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*Spiritual Gifts Then and Now*¹

Max Turner

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What do we mean when we talk about 'spiritual gifts'? The answer to that question would actually solve a number of others. If we take as our starting-point the twentieth-century end of the hermeneutical question we immediately encounter problems of denotation. What activities or processes in the world external to language do we signify when we speak of 'spiritual gifts'? The answer depends to a considerable extent on the speaker. For W. R. Jones—to judge by the title and contents of his essay in a handbook of Pentecostal doctrine²—there are just nine gifts. They are set out in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 (*viz.* word of wisdom, word of knowledge, discerning of spirits, 'faith', working of miracles, gifts of healing, prophecy, tongues and interpretation), and Jones would readily point you to phenomena in his church which (he would claim) were denotata³ of these nine specified gifts. Presumably only the types of events he describes qualify for the designation 'gifts of the Spirit'. Jones' position is not untypical of popular writing in Charismatic circles. Effectively the range of phenomena labelled 'charismata' or 'spiritual gifts' in Pentecostal circles and elsewhere is often reduced to the spectacular manifestations—especially healing, prophecy and tongues—and this (as Congar puts it)⁴ 'even by deservedly respected authors' varying from Leo XIII to A. Kuyper and B. B. Warfield.⁵

At the other extreme we find writers who give such a broad sense to the expressions 'spiritual gifts' or 'charismata' that it is barely possible to think of any event which belongs properly (*nota bene*) to the life of the Christian which could not legitimately be called a denotatum of the terms. E. Käsemann's essay on ministry in the early church clearly tends in this direction.⁶ Beyond him we may note the position of K. Rahner⁷ and E. Dussel:⁸ for them the charisms of the Spirit cannot be exhausted within the confines of the church, nor within those of other religions, but are also evinced in the world, *e.g.* in the rise of secular heroes fighting for the cause of justice etc. *Any* experience of existential 'grace' is an experience and gift of the Spirit. Here we have moved—albeit on theological grounds—to a whole realm of activities best classified under Max Weber's sociologically orientated concept of charisma: itself a secularization of Sohm's.⁹

So we have a problem right at the outset: what exactly are we talking *about* when we speak of 'spiritual gifts'? The immediate answer is that different twentieth-century writers are talking about different sets of

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¹ This workshop paper was originally prepared for the 1984 conference of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians and is presented here without revision.

² P. S. Brewster (ed), *Pentecostal Doctrine* (Cheltenham 1976) 47-62; cf. 95-112.

³ For semantic terms I follow J. R. Hurford and B. Heasley, *Semantics: A Coursebook* (Cambridge 1983) and, especially, J. Lyons, *Semantics* (2 vols) (Cambridge 1977).

⁴ Y. Cougar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* (London 1983) 2 162.

⁵ Most recently T. R. Edgar's polemically anti-charismatic work from the Dallas stable, *Miraculous Gifts* (New Jersey 1983) 14.

⁶ E. Käsemann, *Essays on New Testament Themes* (London 1964) 63-94; cf. his *New Testament Questions of Today* (London 1969) 188-95.

⁷ K. Rahner, *The Spirit in the Church* (London 1979), especially the first essay.

⁸ E. Dussel, 'The Differentiation of Charisms', *Concilium* 109 (1978) 38-55.

⁹ R. Laurentin, 'Charisms: Terminological Precision', *Concilium* 109 (1978) 9.

things. They give to the expression 'spiritual gifts' varied semantic *extensions* (the semantic extension of a term is the complete class of things—objects, events etc.—in the world that are legitimately denoted by the term). The problem is, of course, not merely one of defining extension: at the root of that difficulty is the problem of giving what is called a semantic *stereotype* of 'spiritual gifts': that is, a list of typical characteristics of the things to which the expression is correctly applied.

Can we avoid the problem by pressing the question back to the first-century end of the hermeneutical question, and asking what the New Testament means by 'spiritual gifts'? This looks attractive at first, but on closer examination we find that the new route is dogged by problems of its own. The simple fact is that Paul, Luke etc.—even if we could be sure they used terminology in the same way as each other—are not native speakers of English and do not use the phrase 'spiritual gifts' at all. So we are reduced to trying to find what language the New Testament uses to denote the equivalents of our concept(s) of 'spiritual gifts'. That, of course, means the agenda is fixed at the twentieth-century end of the hermeneutical question again—only with the hope that some 'merging of the horizons' might take a creative place in the process.

How then may we proceed? Perhaps we need not, after all, be overly concerned with the theoretical problems raised above. Whereas we have a great problem—possibly even an insoluble one—in attempting to provide a semantic stereotype of 'spiritual gifts' in general, we have no problem whatever in naming a few semantic *prototypes*. A prototype of a predicate is a thing-in-the-world (object, activity, event etc.) which is held to be typical of the kind of thing (object, activity, event etc.) which can be denoted by the predicate. On virtually any modern theological definition of 'spiritual gifts' the phenomena Paul denotes by the list in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 are definitely *individually* prototypes of what we call 'spiritual gifts', even if it be claimed that they are *together* a somewhat one-sided collection of prototypes that need balancing out with some others. From this useful starting point we may attempt to elucidate the New Testament understanding of these gifts and of their significance for today. In addition we shall ask whether what today we call 'leadership gifts' and 'acts of service' have a good biblical claim to be included within the prototypes of the expressions 'spiritual gifts', 'charisms' or 'charismata': do the New Testament writers associate these potential prototypes so definitely in kind with the undisputed prototypes that we have warrant to accuse, say, W. R. Jones *et. al.* (above) of beginning their analysis with an over-restricted stereotype of 'spiritual gifts'?

The agenda for our discussion could ideally be spelled out in detail as follows:

(1) We have said that we wish to determine the New Testament understanding of the prototypical gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. This will involve (i) specifying the *sense* of the individual terms listed (which, in

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part, must be decided by enquiring what phenomena the terms denote for Paul, Luke etc.); (ii) establishing their *significance* (largely presuppositions and entailments of the *sense*) for Paul, Luke etc., *e.g.*: (a) what binds the 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 gifts together; what common stereotype do they suggest? (b) what expressions (in the contexts of the discussions of these gifts) help to interpret them (*e.g. charismata, pneumatika* etc.) and what propositions in those contexts serve to elucidate the nature and purpose of the gifts? (c) how does the concept of

gifts which emerges relate semantically to the whole dynamic structure of concepts which we call (*e.g.*) 'Paul's theology': *i.e.* how does Paul's concept of spiritual gifts relate to his view of man outside Christ, the work of the Spirit, the nature of the church and ministry, christology etc., and how does what Paul has to say compare with what other New Testament writers say? For convenience, in what follows we shall not separate rigidly the tasks described, but it should be clear to the attentive reader, at any point, in which of the tasks we are engaged.

