

Is God Still Revealing Truth?

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 90-462

Now we have been looking for the last number of weeks on Sunday night at the Charismatic Movement from a biblical perspective. And while the questions that we have posed and answered have been many already, there are just a few things that need to be said, and they happen to be very foundational realities.

I think when most people look at the Charismatic Movement, think about the Movement, they look at the phenomena that goes on. They talk about tongues, and they talk about miracles, and signs and wonders so-called, supposedly. People talk about the kind of behavior they see on television or experience in person if they've been to a Charismatic service or environment. But there are some underlying theological presuppositions that send the Movement on the wrong course from the very outset. The reason the behavior is out of control is because the foundations are non-existent. That is to say biblical foundations are non-existent. What substitutes for a biblical foundation are some serious errors that need to be addressed and you can't understand the Movement is the way it is and features the behaviors that it has until you understand what has gone wrong at the very beginning.

Last week we talked about the first very foundational reality that must be considered in any assessment of the Charismatic Movement, and that is their source for truth. And rather than draw truth out of the Word of God, they look for truth in their experiences. Their experiences, their feelings, their emotions become the source of truth. And that leads to utter chaos.

And there is a second very foundational subject that I want to address tonight and that is around the question, Does God still give revelation? This is less, as I said last week, like a sermon and more like a lecture, but the information is very, very important. Does God still give revelation? Is God still revealing truth from heaven? Is God still speaking? Or on the other hand, has God ceased speaking when the Scripture was complete?

The historic view has always been that the Scripture is the Word of God. It has a beginning and it has an end and when the book of Revelation was completed, and the writings of John at the end of the first century, the canon was complete and God has not revealed His Word since that time. It doesn't mean the Holy Spirit doesn't direct and lead, it doesn't mean God isn't operating in history, He is. Everything happens within His providential power and purpose is. But the question is, Is God still giving revelation? Or do we have all the revelation He has intended for us in the Old Testament and the New Testament?

Now the answer of the Charismatic Movement is absolutely, God is still giving revelation. To make a simple analogy, as the Old Testament is incomplete without the New Testament, so the New Testament for Charismatics is incomplete without the subsequent revelation as the New Testament completes the Old Testament, so the continuing revelation completes the New Testament.

Obviously if you believe that, you have called into question the sufficiency and the uniqueness of the Old and New Testament and that is the issue. You might say that the anthem of the Charismatic Movement is “God told me so-and-so and so-and-so.” Strange private prophecies are proclaimed by all kinds of people who evidently believe that God is still speaking and in fact, He’s not only still speaking but He speaks virtually to anybody and everybody. even though in the Old Testament He spoke through the prophets, and in the New Testament He spoke through the Apostles and those associated with them, now when He speaks He speaks through anybody and everybody, but apparently He speaks mostly through people who have bad theology.

I suppose the most outrageous and infamous and preposterous prophecy was given by one of the architects of the Charismatic Movement, Oral Roberts who has since died. Roberts told his nationwide audience in 1987 that God had threatened to kill him, God had threatened to take him out of this world if he couldn’t raise eight million dollars. So the word was put out and I remember hearing it from his own lips that if he doesn’t get eight million dollars within a certain amount of days, he would be dead. And so there was a move to save him from being killed by God. He received a last-minute reprieve in the form of a large check from a Florida dog track owner. And his view was that God spared his life because that dog track owner came up with the final amount of money to reach eight million.

Two years later Oral Roberts decided to close the multi-million dollar Tulsa based city of Faith Medical Center. Some of you have been to Tulsa, you’ve seen it, it sits there as a monument to folly. He maintains that God told him to close it. This is what Roberts said as an answer to why he would close this when millions upon millions of dollars were paid to build a thirty-five story medical center and then another building about half as tall. To which he responded, “God said, I had you build the city of faith large enough to capture the imagination of the entire world about the merging of my healing streams of prayer and medicine. I didn’t want this revelation localized in Tulsa, however. And the time has come when I want this concept of merging my healing streams to be known to all people and to go into all future generations. As clearly in my spirit—he goes on as I’ve ever heard him—the Lord gave me an impression quote: from the Lord, “You and your partners have merged prayer and medicine for the entire world, for the church world and for all generations—he said—it is done.”

I then asked, “Is that why after eight years you’re having us close the hospital and after eleven years the medical school?” The Lord said, quote: “Yes, the mission has been accomplished in the same way that after the three years of public ministry, my son said on the cross, ‘Father it is finished.’”

