing a systematic study or commentary relying heavy on what others before them taught. , instead of being still and waiting for a personal revelation of What is being spoken. The Scripture is so deep that the same text speaks differently to different people in differet situations at different times, we must be careful as not to box the Scriptures into the confines of commentary or certain traditional understandings.

We also must recognize that Scriptures are they that testify of the anointing

Stephen2, I appreciate your attitude in this discussion.

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 16:05

Thank you brother! And I know that if we could have occasion to meet in person we would spend our time in prayer rather than in debate.

Our King Jesus is precious, and I have the feeling that most of us using this site would agree that we need and greatly want more of Him. And probably some of our debate is simply over what we CALL the things many of us on different sides of this debate have experienced! How we need to pray that the Lord would grant us more of Him.

Re: - posted by proudpapa, on: 2013/10/31 16:11

RE: ///Thank you brother! And I know that if we could have occasion to meet in person we would spend our time in prayer rather than in debate.

Our King Jesus is precious, and I have the feeling that most of us using this site would agree that we need and greatly want more of Him. And probably some of our debate is simply over what we CALL the things many of us on different sides of this debate have experienced! How we need to pray that the Lord would grant us more of Him.///

Amen brother, I agree

Re: , on: 2013/10/31 16:43

Brothers it would be an honor to be in the sane jail cell with you.

Bear. :)

Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2013/10/31 17:22

BearMaster Stated

Quote:

----- Brothers it would be an honor to be in the sane jail cell with you.

Bear. :)

Thank you for saying that! I whole heartedly agree! It so encompasses the heart of a true believer. I have disagreed with many things you have posted over time ... yet I have never questioned your love of, devotion to, and desire to honor our Savior!

In the final analysis we who know Him share far more in common than is recognized. We tend to focus on our differences. However, our differences are very small when compared to all we have in common.

Thanks again bro!

Many blessings to you!

Jason