(2) A second aim, we stated, was to elucidate the significance of our New Testament study for today, with special reference to the topic of the spiritual gifts as experience and their influence on theology. Here a number of questions jostle for attention; pride of place must be accorded to the following: (i) Are there modern valid counterparts (*e.g.* in the Charismatic movement) to the prototypical gifts discussed? Here we shall have to consider a number of subordinate questions: (a) does any writer in the New Testament explicitly state or imply that some or all of the gifts will cease before the parousia? (b) did any of the gifts in fact cease? If so, what are the theological consequences for today? (c) what relationship exists between the gifts discussed in the New Testament and those exhibited in *e.g.* Charismatic circles? (d) is the Charismatic experience unique? (ii) Is there any biblical, theological, or practical reason to assume that reception of 'charismatic gifts' depends on a post-conversion crisis experience? (iii) What is the relationship between revelatory experiences and theology, yesterday and today?

It should immediately be clear that it is quite impossible to fulfil the requirements of this agenda within the scope of a single paper. Corners will need to be cut at numerous points: chief of which is that we must restrict our discussion for the most part to *three* of the 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 list; namely to prophecy, tongues and healing.¹⁰ Also, we shall confine most of our remarks to the significance of these gifts for Paul and for the writer of Luke-Acts, as their writings probably roughly span the apostolic age and contain more material relating to the gifts than any other.

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PART I ELUCIDATING THE NEW TESTAMENT UNDERSTANDING OF THREE PROTOTYPICAL GIFTS

1 The Sense(s) of the Terms *Prophēteia*, *Prophēteuō* and *Prophētēs* in the New Testament

Let us start by noting that we can base no conclusions on the results of study of word-formation or etymology—words change their meanings with time, and we are only interested in synchronic analysis: what the words meant in Paul's day.¹¹ Neither, though the issue is certainly germane, are we primarily interested in how Paul (or Luke) understood Old Testament prophecy, but how they understood a particular set of phenomena in the church.

1.1 In Paul

**Propheteia* Prophecy in the New Testament church has been the subject of many works, the most significant of which are those by E. Fascher¹²; E. Cothonet¹³; T. M. Crone¹⁴; G.

¹⁰ For a good New Testament survey of the sense and significance of the other gifts see J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (London 1975) 209-58. Less technically, see A. Bittlinger, *Gifts and Graces: A Commentary on 1 Corinthians 12-14* (London 1967) 27-53.

¹¹ On the dangers of etymologizing etc. see J.P. Louw, *Semantics of New Testament Greek* (Chico 1982) chap 4; G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (London 1980) chap. 2 and M. Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meanings: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics* (Grand Rapids 1983) *passim*.

¹² E. Fascher, ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ: *Eine sprach-und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Giessen 1927).

Dautzenberg¹⁵; U. Muffler¹⁶; J. Panagopoulos¹⁷; E. E. Ellis¹⁸; D. Hill¹⁹; W. Grudem²⁰; and D. E. Anne²¹, whose work surpasses anything so-far written on the subject.

With the works of Grudem and Aune we arrive at some precision on the question of what 'prophecy' meant in the New Testament, and generally in its environment. Essentially 'prophecy' fell within the sphere of what the ancients called 'natural divination' (as opposed to 'technical divination')²²: it 'is a specific form of divination that consists of intelligible verbal messages believed to originate with God and communicated through inspired human intermediaries'.²³ Similarly, Grudem can insist that the essence of prophecy, for Paul, is to be inferred from 1 Corinthians 14:29f. Here Paul states: 'Two or three prophets should speak and the others should weigh carefully what is said. And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first should stop. For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged.' Grudem elucidates this (at length) to mean that for Paul prophecy is the reception and *subsequent* communication of spontaneous, divinely given *apokalypsis*.²⁴ **Prophēteuein* is then usually the verbal form which denotes the process. **Prophētēs* is a semantic agent of *prophēteuein*.²⁵ The question is whether Paul uses it of anyone who once 'prophesies', or restricts it in some way. We shall return to this question more fully later, here merely noting that Grudem may be right to argue that Paul can use the terms *both* ways (*cf.* 1 Cor. 14:32), but usually restricted it in a manner that involved both subjective factors (*cf.* 1 Cor. 14:37: 'If anyone considers himself to be a prophet...') and *informal* recognition by the church.²⁶

1.2 In Luke-Acts

Luke does not use the noun *prophēteia*. In Luke 22:64, Jesus, blindfolded, is mocked: 'Prophecy! Who hit you?' The assumption, in accord

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with the above, is that God could reveal the identity of the assailant, and Jesus declare it (*cf.* Lk. 7:39): this process would be 'prophecy'. A similar picture emerges in Acts 2:17f. quoting Joel. Israel's sons and daughters will prophesy (17b and 18b) because God will reveal things to them in dreams and visions—the assumption (in accord with most Old Testament and much intertestamental literature)²⁷ is that prophecy is the declaring of a revelatory experience.

¹³ E Cothonet, 'Prophetisme dans le Nouveau Testament', *DBSupp* 8, 1222-1337.

¹⁴ T. M. Crone, *Early Christian Prophecy: A Study of Its origin and Function* (Baltimore 1973).

¹⁵ G. Dautzenberg, *Uchristliche Prophetie* (Stuttgart 1975).

¹⁶ U. Muller, *Prophetie und Predigi im Neuen Testament* (Gütersloh 1975), for a critique of whose method see J. Panagopoulos (ed), *Prophetic Vocation in the New Testament and Today* (Leiden 1977) 3-5.

¹⁷ Panagopoulos *ibid.*

¹⁸ E. E. Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic* (Tübingen 1978).

¹⁹ D. Hill, *New Testament Prophecy* (London 1979).

²⁰ W. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (Washington 1982).

²¹ D. E. Anne, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids 1983).

²² Anne, *ibid.* 339, *cf.* 23f., 35ff.

²³ *ibid.* 339 Anne is aware of the qualifications that need to be made with respect to Delphic prophecy (where Pythia may utter unintelligible prophecy *interpreted* by the *prophētēs*) and to Qumran writings (where the Teacher of Righteousness regards himself as an eschatological prophet, but does not prophesy as such) see chap. 2 and 132ff. and 341ff. respectively.

²⁴ Grudem, *Gift* 115-143, especially 139ff.

²⁵ In the Greek world *prophētēs* was 'one who speaks on behalf of the god'—not necessarily in oracular speech; but this observation concerns the past history of the word at Paul's time.

²⁶ Grudem, *Gift* chap. 4 especially 231.

²⁷ see especially Dautzenberg, *Urchristliche* pt. I.

In Acts 19:6 Luke describes an illapse of the Spirit on twelve 'disciples' at Ephesus with the words 'they began to speak in tongues and prophesy'. Here 'prophesy' probably does *not* have the sense 'to report a revelation (word, vision or dream) received', but 'to speak while under the external influence of the Spirit'. The precedents for that type of 'prophecy' are to be found in 1 Samuel 19:20-24; 10:5-13; Numbers 11:24-30 etc.²⁸ What is not clear is whether the *kai* is epexegetic (thereby identifying the speaking in tongues as 'prophecy'—which would certainly be consistent with general Greek usage)²⁹ or conjoining. But either way we have a different sense to that which Paul uses in the situation confronting him at Corinth.³⁰ Just what other phenomena Luke would happily denote by *prophēteuein* we shall need to discuss below.