That's Oral Roberts quoting God, giving Him the reason why he was to close the medical center.

We may gasp at that kind of folly but he is not the only Charismatic. In fact, this is fairly normal, maybe not such an outrageous approach and not such an outrageous project, but people are always receiving private revelation from God. At one time or another God is supposed to speak to you and just like if you don't speak in tongues and you call yourself a Charismatic, you've come up woefully short. If you're not getting private revelation, you're equally being cut out of what God has for His people. God speaks sometimes in an audible voice, He speaks sometimes with a strong internal impression that is unmistakably Him, He speaks in a vision, He speaks in a dream, He sometimes speaks through someone else who brings a prophecy. God speaks to people and they write a song. God speaks to people and they write a poem. God speaks to people and they utter it as a prophecy.

An editor for a Christian publisher once told me that he receives submissions manuscripts every week from Charismatics who claim God inspired them to write their book, their article, their song, or their poem. My editor friend noted that the manuscripts are often poorly written and have bad grammar and are marred by factual and logical errors and are full of poems that don't rhyme. And he is convinced that God didn't actually write any of it.

You might think that this is just cranks and obscure eccentric people and naïve people who would come up with this but this comes right from the leadership, right from the leadership. There have been books throughout the history of the Charismatic Movement that have claimed to be written by God. A well-known some time ago David Wilkerson claimed that his book was written by God and handed to him in the same way that the Bible is inspired. Jack Hayford told the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America that God had told him a new era is coming. He related a vision in which he had seen Jesus seated on His throne at the right hand of the Father. In the vision Jesus began to lean forward and rise from His seat. As the anointing caught in the folds of His garments, it began to splash out and fall over the church. Then Jesus said, "I'm beginning to rise now in preparation for My Second Coming. Those who will rise with me will share in this double portion of anointing." That's a direct revelation from God through a vision, it's claimed to be so.

Maybe the most unusual story of all comes from one of the fathers of the Movement, Kenneth Hagen. He says that when he was younger and still single, God led him to break off a relationship with a girl by revealing to Him that she was morally unfit. He didn't discover that, God revealed it to him.

How did that happen? In a most unconventional way. Hagen claims God miraculously transported him out of church one Sunday right in the middle of the sermon, worse of all, he was the preacher delivering the sermon. And in the middle of delivering the sermon, he was transported, and I quote him, "Suddenly I was gone. Right in the middle of my sermon I found myself standing along a street in a little town fifteen miles away and I knew it was Saturday night. I was leaning against a building and I saw this young lady come walking down the street. About the time she got to where I was standing, a

car came down the street, the driver pulled up to the curb sounded the horn, she got into the car. He backed out, turned the other direction, started out of town and suddenly I was sitting the backseat. They went out in the country and committed adultery and I watched them. I was still in the cloud. Suddenly I heard the sound of my voice and the cloud lifted and I was standing behind the pulpit. I didn't know what to say because I didn't know what I had been saying so I just said, 'Everyone bow your head and we prayed.' I looked at my watch and I had been gone about fifteen minutes.

"While I was shaking hands with people as they went out the door, this young lady came by, I said, 'We missed you last night.' She said, 'Yes, I was over in such-and-such town,' and I said, 'Yes, I know.'"

Well on the basis of that questionable experience, Hagen determined that the girl was promiscuous and assumes to this day that she was, or did, until his dying day, that she was guilty of adultery. He followed with a report that he was also suddenly transported into a car where another young girl was supposedly engaged in moral compromise."

This must be where Mark Driscoll is drawing from when he gives his supposed visions of people engaged in adultery and immorality. Vivid visions which he describes.

Would God transport Hagen miraculously into cars so he could witness acts of adultery? Would He give anybody visions of people committing adultery? Did God talk to Oral Roberts or anybody else? Are Christians still receiving by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit direct messages from God so that they can know things they otherwise couldn't know so that they can write books that are inspired, songs, poems or teachings, or make decisions?

Really, the Charismatic Movement is just absolutely full of this. It is pretty normal. In fact, as I said earlier, if you're not having God speak to you, something's seriously wrong...seriously wrong.

