

questions of truth. I confess myself to be one among the many whom these features of the movement bother. Nonetheless, I think I see God's touch in charismatic experience, and therefore I venture upon the second course -- that of retheologizing. The reader must judge how I get on.

First we glance at the traditional Pentecostal account of charismatic experience, which most Protestant charismatics outside Germany embrace. This, the restorational view as I have called it, makes the essence of the disciples' experience on Pentecost day, as described in Acts 2, and of the Corinthians experience, as described in 1 Corinthians 12-14, into norms, ideals, and goals for Christians now. The view centers on a conception of Spirit baptism as "as experience distinct from and usually subsequent to conversion in which a person receives the totality of the Spirit into his life and is thereby fully empowered for witness and service." Until Spirit baptism takes place, the Christian is thought to lack essential resources that God has in store for him; therefore he is charged to seek this experience till he finds it. When it comes thus to upgrade him, glossolalia usually (some say invariably) occurs as the outward sign of what has happened. Since only hereby does he receive "the totality of the Spirit" (however that odd phrase be construed), his experience as thus theologized may properly be viewed as completing his initiation into Christ just as in Anglo-Catholic theory among Episcopalians, receiving the Spirit in confirmation has been seen as completing the initiation that water baptism began.

Recent thorough examinations of this view by James D. G. Dunn, F. D. Bruner, J. R. W. Stott and A. A. Hoekema makes it needless for us to weigh it in detail here. Suffice it to say, first, that if accepted, it compels an evaluation of noncharismatic Christianity -- that is, Christianity that neither knows nor seeks postconversion Spirit baptism -- as low-road, second-class, and lacking something vital; but, second, that it cannot be established from Scripture, for this view has no coherent answer to biblical counterquestions like the three following.

Can it be convincingly denied that 1 Corinthians 12:13 (NIV) ". . . We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body -- whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free -- and we were all given the one Spirit to drink," refers to one aspect of what we may call the "conversion-initiation complex" with which the Christian life starts, so that according to Paul every Christian as such is Spirit baptized? Surely not. . . .

Can it be convincingly denied that the narratives of Acts, from Pentecost on, assume that faith-repentance (Luke alternates these words when specifying response to the gospel) and the gift of the Spirit in the fullness of his new covenant ministry come together? Surely not. . . .

Can it be convincingly denied that, as Luke presents the matter, the sole reason why Jesus' first disciples had a "two stage" experience, believing first and being Spirit baptized after, was dispensational, inasmuch as nine o'clock on Pentecost