2 The New Testament Concepts of Prophecy

We move now from discussion of word-usage to the concept(s) signified by the *prophēteuein* word-group. What can we discern about the nature of New Testament prophecy beyond what we have said above? The essence of prophecy in Paul, we have noted, is the declaration of a revelation imparted by a spiritual agent (God, or Jesus, in Spirit in the case of true prophets/prophecies).³¹ Six major points require elucidation:

2.1 The Psychology of Prophecy³²

The sharp antithesis drawn between Greco-Roman 'ecstatic' prophecy on the one hand, and Jewish and Christian 'controlled' prophecy on the other, seems to rest on a caricature of the former.³³ Nevertheless, Grudem and Aune are probably right to insist that we do not encounter ecstatic³⁴ prophecy in the New Testament (not even behind 1 Cor. 12:3),³⁵ but what Aune describes as 'controlled' prophetic 'trance' (using and developing the anthropological typology of E. Bourguignon and sociological analysis of I. M. Lewis).³⁶ On the one hand the revelation that comes to the prophet is distinct and compelling, such that the prophet may (wrongly in Paul's opinion) feel he could not resist the Spirit (1 Cor. 14:32) or (rightly in Paul's view) that he must be given almost immediate hearing if the revelation comes to him during worship (1 Cor. 14:30). On the other hand he is sufficiently aware of his surroundings to be able to bring his speech to a close when another signals he has received an immediate revelation (1 Cor. 14:30). The strength and sharpness of the revelation probably varied widely. At one extreme we have the powerful visionary experiences of Paul, e.g. in 2 Corinthians 12³⁷ (though not all led to prophecy), or John in

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²⁸ Grudem, *Gift* 33-37.

²⁹ So G. Haya-Prats, *L'Esprit: Force de l'Église* (Paris 1975) 24.

³⁰ Aune, *Prophecy* 199 follows N. J. Engelsen, *Glossolalia and Other Forms of Inspired Speech According to 1 Corinthians 12-14* (unpublished Ph.D., Yale 1970) in saying Paul was the first to separate the two phenomena (tongues and prophecy), and this on situational grounds: cf. Crone, *Early Christian Prophecy* 219-21.

³¹ not by 'angels' as Ellis supposes: see Grudem, *Gift* 120-22.

³² see Grudem, *Gift* chap. 2 onwards.

³³ *contra* especially Bacht, see Aune, *Prophecy* 230 and *passim* for arguments.

³⁴ 'Ecstasy is much too vague a term to employ unless it be abundantly qualified to make clear that there are many degrees of it, ranging from mild dissociation to extreme uncontrollable rapture', C. G. Williams 'Glossolalia as a Religious Phenomenon: "Tongues" at Corinth and Pentecost' *Religion* 5 (1975) 21; see further his *Tongues of the Spirit: A Study of Pentecostal Glossolalia and Related Phenomena* (Cardiff 1981) chap. 1.

³⁵ Grudem, *Gift* 150-77 especially 155-72; K. Hemphill, *The Pauline Concept of Charisma* (unpublished Ph.D., Cambridge 1976) 69-72.

³⁶ Aune, *Prophecy* 19-21.

³⁷ cf. A. T. Lincoln, ' "Paul the Visionary": The Setting and Significance of the Rapture to Paradise in II Corinthians XII. 1-10' *NTS* 25 (1979) 204ff.

the Apocalypse (note John characterizes his work as *prophecy*: Rev. 1:3; 22:18ff.); at the other extreme *apokalyptein* can be used even of the firm conviction gradually etched on the mind (e.g. Phil. 3:15). The verb is neutral with respect to the strength and clarity of the revelation.³⁸

2.2 The Content of Prophetic Speech

This seems to have been wideranging; from specific directions to churches concerning personnel (Acts 13:2f.), solution of disputes (Acts 15:28, 32), specific guidance and assurance given to missionaries (e.g. Acts 16:6ff.), and warning of famine (Acts 11:28), to prediction of Paul's personal fate (Acts 20:23; 21:11). It should be noted that each of these instances involves the necessity of God's revealing particularistic knowledge—not merely general principles that could be deduced, for example, by illuminated reading of the Torah, or from the Gospel Tradition, or from apostolic *didache*. The prophetic analysis of the seven churches in Revelation 1-3 points in the same direction. Paul, too, assumes that the same particularistic knowledge will be imparted when he says the outsider will be convicted, for God (through Corinthian prophesying) will reveal the secrets of his heart (1 Cor. 14:23). What is envisaged here is the laying bare of personal information which the outsider is convinced only God could have revealed (as in Jn. 4:16ff.).³⁹

But it is unlikely that Paul would have placed prophecy in such a privileged position (prophets second to apostles; prophecy the highest gift to which the Corinthians could aspire: 1 Cor. 12:28f.; 14:1 etc.) unless prophetic *apokalypsis* went further than this, and involved the impartation of doctrinal 'mysteries' (cf. 1 Cor. 13:2).⁴⁰ Aune uses five criteria to identify prophetic oracles in the New Testament (all or most to be satisfied before a passage is recognized as 'prophecy').⁴¹ Prophecy may be suspected if a saying or speech is (1) attributed to a supernatural being; (2) consists of prediction or involves special knowledge; (3) introduced or concluded by formula(e) which in other contexts are marks of prophetic diction; (4) prefixed by a statement of the inspiration of the speaker; (5) does not sit easily in the literary context. Using these criteria Aune discovers some 59 prophecies embedded in the New Testament (e.g. 2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor. 15:51f.; Rom. 11:25f.; 1 Thess. 4:15ff.; Gal. 5:21; 1 Thess. 3:4; 4:2-6; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10, 12 from amongst the paulines'.⁴² The types of oracle include *oracles of assurance* (Acts 18:9; 23:11; 27:23-24; 2 Cor. 12:9); *prescriptive oracles* (Gal. 5:21; Acts 13:2; 21:4; 2 Thess. 3:6 etc.); announcements of salvation (Rev. 14:13; 19:9 etc.); *announcements of judgement* (Acts 13:9-11; 1 Cor. 14:37f; Gal. 1:8-9); *legitimation oracles* (e.g. 1 Cor. 12:3—and including *self-commendation oracles* (Rev. 1:8, 17)) and *eschatological theophany oracles* (Rom. 11:25 f.; 1 Cor. 15:51 f. 1 Thess. 4:16f. etc.). Clearly the last of these—and for that matter the previous three types—are heavily doctrinal in nature.⁴³

It should be obvious by now that the form and content of early

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³⁸ Grudem, *Gift* 134-6.

³⁹ see E. Best, 'Prophets and Preachers' *SJT* 12 (1959) 146ff.

⁴⁰ Dautzenberg, *Urchristliche* chap. 4.

⁴¹ Aune, *Prophecy* 247f, 317f.