This notion that God is speaking was really legitimized some years back in a book by a man named J. Rodman Williams. He was a pretty formidable guy. He was professor of systematic theology at Austin Presbyterian Seminary. He was professor of renewal, Charismatic Renewal theology at the Virginia Beach University, Regent University, some of you know about. He had a Ph.D. from Union Theological Seminary which is a rank, liberal, godless, Christ-rejecting seminary in New York. But he was enough of a scholar to bring some kind of credibility to the Charismatic Movement. And this is Rodman Williams wrote, "The Bible truly has become a fellow witness to God's present activity." Did you get that? The Bible is a fellow witness to God's present activity. "If someone today perhaps has a vision of God, of Christ, it is good to know that it has happened before. If one has a revelation from God, to know that for the early Christians, revelation also occurred in the committee of ...in their community. If one speaks a "Thus says the Lord," and dares to address the fellowship in the first person, even going beyond the words of Scripture, it's good to know this was happening long ago.

How strange and remarkable it is, if one speaks in the fellowship of the Spirit the Word of truth, it is neither his own thoughts and reflections, or simply some exposition of Scripture, for the Spirit transcends personal observations however interesting or profound they may be. The Spirit as the living God moves through and beyond the records of past witness, which is Scripture. However valuable such records are as a model for what is happening today. So the Bible is not a unique set of divine revelation, sixty-six books, it's a model for what God is continuing to do. That's what he's saying. He's alleging the Bible is not the final source of God's revelation, it is a witness to the way He does revelation and He's doing more of it even today."

This is deeply troubling. Is the Bible a model for the kind of revelation God is doing today? One writer says, "The age of models has come," talk a lot about that. A model takes the place of a Law. Models are human perceptions of truth, they are tentative and thus subject to change as new data becomes available. These models are open and constantly tested. No scientist dares claim any longer that one model is the way to explain all known phenomena, for fear that some newly discovered data will prove the scientist to be a precipitous old fool.

In other words, models change and shift in science. The models progress and progress. Now that leads me to say this, and this is an important thing. A model can be an open system model or a closed system model. If the Bible is a closed system, then it really isn't a model that's going to change, if it's a closed system. If it's a closed system, there is no new revelation...no new revelation. And taking this idea of a model that is open that keeps shifting with new data is very, very dangerous. But that is exactly what the Charismatic Movement does, rejecting the closed system of the Bible, it opts out for the fact that the Bible is a model and an expanding model in which new data is being inserted by God. This is erroneous and this is deadly. There should be no confusion in this area. The orthodox teaching on Christianity has always affirmed that God's Word is complete. Jude, "It is the once for all delivered to the saints faith." This is the issue. Is the Bible complete? Or is it incomplete? Is it the Old Testament and the New Testament? Or is it the Old Testament and the New Testament and all the other revelation that keeps coming?

Now they want to scramble around and say, "Well no, not all of this new revelation is equal to Scripture." Well if it comes from God, then it has to be equal with Scripture because God only speaks the truth. And then they say, "Well we don't know that it all comes from God because some of it is true and some of it is false." Well how do we know the difference? Well we really don't know. It puts God in a very awkward position.

If on the other hand the Bible is complete, it represents a closed system of truth, fixed, absolute, dogmatically proclaimed, affirmed and understood. If on the other hand God is still speaking and still granting new revelation, then the truth of God is still being progressively revealed.

That is a severe problem because we have no idea what God may say tomorrow, that may somehow change what He said in the past, or altered or qualified in some way. If all you had was the Old Testament, you would be waiting for the New as the disciples and the believers in the Lord Jesus were in the early church. They couldn't wait to get the New because the Old Testament was not the full story, the revelation of God was yet incomplete. The Old was not enough. It was all true but it was progressive revelation and there was more to come, more to come, and so Paul says, "I am a minister of the mystery, what was hidden is now revealed. The message is complete only when you have the New Testament.

But if God is still giving revelation, then the message isn't true yet. And if it's not complete now, what might be said by somebody somewhere that comes from God, just anybody since there are no prophets as there were in the Old Testament and those associated with them who wrote the Old and there are no Apostles and those associated with them who wrote the New, you mean to say that God is just speaking all over the place to all kinds of people and we're supposed to try to figure out what He may be saying? It's hopeless...it's hopeless. Why would God ever think to do that, to reveal Himself in such a willy-nilly fashion, as I said, to people with bad theology who aren't writing it down? No, Scripture is a closed system of truth, complete, sufficient, not to be added to, that's why it ends. "If you add to this book, will be added to you the plagues written in it." That's the last word in the last book written in the last decade of that first century when all the New Testament was complete. And again, Jude 3, "It is the faith once for all delivered to the saints." Once, and we'll get into that a little bit.

