

if not in particular segments of It in Britain and Germany) is the Pentecostal development of the two-level, two-stage view of the Christian life, which goes back through the last-century holiness movements (Keswick, Higher Life, Victorious Life), and the power-for-service accounts of Spirit baptism that intertwined with them, to John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection, otherwise called perfect love, entire sanctification, the clean heart, or simply the second blessing. This charismatic theology sees the Apostles' experience at Pentecost as the normative pattern of transition from the first and lower level to the higher, Spirit-filled level. But this idea seems to lack both biblical and experiential justification, while the corollary that all Christians who are strangers to a Pentecostal transition experience are lower-level folk, not Spirit filled, is, to say the least, unconvincing. Yet the honest, penitent, expectant quest for more of God (out of which has come for so many the precious experience miscalled Spirit baptism) is always the taproot of spiritual renewal, whether impeccably theologized or not; and so it has been in this case.

2. SIGN GIFTS. The restorationist theory of sign gifts, which the charismatic movement also inherited from older Pentecostalism, is inapplicable; nobody can be sure, nor does it seem likely, that the New Testament gifts of tongues, interpretation, healing, and miracles have been restored, while Spirit-given prophecy, which in essence is not new revelation (though in biblical times this was often part of it), but rather power to apply to people truth already revealed, is not specially related to the charismatic milieu; it has in fact been in the church all along. Yet the movement's accompanying emphasis on every-member ministry in the body of Christ, using ordinary spiritual gifts, of which all have some, is wholly right and has produced rich resources of support and help for the weak and hurting in particular.
3. STRENGTHS. The charismatic stress on faith in a living Lord, learning of God from God through Scripture, openness to the indwelling Spirit, close fellowship in prayer and praise, discernment and service of personal need, and expecting God actively to answer prayer and change things for the better, are tokens of true spiritual renewal from which all Christians should learn, despite associated oddities to which mistaken theology gave rise.
4. GLOSSOLALIA. Charismatic glossolalia, a chosen way of nonverbal self-expression before God (chosen, be it said, in the belief that God wills the choice), has its place in the inescapable pluriformity of Christian experience, in which the varied makeup of both cultures and individuals is reflected by a wide range of devotional styles. It seems clear that as a devotional exercise glossolalia enriches some, but that for others it is a valueless irreverence. Some who have practiced it have later testified to the spiritual unreality for them of what they