⁴² *ibid.* chap. 10.

⁴³ *ibid.* chaps. 10, 12.

Christian prophecy was exceedingly varied, and parallels can be found to some forms in non-prophetic speech. This observation prompts Aune to his conclusion: 'the distinctive feature of prophetic speech was not so much its content or form, but its [direct] supernatural origin'.⁴⁴

2.3 The Purpose(s) of Prophecy

On this it is commonplace to begin with Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 14:3 (*cf.* 31) that prophecy is for the edification, exhortation and consolation of the congregation. Two points must be remembered however. Firstly, Paul does not offer this proposition as a sufficient condition of the predicate *prophēteia*. It is not: forms of speech other than prophecy serve the same purpose, such as homily, exposition and teaching. These alternatives may be highly charismatic too; but that does not make them prophecy.⁴⁵ Secondly, Paul's statement in 14:3 need not even be a necessary condition of *prophēteuein*—he may merely have thought it would usually characterize congregational prophecy. Certainly 1 Corinthians 14:3 should not be used to marginalize prophecy given to individuals *outside* the framework of the assembly of the congregation (as *e.g.* Agabus to Paul in Acts 21:11).⁴⁶ More precisely, the function of prophecy can to some extent be read off the forms of prophetic speech identified: oracles of assurance, salvation, judgement, legitimation, prescription and eschatological theophany etc. These activities of God in the congregation serve as a sign (*cf.* 1 Cor. 14:22) to his people: a sign of blessing indicating that he is with them; that he knows them intimately; that he knows what dangers beset them; that he has them in his hand, leads them and instructs them. It is a sign that is transparent, too, to the unbeliever (vv.24f.).

2.4 Does Prophecy Denote Charismatic Exegesis, Preaching or Teaching?

It need not be doubted that prophecies had didactic and prescriptive elements (see above),⁴⁷ nor that those who rose to be recognized as 'prophets' in the early church were able to preach and to teach. But it is quite another matter to assert that inspired preaching, exegesis or teachings are actually (wholly or in part) what the New Testament means by prophecy. Warnings against such misunderstanding, which are especially prevalent in Reformed circles, have been given by (*inter multos alios*) Best⁴⁸ and Grudem.⁴⁹ But the positive case has recently been reasserted by Cothonet,⁵⁰ Hill⁵¹ and Ellis.⁵² Antecedently the latter position looks unlikely. After all, prophecy in the Greco-Roman world was *oracular* speech or writings.⁵³ And in Judaism the belief was widespread that *prophecy* had ceased; *now* there were *sages* and *scribes*.⁵⁴ Where such statements are made, the point is precisely that God no longer speaks *directly*, but by *scripture* interpreted and expounded. Where such statements are denied, and the continuation of prophecy maintained, it is invariably as *oracular* speech; the declaration of knowledge imparted

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⁴⁴ *ibid.* 338.

⁴⁵ see especially Grudem, *Gift* 181-5.

⁴⁶ Anne, *Prophecy* 195ff., 211ff.

⁴⁷ however, see Grudem, *Gift* 185ff. on *manthanō* in 1 Cor. 14:32.

⁴⁸ Best, 'Prophets' *passim*.

⁴⁹ Grudem, *Gift* 139ff.

⁵⁰ Panagopoulos, *Prophetic Vocation* 77ff.

⁵¹ *ibid.* 108ff. (with modifications and reservations).

⁵² Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic* pt. 2.

⁵³ Anne, *Prophecy* chap. 2.

⁵⁴ Grudem, *Gift* 21ff. and Aune, *Prophecy* chap. 5 for full treatment and literature.

directly to the speaker from a supernatural source (e.g. Josephus' dream-prophecy of Vespasian's election as Emperor; cf. also that of Johanan ben Zakkai)⁵⁵—albeit sometimes then read back into scripture (as in *Bellum Judaicum* 111.351-4).⁵⁶ As Christians spoke of *two* charismata—teaching *and* prophecy (cf. 1 Cor. 12:28 etc.)—it is antecedently probable that the old and widespread distinction holds. Charismatic *teaching* includes exposition that relates scripture and tradition to the immediate needs of a congregation, while prophecy primarily denotes the declaration by a man of material revealed to him *directly* by the supernatural source rather than mediated through consideration of scriptures.⁵⁷

Those who argue for the equation of prophecy with preaching or teaching usually argue from the paraenetic function of Old Testament prophecy to the conclusion that New Testament paraenetic is therefore prophetic; but this overlooks the fact that paraenetic is not a distinctive feature of Old Testament prophecy as such, but common to a variety of genres. The more subtle case, made by Ellis, that the New Testament evinces occasions where midrashic exegesis is accompanied by the formula 'says the Lord' and that the latter is a claim to prophetic knowledge by the exegete (e.g. Rom. 12:19's use of Dt. 32:35) has been severely criticized by Aune.⁵⁸ Aune counters (1) that the same phenomena in *Barnabas* are explained by the writer not as *prophecy* but as *teaching*; (2) that the *legei kyrios* formula is not a claim to inspired speech (and anyway never evinced in prophetic speech) but simply identifies God as the speaker of the Old Testament passage under consideration and (3) that there is no material (historical) connection between such 'implicit midrash' and early Christian prophecy as such; *no* evidence connects charismatic exegesis with prophets, while such teaching would naturally be expected of 'teachers'. The burden of proof seems to rest with those who wish to claim that charismatic and expository preaching were aspects of prophecy rather than teaching.

2.5 Were All Regarded as Able to Prophecy?

We can be certain that in Paul's view not all were prophets: the form of the question in 1 Corinthians 12:29 ensures that. But it has usually been argued that Paul, and others in the New Testament, reserved the honoured title 'prophet' for the recognized *specialist* in prophecy, while allowing that all at Corinth might prophesy one-by-one (1 Cor. 14:31).⁵⁹ To this is usually added the further argument that, in Luke, the gift of the Spirit described and promised in Acts 2 is Joel's promise of the Spirit of prophecy. *Ergo*, it is all too often concluded, each Christian is a prophet, or, at least, can prophesy. I agree with the stated premise (and elsewhere have defended the position at length);⁶⁰ but the conclusion is most unsure. The Spirit of prophecy as understood by Judaism was the organ of revelation and communication between God and a man. So the Spirit of prophecy (failing some alternative agency) was a necessary condition of

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⁵⁵ Aune, *ibid.* 141ff., 144ff.

⁵⁶ *ibid.* 141-4, 145.

⁵⁷ *ibid.* 339-46.

⁵⁸ *ibid.* 343-5.

⁵⁹ see M. M. B. Turner, *Luke and the Spirit: Studies in the Significance of Receiving the Spirit in Luke-Acts* (unpublished Ph.D., Cambridge 1980) 131f. for literature.