And it was done by the Apostles. We talked about that in the Q & A a couple of weeks ago. The signs of an Apostle authenticated them as the true writers of Scripture, 2 Corinthians 12:12. Again Hebrews 2, God affirmed the writers of the New Testament by signs and wonders and miracles, so that everybody knew who were the true speakers for God. God is not speaking to fakes and frauds, charlatans.

I will give some credit to a part of the Movement because now there has come a new Movement called The New Apostolic Reformation and people are declaring themselves Apostles now. I noticed Fred Price over here in Inglewood in the last couple of years has now declared himself an Apostle and every time you see him or hear him, he's called Apostle Fred Price. They do know that divine revelation came through the Apostles in order to legitimate the fact that they may be the recipients of this, they're now calling themselves Apostles. They are the new Apostles of the new Apostolic reformation, which, by the way, isn't new, isn't apostolic and isn't a reformation.

What were the qualifications of an Apostle? These don't qualify any of these people. One, they had to be eyewitnesses to the risen Jesus Christ. And Peter says, "You haven't seen Him but you love Him." They had to be personally chosen by Christ and they had to be confirmed by signs and wonders. There is no possibility there will be any Apostles in this era or any past the New Testament because

there are no eyewitnesses to the risen Christ. It is these Apostles and their associates who were the writers of the New Testament. Jesus says that in the Upper Room discourse, John 14, John 15, John 16 repeated, repeated, repeated that the Spirit will come upon you and bring things to your remembrance and that's giving them the promise that they will be able to recall and write down the Scripture as the Spirit comes upon them.

Now when they talk about the Lord speaking to them, they are saying that they are inspired...they are inspired. And I need to talk about that word for just a minute. What does inspiration mean? When we say someone is inspired, we could mean all kinds of things, inspired to put on a great performance as a singer, inspired to write a great book, inspired to do a great deed, inspired to act in a heroic way. However, that is not really a good definition for the word. "Inspire" comes from the Latin root meaning "to breathe...to breathe in." INspired, to bring in. It's contrary to another word, "expire." That's when you breathe out. And when somebody breathes out their last, we say they expired.

But the word "inspired," or "inspiration" doesn't convey the true meaning of the Greek term. Turn to 2 Timothy 3:16 for a minute, and let me have you look at that text, 2 Timothy 3:16. And it says, "That all Scripture is inspired by God." And again, there's that word but that is not...that is not the best word to use. All Scripture is inspired by God.

Now technically speaking, that again, the Latin root, breathed in by God, that's not the real meaning. The Greek term is *theopneustos*, God breathed...God breathed. "All Scripture is God breathed."

If you say it is inspired, it might convey that it is the words of men into which God puffed life. That is exactly what neo-orthodoxy says that the Scripture is dead until God puffs life into it, until God makes it live. It is not inspired in itself, it is not inerrant in itself, it is...it has no message in itself, but God will puff breath into it when you absorb it first. That is, when you put it into your thoughts, and your mind, and your concepts, and your intuition, and your words, when you make it your own, God puffs life into it.

The idea then would be that God is sort of assisting, puffing life into His Words. That is not what it means. What God breathed means is that it's the very breath of God...the very breath of God. At the burning bush, God said to Moses, "Go and I, even I, will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to say," Exodus 4:12. Jeremiah, the prophet of Judah received this charge from God, "All that I command you, you shall speak. I have put My words in your mouth," Jeremiah 1. He said to Ezekiel, "Son of Man, go to the House of Israel, take into your heart all My words which I shall speak to you. Listen closely and speak to them."

Second Peter 1:21, "No prophecy is ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." Moved by the Spirit, spoke from God. So it isn't the idea that God breathed into human words, but that God breathed out divine words, God breathed out divine words from His

own mind.

We need to think of the way the Scripture was done different than men being inspired, as if God puffed life into their ideas or puffed energy or spirituality into their words and thoughts and feelings and intuitions. That, however, is the experience of Charismatics along with neo-orthodox who take the Bible and think it's some dead letter until somehow they think God puffed some life into it.

No, every word of God is true because every word of Scripture comes from the very mind and mouth of God. This has been very confusion, not only to Charismatics, but to many people because the attacks on the fact that God breathed out Scripture have been relentless. I know as a student, all the way back in my seminary days, we were always having to write papers defending the fact that the Bible was the Word of God and not the word of man into which God puffed life when it touched the heart.

There was a writer, and I remember dealing with him in seminary days and after, by the name of Dewey Beegle(?). He was a professor at a Wesleyan seminary in Washington D.C., Old Testament professor, who had received a degree from Johns Hopkins, Ph.D., so he was a bright guy. This is his view of inspiration. "Some of the great hymns are practically on the par with the Psalms. And one can be sure that if Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, Augustus Toplidy(??) and Reginald Heber who all wrote hymns, had lived in the time of David and Solomon, and been no more inspired then they were in their own day, some of their hymns and praise to God would have found their way into the Hebrew canon."

In other words, hymn writers were just as inspired as the Psalmist. Beegle who died in 1995 refers in particular to the experience of somebody like George Matheson, a blind Scottish pastor who was engaged to a girl and his blindness was increasing and she left him because she didn't want to push around a blind man all her life, so he wrote a wonderful song, "O love that will not let me go," because her love had definitely let him go. He wrote it during the time of great personal stress. In fact, on the evening of his younger sister's wedding, Matheson was reminded vividly of the agony he had suffered before when his own fiancée rejected him because she learned he was going blind. Matheson wrote the hymn in just a few minutes. He claimed nothing more than that he had written it. He wrote the hymn, "O love that will not let me go," and it was of that hymn that Beegle said, "That kind of inspiration is the same as the Psalms. There's no difference in kind. If there is any difference, it was a matter of degree. When the biblical writer served as channels of God's revelation, they needed more divine help. But the inspiration was not distinct in kind from that given to all the messengers of God down through history. What distinguishes the Bible is its record of special revelation, not a distinctive kind of inspiration."

In other words, its record of inspiration is legitimate but it's not the only revelation. Beegle then summed it up by saying, "The canon of Scripture hasn't been closed." That puts us in an impossible

situation. Now you've got a Charismatic Movement that can go back, pick up a couple of scholars like J. Rodman Williams, and Dewey Beegle and have some sort of highbrow authentication for continuing revelation, continuing inspiration.

He writes, Beegle does, "The revelation and inspiration of God's Spirit continues. If the church had a more dynamic sense of God's inspiration in the twentieth century, it would be more effective in its witness and outreach. It is well and good to protect the distinctiveness of the Bible, but to think only in terms of its inspiration as absolutely different in kind from inspiration in our time is too high a price to pay. Christians today need to have the same sense of being God-motivated, God-sent, as did the biblical writers and interpreters. In a genuine sense, the difficulty of interpreting God's record of revelation to this complex age requires as much of God's in-breathing and wisdom as did the process of interpretation in the biblical period," end quote.

So he sees inspiration as God breathing in to human words His own breath, which gives them some kind of spiritual life. That is exactly what Charismatics believe and they retreat to these kinds of guys to get some scholastic support for the things that they say.

The truth is, however, if that is the case, you can't protect the uniqueness of Scripture...you can't. If the canon is still open, by the word canon, that's a theological term meaning standard or rule, if the standard of Scripture which has always been affirmed by the church is now open and there's more than God is still giving new prophecies, new words of wisdom, new revelations, new visions, conveying new truth, then the New Testament advances the Old Testament and this advances the New Testament.

Charisma magazine, which is the main magazine for the Movement, recommends this, "To meditate on our personal prophecies, we should record them if at all possible. If someone approaches us saying he or she has a word from God, we should ask the person to wait a moment until we can get an audio recorder or else ask the person to write it down. If the word comes from someone on the platform during a meeting that is not being recorded, we must try to write down as much as possible, getting at least the main points." This is like writing again the new New Testament. Wherever it comes, to whomever it comes, please write it down, God is still speaking.

And oh, by the way, the people in the Movement chase those rather than going back to the New Testament because that's the fresh word from God. The canon is still open, God is still speaking. Progressive revelation still going on. They receive revelation through tongues, prophecies, visions, new manifestations. It's good to know, says one writer, if one speaks "Thus says the Lord," and dares to address the fellowship in the first person, even going beyond the words of Scripture that this was happening long ago. That's from Rodman Williams. It's the same process as in the biblical writers experience. Progressive revelation, still going on, still continuing.

Now I could keep reading you quotes but I think you get the picture. It is these pseudo-scholars that are used to defend these kinds of things. To say that current instances of Charismatic prophecy or visions, or supposed revelations are divine and they are from God, makes them equal to Scripture and how in the world can we chase all of this down and get it so we know what god is actually saying?