⁶⁰ Turner, *ibid.* chaps. 4, 5; 'Spirit Endowment in Luke-Acts: Some Linguistic Considerations' *Vox Ev* 12 (1981) 55-60 [http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/vox/vol12/spirit_turner.pdf]. For a survey of scholars' views on what receiving the Spirit means in Luke-Acts see Turner, 'The Significance of Receiving the Spirit in Luke-Acts: A Survey of Modern Scholarship' *Trin J* 2 (1981) 131-58

prophesying—but in Luke's view (again following, but also developing Jewish understanding) the Spirit of prophecy might indeed give gifts such as dreams, visions, words of guidance etc. (which are the basis of prophecy), but also gave other *related* charismata such as tongues, charismatic wisdom, power in evangelizing and pastoral preaching etc.⁶¹ Now Luke almost certainly regarded this diversity of gifts as coming under the general title 'prophetism' (prophecy and *related* phenomena), but it is a moot point whether he would have called all these gifts *prophecy as such*; certainly there is no evidence that he does. One cannot show that by the term prophecy he means anything other than oracular speech (controlled or ecstatic-possibly including tongues *cf.* Acts 19:6); and it would be very difficult indeed to show that Luke believed all Christians prophesied in the narrow sense. At most we can say that, as the Spirit at Pentecost is the Spirit of prophecy, Luke may have expected that many, or even the majority of Christians would be able to prophesy.

We may now return to the pauline evidence. Aune has pointed out that 'all may prophesy one-by-one' could simply denote the prophets. In which case there is no suggestion that prophecy is universal. However, it is probably better, with Grudem, to take a middle position. Prophets are the tested specialists; all may *seek* prophecy (1 Cor. 14:1, 5, 39), for none are excluded *a priori*, but God will not in fact distribute any one gift to all (1 Cor. 12:14-30).⁶²

2.6 The Authority and Limitations of New Testament Prophecy

The canonical prophets are represented as having spoken in the name of the Lord as his messengers: their words were neither more nor less than what God had commanded them to utter. A man might test the prophet, but he could not tamper with the oracle once he decided the prophet was authentic. To disobey such a prophet was to disobey God. Correspondingly, should the prophet be shown to have erred in any respect in his prophecy the sanction was death. The seriousness of disobedience or of prophesying falsely underscored that the oracles of the prophets were the very words of God, holy and authoritative. Such is the picture fleshed out by several scholars, and at its most nuanced in Grudem. In the New Testament, as Grudem, following writers such as Guy and Friedrich, sees it, the mantle of prophecy with authority of actual words transfers to the apostles,⁶³ and New Testament prophecy carries only the authority of general content: it is parallel to the revelatory phenomena in early Judaism with its consciousness of the withdrawal of true prophecy—a weaker sort of prophecy with a lesser authority.⁶⁴

The evidence on which this sort of construct is based is (1) many aspects of Paul's apostolic self-consciousness closely parallel that of Old Testament prophets.⁶⁵ (2) Paul relativizes the authority of Corinthian prophets and subordinates them to his (1 Cor. 14:37f.). (3) John—an apostle—claims divine authority of actual words for the Apocalypse

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(Rev. 22:18f.). (4) Paul knows that prophecy is sometimes so unprepossessing that prophecy as a whole is in danger of being despised (1 Thess. 5:19f.). (5) Both at Thessalonika and at Corinth he demands that prophecy be *evaluated*⁶⁶—not that it just be accepted totally as true

⁶¹ Turner, *Luke and the Spirit* 134-46; 'Jesus and the Spirit in Lucan Perspective' *Tyn B* 32 (1981) 38-40.

⁶² Grudem, *Gift* 235ff.

⁶³ *ibid.* chap. 1 especially 43-54; similarly Hill, *NT Prophecy* e.g. 116.

⁶⁴ Grudem, *Gift* 21ff., 54-73.

⁶⁵ see especially J. M. Myers and E. D. Freed, 'Is Paul also among the Prophets?' *Int.* 20 (1966) 40-53, but see also the criticism by Anne, *Prophecy* 206ff., 275ff.; Dautzenberg, *Urchristliche* 126-48.

⁶⁶ for this sense of *diakrinō* (*contra* Dautzenberg) see Grudem, *Gift* 58f., 263-88.

prophecy or rejected totally as false prophecy (as in the Old Testament, according to Grudem). The presupposition is that any one New Testament prophetic oracle is expected to be *mixed* in quality, and the wheat must be separated from the chaff. The prophet may genuinely have received something from God (albeit often indistinctly), but the 'vision' is partial, limited in perspective, and prone to wrong interpretation by the prophet even as he declares it (1 Cor. 13:12).

This presentation of Grudem's case is vastly oversimplified, but we suspect that Grudem, too, has occasionally himself over-schematized the evidence. The sharp distinction between apostolic and merely prophetic prophecy seems to be overdrawn. Undoubtedly the apostles were recognized (at least in some circles) to be commissioned with the Lord's authority—but *were* they regarded as Yahweh's prophetic messengers giving his *actual words*?⁶⁷ I see no evidence to suggest such outside the Apocalypse and even *there* the claim to authority is made in the name of *prophecy* not of apostolicity.⁶⁸ All that Paul says is consistent with his believing he has rather full 'authority of general content' (*i.e.* it has a true propositional structure), but nowhere does he suggest that he is claiming 'divine authority of actual words'. This is where Grudem's distinction breaks down (and he is not unaware of the problems): semantically it is not the surface structure of the wording, but the semantic structure of the propositions of a communication that is primarily significant. And this suggests, what seems reasonable on other grounds too, namely, that there was no *sharp* distinction between apostolic prophecy and prophets' prophesyings—rather, a spectrum of authority of charisma extending from apostolic speech and prophecy (backed by apostolic commission) at one extreme, to vague and barely profitable attempts at oracular speech such as brought 'prophecy' as a whole into question at Thessalonika (1 Thess. 5:19f.) at the other. A prophet's speech might fall anywhere on the spectrum, so the task of evaluation fell on the congregation.⁶⁹ The New Testament surely was not claiming that the Old Testament Spirit of prophecy had now returned, but merely to the apostles—thus dividing all other persons or charismata off and levelling them down with the sort of phenomena professed by early Judaism in its consciousness that the Spirit had been withdrawn (Acts 2:17-38). Paul does not say that all New Testament prophets see through a glass darkly while apostles see clearly: the apostles' prophecy, too, is *ek merous* and *en ainigmati* (1 Cor. 13:12).⁷⁰

Whilst we are unhappy about the way Grudem phrases his contrasts, we fully accept that he has put his finger on an important issue, and that Paul does relativize the authority of prophetic communications in the church. We shall discuss the temporal limits Paul places on prophecy later. We

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⁶⁷ Paul's authority, as Dunn rightly observes, *Jesus and the Spirit* 47, was primarily the authority of the gospel itself as it was revealed to Paul in the Damascus Road christophany; cf. J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh 1980), S. Kim, *The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Tübingen 1981). Paul's references to 'my gospel' certainly do not seem to me to necessitate a belief that Paul claimed divine authority of actual words (*contra* Grudem). It is the general structure of his gospel that he hereby denotes.

⁶⁸ see the critique of Aune, *Prophecy* 206-8.

⁶⁹ on the importance of congregational discernment for Paul, see especially J. D. G. Dunn, 'Discernment of Spirits—A Neglected Gift' in W. Harrington (ed) *Witness to the Spirit* (Dublin 1979) 79-96 and more fully 'The Responsible Congregation (I Co. 14:26-40)' in L. De Lorenzi (ed) *Charisma und Agape (I Ko 10-14)* (Rome 1983) 201-36; cf. J. Martucci, 'Diakrisis pneumatōn (I Co. 12, 10)' *EgTh* 9 (1978) 465-71 and J. Gniska, 'La Relation entre la Responsabilité Communautaire et l'Autorité Ministérielle d'après le NT, en Tenant Compte Spécialement du "Corpus Paulinum"' in L. De Lorenzi, *Paul de Tarse: Apôtre du Notre Temps* (Rome 1979) 455-70.

⁷⁰ as Grudem himself notes, *Gift* 53f., 49 n100.

now pass more briefly to 'tongues' and 'healing'.

3 'Tongues' in the New Testament

Once again we must ask what phenomena the authors of Acts and 1 Corinthians think they denote when they write about *glōssais lalein*, and then, more broadly, how they relate *glōssais lalein*, to broader theological structures.⁷¹

3.1 Luke's View of 'Tongues'

3.1.1 Acts 2:1-13.

There is no doubt that Luke considers the Pentecost phenomenon which he designates as *heterais glōssais lalein* to be xenolalia: the speaking of actual foreign languages.⁷² Not only is this suggested *prima facie* by the word *glōssa*, especially qualified by *hetera*, but it is further demanded in verse 6 'they each heard in their own dialect' (*tē idia (i) dialektō (i)*; cf. vv. 8 and 11). This cannot be taken as specifying a miracle of hearing rather than one of speech.⁷³ We may not seriously doubt that Luke attributed the charisma in this process to the activity of God in the 120 *believers*. He is not suggesting God worked the yet greater miracle of interpretation of tongues in the *unbelievers*. No substantial problem is created for this view by the fact that some in the crowd comment 'they are filled with new wine' (v.13).⁷⁴ Luke envisages a very large crowd indeed by the time that Peter speaks his explanation (cf. 2:41); certainly not all will have understood the variety of 'dialects' Luke reports as having been spoken (vv.8-11);⁷⁵ and some could be expected to have heard nothing intelligible at all.⁷⁶ Of

⁷¹ There is a vast bibliography on tongues, though as yet no full critical treatment of the NT phenomenon has been published. We note the following more-or-less significant contributions on the NT issues (asterisked items were only available to me in resumé form): *E. Lombard, *De la glossolalie chez les premiers Chrétiens et des phénomènes similaires* (Lausanne 1910); J. Behm, 'γλῶσσα' *TDNT* 1 719-27; J. G. Davies, 'Pentecost and Glossolalia' *JTS* 3 (1952) 228-31; F. W. Beare, 'Speaking with Tongues: A Critical Survey of the New Testament Evidence' *JBL* 83 (1964) 229-46; S. D. Currie, ' "Speaking in Tongues": Early Evidence Outside the New Testament Bearing on "Glossais Lalein" ' *Int* 19 (1965) 274-94; R. J. Banks and G. Moo, 'Speaking in Tongues: A Survey of New Testament Evidence' *Churchman* 80 (1966) 278-94; R. H. Grundy, ' "Ecstatic Utterance" (N.E.B.)?' *JTS* 17 (1966) 299-307; J. P. M. Sweet, 'A Sign for Unbelievers: Paul's Attitude to Glossolalia' *NTS* 13 (1967) 240-57; *N. J. Engelsen, *Glossolalia and Other Forms of Inspired Speech According to 1 Corinthians 12-14* (unpublished Ph.D. Yale 1970); M. D. Smith, 'Glossolalia and Other Spiritual Gifts in a New Testament Perspective' *Int* 28 (1974) 307-20; E. Best, 'The Interpretation of Tongues' *SJT* 28 (1975) 45-62; J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (London 1975); K. Stendahl, 'Glossolalia and the Charismatic Movement' in J. Jervell and W. A. Meeks (eds) *God's Christ and His People* (Oslo 1977) 122-31; R. A. Harrisville, 'Speaking in Tongues: A Lexicographical Study' *CBQ* 38 (1976) 35-48; T. W. Gillespie, 'A Pattern of Prophetic Speech in First Corinthians' *JBL* 97 (1978) 74-98; W. Grudem, '1 Corinthians 14:20-25: Prophecy and Tongues as Signs of God's Attitude' *WTJ* 41 (1979) 381-96; B. C. Johanson, 'Tongues, a Sign for Unbelievers?: A Structural and Exegetical Study of I Corinthians XIV. 20-25' *NTS* 25 (1979) 180-203; A. C. Thiselton, 'The "Interpretation" of Tongues: A New Suggestion in the Light of Greek Usage in Philo and Josephus' *JTS* 30 (1979) 15-36; C. G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit: A Study of Pentecostal Glossolalia and Related Phenomena* (Cardiff 1981).

⁷² for terminology see N. Bloch-Hoell, *The Pentecostal Movement* (London 1964) 142f.; C. W. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit* prefers *xenoglossia*, both are using this in distinction from glossolalia, by which they mean ordinarily non-cognitive, lexically non-communicative utterances.

⁷³ see J. Kremer, *Pfingstbericht and Pfingstgeschehen* (Stuttgart 1973) 120-26.

⁷⁴ *contra* Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 149.

⁷⁵ cf. I. H. Marshall, *Acts* (Leicester 1980) 70f.

⁷⁶ The *heis hekastos* of vs. 6, 8 need not be pressed to mean everyone in the crowd heard their own language/dialect. Grundy, 'Ecstatic Utterance' 304 and Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts* 126 argue that Luke means the visiting foreigners heard their vernacular, while to the Palestinians it was all gibberish. Cf. also K. Haacker, 'Das Pfingstwunder als exegetisches Problem' in O. Böcher and K. Haacker (eds) *Verborum Veritas* (Wuppertal 1970) 125-31.

course one should not try artificially to harmonize Luke's details—but nor should one unnecessarily make a fool of him when one can plausibly explain how he may have viewed the scene.

What is the content of the 'tongues' speech? Here it is worth noting that Luke simply designates it *to megalia tou theou* (v. 11) ('the greatnesses of God' or 'the mighty deeds of God'). His use of the verbal form in 10:46 and 19:17, where simply praise to God is meant, suggests that the tongues in Acts 2 are not to be construed as an evangelistic communication as such: indeed the tongues-speeches taken by themselves only lead observers (sympathetic and otherwise) to questions and to confusion—it is Peter's *preaching* which communicates the gospel.