Williams says, "Prophecy can, by no means, be taken casually. Since it is verily God's message to His people, there must be quite serious and careful consideration given to each word spoken and application made within the life of the fellowship. Also because of the ever-present danger of prophecy being abused, the pretense of having a Word from God, there is a need for spiritual discernment. Just how do we do that? That would have been easy if we were dealing with a prophet or an Apostle. How do we do that with people scattered all over the planet having these supposed revelations?"

Now he understands the deadly effect of this on the Bible, so Williams later wrote in a logos journal, "I do not intend in any way to place contemporary experience on the same level of authority as the Bible. Rather I do vigorously affirm the decisive authority of Scripture, hence God does not speak just as authoritatively today as He spoke to the biblical authors but He does continue to speak. He did not stop with the close of the New Testament canon. Thus He moves through and beyond the records of past witnesses, for He is the living God who still speaks and acts among His people."

Well if it's God and He's speaking, how is it different than Scripture? You can say it's not as authoritative as Scripture, but if it's God, are you telling me He's making suggestions, options? That explanation fails to resolve the issue. Additional revelation from God is from God and it must be authoritative. That is an artificial comment, nonsense.

So you have J. Rodman Williams, and I remember him, at the heart of the Charismatic Movement, you have Dewey Beegle outside the Movement, a rank liberal, and they both are saying the same thing. The Movement holds on to this continuing revelation and consequently undercuts the uniqueness of Scripture. Scripture is sacrificed, it's not the newest and the freshest, you can't use it to gain power over people. You want power over people? Just tell them God speaks to you and He tells you this and He tells you that, and He tells you the other thing. People who buy into that are under your control and your power and they can check you against nothing.

Essentially what this Movement has done is abandon the cornerstone of Scripture, while on the one hand affirming the Bible, affirming the Scripture, reading the Scripture, talking about the Scripture, at the same time undermining its unique sole authority, *sola Scriptura*. Once a congregation sees Scripture as less than the final, complete, infallible authority for faith and practice, you have just opened the door to chaos. If you can get truth from anywhere and anywhere, experientially and

intuitively, as we said last week, and if God is still talking and the Bible is not the final word, then anything goes, absolutely anything goes and you get crazy things, such as I read you earlier, blamed on God.

Kenneth Copeland, another leading force in this Movement, says Jesus gave him a message during a three-day meeting in Dallas. This is what he said. "Jesus said to him, it's time for these things to happen, says the Lord. It's time for spiritual activity to increase. Oh yes, demonic activity will increase along at the same time, but don't let that disturb you. Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of thinking you're God. Don't be disturbed when people accuse you of a fanatical way of life. Don't be disturbed...this is supposed to be Jesus speaking...don't be disturbed when people put you down and speak harshly and roughly of you. That spoke that way of Me, Jesus. Should they not speak that way of you? The more you get to be like me, the more they're going to think that way of you. They crucified Me for claiming that I was God, but I didn't claim I was God, I just claimed I walked with Him and that He was in me. Hallelujah, that's what you're doing."

What? God gave you a message that Jesus didn't claim that He was God? I don't think so. Copeland's prophecy is a lie. And he gives it in the first person as if Jesus is saying, "I didn't claim to be God, I claimed that God was in me and you can be just like me cause God can be in you." That's why he calls believers "little gods." Jesus did claim He was God.

Is Copeland a prophet or is he one of those false prophets Peter spoke of who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them? You see, here we come again to the conclusion that Charismatics have abandoned the uniqueness of Scripture, the only Word from God and the result is a spiritual free-for-all and there's no real interest in Bible study, there's only interest in the next revelation, the next word from heaven, the next message from God. And there's no way to resolve the chaos and the confusion.

People say to me all the time, "Okay, I understand this Movement is dangerous, how do we stop it?" You know, it would be like imagining the entire United States on fire and then asking how you would stop it. Where would you even begin to fire the hose...to shoot the hose? It's all over the globe. There's half a billion people in this Movement. I'm not on any illusions that all of a sudden the efforts that we're making all the way through October in the conference are going to stop the Movement, but we're certainly going to make a cry as loud as we can. Why? Because we're mad at those people?