3.1.2 Rest of Acts.

On two further occasions Luke records incidents of tongues: Acts 10:46 and Acts 19:6. In Caesarea, Peter and his companions recognize that Cornelius has received the Spirit of prophecy, as at Pentecost, 'for they heard them speaking with tongues and exalting God' (10:46). Similarly in Acts 19:6, with the illapse of the Spirit, 'they began to speak with tongues and prophesy'. On neither occasion is there any suggestion to the effect

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that the tongues were languages actually recognized by any of the hearers⁷⁷ (we are not told *how* Peter knew they were genuinely speaking with tongues—Luke assumes that the context of God's action in the whole proceedings leading up to this point is sufficient guarantee). Nor is there any suggestion here that tongues serve *any* kind of evangelistic function.

What is *not* clear is whether the exalting of God (10:46) is assumed to be the content of the tongues-speech or in parallel with it: similarly with respect to the prophesying of 19:6.

3.1.3 Preliminary Conclusions

Luke clearly considers the tongues at Pentecost to be xenolalia. Contrary to the usual claim, however, there is no evidence he thinks *glōssais lalein* generally served an evangelistic purpose. Certainly he never suggests, in the twenty-six chapters that follow the Pentecost account, that xenolalia was ever identified as *recognized* languages again, or that they played any part in evangelism.⁷⁸ Consequently two major and oft-repeated objections to Lukan historicity on the issue of tongues—namely that Paul does not think of tongues as evangelistic, nor does he think of them as intelligible—simply fall to the ground. It is perfectly reasonable to assume Luke considered the Pentecostal recognition of xenolalia, and the positive effect of this, to be a providential sign marking the beginning of the age of the Spirit of prophecy, and one that was not repeated exactly elsewhere. From the evidence we have it would not even be possible to be sure that Luke thought *all* tongues-speech was xenolalia as opposed to some wider concept of tongues-speech (*cf.* Paul's *genē glōssōn*; 1 Cor. 12:10).

3.2 Paul's View of 'Tongues'

⁷⁷ Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts* 132 supposes they were, on the grounds that Peter later says Cornelius received the same gift 'as he gave us' (Acts 11:17): but this refers to the gift of the Spirit of prophecy, not to xenolalia as such.

⁷⁸ *contra* Edgar, *ibid.* 198ff. who sees the purpose of tongues as a sign-gift to soften people up for evangelism (which gift is restricted to the apostolic age).

3.2.1 Denotation

What does Paul imagine *glōsse(i)* (or *glōssais*) *lalein* to denote? Most commentators, following H. Leisegang, draw parallels between 1 Corinthians 12-14 and the ecstatic utterance of the Pythia at Delphi, or Dionysiac *enthusiasmos* (though T. M. Crone has shown that the parallels are not nearly as close as is usually thought).⁷⁹ More discerning writers at least make a sharp distinction between how the Corinthians may have viewed tongues-speech and how Paul himself viewed it.⁸⁰ In Paul's view the *glōssai* are *languages*, not merely pre-cognitive mumblings. This is the normal meaning of *glōssa*, and none of the parallels brought forward by Behm⁸¹ or Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich shows that *glōssa* means ecstatic noncognitive utterance—however riddling and 'dark' the speech denoted by *glōssa* in the parallels may have been thought to be.⁸² Nor is Thiselton convincing in arguing back *from* the possibility that in Philo *hērmēneuein* compounds can mean 'put into speech' rather than 'translate' or 'interpret' *to* the possibility that when Paul speaks of *hērmēneia glōssōn* he means the

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putting into words of (presumably) non-cognitive 'tongues'.⁸³ To be sure one can put into (intelligible) words (*hērmēneuein*) one's *thoughts* (etc.), but collocated with *glōssē(i) lalein*, *hērmēneuein* would naturally mean 'translate' or, more broadly, 'interpret'. This is in keeping with the fact that Paul can make an *immediate* parallel (not merely an illustration) between *glōssais lalein* and the *heteroglōssoi* (foreign language) of Isaiah 28:11 (1 Cor. 14:21f.). It is further in keeping with his ranking of the phenomenon as a *spiritual gift* (1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28), the right use of which he mildly encourages (1 Cor. 14:5), personally experiences and is thankful for (1 Cor. 14:18).

But is it human language or angelic language—"tongues of angels" (1 Cor. 13:1)—that Paul has in mind? Dunn⁸⁴ thinks Gundry⁸⁵ is wrong to identify the languages as earthly ones. He contends that the 'tongues of men' in 13:1 are inspired speech in vernacular (ranging from preaching to prophesying) and contrast with angelic tongues-speech. Secondly, he argues, the subject matter is 'mysteries' (13:2)—eschatological secrets known only in heaven—so the language used will be the language of heaven. Thirdly, Paul could only *compare* tongues with the effect of speaking in foreign languages (14:10ff.) if he thought tongues were *not* human languages.⁸⁶ But none of these arguments is conclusive. (1) In 14:10ff. Paul could be pointing to the obvious consequences in the secular realm of what the Corinthians fail to see in the spiritual, without contrasting the types of language as such: they are proud of their 'tongues' which others do not understand; Paul points out how close they come to being ridiculed as 'barbarians' rather than exalted as 'spirituals'. (2) There is no reason to accept that mysteries spoken in the Spirit must be in a heavenly tongue, as Paul will declare at least one heavenly mystery in Greek just one chapter further on in the letter (1 Cor. 15:51f.), and indeed his initial preaching centred on the 'mystery' of the gospel (2:1, 7; 4:1)! (3) If Paul thought *all* tongues were angelic he is unlikely to have maintained they belong only to our pre-

⁷⁹ Crone, *Early Christian Prophecy* chap. I and 220f.

⁸⁰ So Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, though it must be stated that such claims as 'the conclusion becomes almost inescapable: glossolalia as practised in... Corinth was a form of ecstatic utterance-sounds, cries, words uttered in a state of spiritual ecstasy' (243) are methodologically unjustified.

⁸¹ Behm, *TDNT* 1 719-27.

⁸² see Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts* 110-21.

⁸³ Thiselton, 'The "Interpretation"' 15-36.

⁸⁴ Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 243f.

⁸⁵ Gundry, 'Ecstatic Utterance' *passim*.