There are some people that I'm very righteously angry at, the architects of this Movement, the leaders of it who know they're frauds. But it isn't because we're angry with them, it's because we care about them. It's because their souls are at stake and they're brans that need to be snatched from the burning. They need to be rescued from lies. And I'm sure there are many of you here in our church tonight who came out of the Charismatic Movement. I'm sure many of you. I'd be curious, if you came out of a Charismatic background, put your hand up. Yeah, and that's why we do this.

It gets so bizarre that they've, some of them have developed a school of the prophets where you can go to learn how to get revelation. And they have seminars on how to listen for God's voice speaking. This is at the heart of this Movement and it leads people away from the truth, away from the Word of God, chasing error, lies and deception. It's just a tragic thing. Their souls are at stake, the truth is at stake.

The canon of the Word of God is closed and settled. I could give you all the history of that. You can read it. There are a lot of places to read about the close of the canon. If you're a little unsure of how that all happened, you could certainly read about it. The canon of the Old Testament closed, the books of the Old Testament, 39 books of the Old Testament closed right after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, everybody knew it. And then there were 400 silent years, God was through speaking. And the silence of God was broken with the coming of John the Baptist and the New Testament. And when the New Testament was complete, God stopped speaking and there was a pattern. And that's the way it was in the Old, and that's the way it was in the New...God has spoken through the Old Testament to the prophets, many ways, many portions, and now in these last days, spoken to us in His Son, that's the New Testament. And then God ceased speaking.

The saints knew what the Old Testament was, what the true Old Testament was. They affirmed it collectively. The saints knew what the New Testament was, they affirmed it collectively. They knew those books that were inspired books because of their doctrinal accuracy, historical accuracy, and apostolic authorship, and apostolic connections. They knew that. It is critical to say that the Christian faith is unchangeable and unchanging...it is unchangeable and unchanging. It is applied to every age and every believer by the work of the Holy Spirit, but the faith once for all delivered to the saints, that faith, that body of truth is complete and the canon is closed and the Word of God is settled forever in heaven. And as long as we stay within the bounds of the Word of God, we are secure and we are safe. But when somebody leads you beyond the Word of God and starts telling you you're getting...they're getting revelation from God, avoid such false teachers...avoid such false teachers. You know the true teachers by their loyalty to holy Scripture.

I had a lot more to say, but that's enough and I think you get the point. I have been concerned about this Movement, you all know that, for decades. I've spoken about it many times through the years in years past, been a few years since we addressed it to this degree. But the proportions that it's reached has energized me and I do this for the honor of the Lord and the sake of souls that are deceived. Pray, will you?, that the Lord will bless these efforts of not only the messages that we've been preaching the series we did a couple of years ago on Romans 8, and then these follow-up Q and A messages, they're getting spread around. There are lots of articles coming up now on the Internet attacking back at me and that's what's going to happen. They're not going to be able to answer the arguments when the book comes out, and it will be out in October and you'll be able to get a copy, Strange fire book. They're really not going to be able to answer the arguments, there are

just too many of them and they're too biblical and too truthful and they're just powerful arguments. So what's going to happen, and it's already beginning to happen, is the *ad hominem* attack where you can't be the argument so you attack the other person. So we're going to see some of that coming at us.

For the sake of the truth, I would endure anything...anything. For the sake of the truth you could burn me at the stake. This is about the truth. This isn't about denominations, it isn't about personalities, this is about the truth. And of those of us who minister have any accountability or responsibility to God, it is for the truth in our generation...for the truth...for the truth. I live for the truth, it is my life, every day of my life, it is about the truth, knowing the truth, understanding the truth, understanding it better, more richly, understanding the revealed truth on the pages of holy Scripture. If you throw at me endless revelations from God all over the planet to all kinds of people, you have just confounded my entire life as well as confounded the church and the world cause you've gone beyond Scripture. You will get away with murder, and they have proven that that's exactly what they get away with.

So this is an important thing and that's why we're doing this. And you need to start now praying and if you're not a volunteer already, I think you want to volunteer. This may be the most interesting three-days of your entire life. Okay, so if you need a little adventure, cancel climbing Mount Everest and come to the Strange Fire Conference. All right.

Father, thank You for Your Word, Your truth. Thank You for giving it to us, passing it down, protecting it so that we can hold it in our hands, everything You've said, all 66 books and know that that's sufficient, that's Your Word and You've gone silent, except that the Holy Spirit activates the Word to us. Everything we need to know is in the pages of the holy book and it is more than enough. We rejoice in it. We love the truth, may we be faithful to it. Amen.

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