⁸⁶ Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 244, with Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit* chap. 2, against Gundry, 'Ecstatic Utterance' 306.

resurrection 'childhood' (1 Cor. 13:11) and will pass away.⁸⁷ Given this, however, we need not reject that Paul thought *some* types of tongue (*cf. genē glōssōn*; 12:10) were angelic (as, *e.g.* in *Test Job* 48-50).⁸⁸

Further arguments have been brought against the conclusion that Paul envisaged actual languages, but each of them is very shaky. (1) Why, it is asked, do we not have more ancient reports of tongues being recognized? But this question seems to rest on the misunderstanding that Luke expected xenolalia to be recognized and thus to prepare for evangelism. (2) Why, it is asked, do Irenaeus and Celsus regard tongues as babbling or 'lalling' if it was a widespread belief in the early church that *glōssais lalein* was xenolalia? The answer here would appear to be that the passages Currie⁸⁹ and Thiselton⁹⁰ use to substantiate this (*Adv. Haer* III.xiii; *Adv. Celsus* VII.ix) are not about *glōssais lalein at all*: they are about the production of incoherent *prophetic* speech (incoherent, that is, not

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because the individual words are unintelligible, but because together they make no sense—a common criticism of unsolicited oracles in the ancient world).⁹¹ (3) Why, it is asked, would Paul be so disparaging as he is in 1 Corinthians 12-14 if he thought tongues were a true language miracle? In this connection Thiselton quotes a series of scholars who regard Paul as disparaging of tongues and ends by quoting Best: 'Paul would hardly... have criticized it since it would have been so useful in evangelism and certainly could not have been described as speech to God alone.'⁹² Yet again we meet the misunderstanding concerning the relationship of tongues to evangelism. But more broadly the answer has to be given that Paul is not critical of tongues *per se*⁹³—he practises it himself abundantly, is thankful for it (1 Cor. 14:18) and encourages it (14:5)⁹⁴—what he is against, and criticizes heavily, is the domination of the assembly by uninterpreted tongues.

We conclude that Paul probably thought of tongues-speech as xenoglossia and (possibly) heavenly languages. If he had any contact with the sort of tradition embedded in Acts 2—which is not improbable—this would have confirmed his view.

3.2.2 The Purpose of Tongues in Paul.

Though Paul does not explicitly say why God has given the gift of tongues, he does, in passing, indicate several ways in which it functions.

3.2.2.1 Tongues as Signs?

In 1 Corinthians 14:22, Paul states: 'So tongues are a sign not to believers, but to unbelievers; while prophecy is a sign not to unbelievers but to believers.' This would almost make sense as a straight-forward statement if Paul had Lucan pentecostal xenolalia as his model: we would then approach the claim that Paul had thought of xenolalia as a convincing sign-gift and primary aid to evangelism. In fact, Edgar, having rejected all alternative exegeses, says, with

⁸⁷ so, for example, Thiselton, 'The "Interpretation"' 32.

⁸⁸ or perhaps it was the Corinthians who thought *they* spoke with angelic tongues, see Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 123.

⁸⁹ Currie, 'Speaking in Tongues' 290.

⁹⁰ Thiselton, 'The "Interpretation"' 29.

⁹¹ Anne, *Prophecy* 51 *etc.*

⁹² Best, 'The Interpretation of Tongues' 47.

⁹³ Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 123.

⁹⁴ *Contra* Hemphill, *ibid.* 127, the positive approbation of tongues in 5a cannot be emptied entirely by appeal to its rhetorical function with respect to 5b.

amazing naïveté: 'This view alone has no problems'!⁹⁵ But if all Paul had to say on the subject was that tongues was an evangelistic sign-gift (and Edgar insists that this is the one and only purpose of tongues) why on earth does it take him three very difficult chapters to say so? If it is not really a gift for the assembly *at all*,⁹⁶ why does he allow it in the assembly at all; and, worse, why does God give a spiritual gift of 'interpretation of tongues' (12:10) which *ex hypothesi* is unnecessary—for tongues are not intended for the congregation but to startle pagans (who will know the languages) into belief? And why does Paul in this context expect precisely that outsiders will not understand the tongues (unless perhaps there be interpretation), but will complain 'you rave' (v.23)? I fear Edgar asks us to believe too many impossible things before breakfast! Not surprisingly, most commentators have suspected Paul of more subtle rhetoric and irony than Edgar imagines.

Aware that Paul in verses 23-25 seems to *reverse* what he states in

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verse 22, Johanson⁹⁷ argues that verse 22 is actually a rhetorical question in which Paul sums up the views of the Corinthian enthusiasts whom he opposes. They magnify tongues because they (wrongly) regard it as an apologetic-evangelistic gift. Rather more probable is the interpretation of W. Grudem, taking up and developing earlier discussion (*e.g.* by Sweet).⁹⁸ Grudem argues that the word *sēmeion* has a double connotation in the LXX: it marks a 'sign' (of God's blessing on his covenant people and of his judgement on unbelievers). In Isaiah 28:11 the point is that Israel have not listened to God when he spoke clearly so he will now speak through the foreign language of an invading army. Paul is alluding to this, and making capital out of it, when he tells the Corinthians not to speak in tongues (without interpretation); for that way of God's speaking would be inappropriate—certainly not an evangelistic aid (for they will say 'you rave'), but rather a sign of judgement (God speaks in a foreign and incomprehensible language). Prophecy, on the other hand, precisely because, in contrast to tongues, it is understood, is a sign of God's blessing of his people. The convicted outsider can see this and says 'truly God is amongst you' (v.25). If Grudem is right, and I think he is, then Paul does not claim tongues on their own to be a *positive* sign to unbelievers at all (though if they were interpreted or recognized—a situation Paul does not envisage—he would no doubt attribute to them a positive value). On Grudem's view tongues may *mistakenly* be made to function as a sign to unbelievers; but then only as a negative one. Paul, for his part, does not think this is their proper purpose, and so he prescribes that they be used only with interpretation, when they may approximate the positive sign value of prophecy. We may thus exclude the view that Paul thought of tongues as primarily intended for the outsider (nor is this view especially encouraged by Mark 16:15-17 on which Edgar dangerously builds so much). It is worth noting that Paul's argument seems convoluted here because essentially he only introduces the Old Testament quotation to make the point that, biblically, tongues are *not* a sign of God's especial blessing of his people: this is to be seen over against Corinthian boasting in tongues.⁹⁹ But if tongues are not really to be exercised as a sign to unbelievers, nor as a sign to believers, what *are* tongues for?

3.2.2.2 For the Building Up of the Church?

⁹⁵ Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts* 202.

⁹⁶ *ibid.* 199.

⁹⁷ Johanson, 'Tongues, a Sign?' 180-203 especially 193ff.

⁹⁸ Grudem, 'Prophecy and Tongues' *passim*; *Gift* 185-201.

⁹⁹ Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 141.

Paul is so adamant that tongues on their own do not edify the church that not a few of his interpreters have argued that he wished to suppress the phenomenon—at least in the assembly. This neglects the fact that Paul allows that tongues *with* interpretation is as useful to the upbuilding of the church as prophecy (1 Cor. 14:5c). If it must be tongues *or* intelligible speech Paul would have only the latter (14:19); but that is not the choice. Interpretation is intelligible speech, so tongues, interpreted, can be commended in moderation (14:27, 39). But the reservations noted still

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suggest we have yet to put our finger on what Paul regards as the main purpose of tongues.

3.2.2.3 *Tongues as an Aid to Private Devotion?*

This, the usual explanation given by Pentecostals, Charismatics¹⁰⁰ and, for that matter, by most New Testament scholars, has been vigorously denied by Edgar who insists: (1) that such a view contradicts the purpose stated in 1 Corinthians 14:22; Mark 16:15-17 and implicit in Acts 2:1-13. (2) A private gift would not be for the edification of the church and makes it unique. (3) Such a gift would be self-centred.¹⁰¹ (4) If the gift of tongues could edify it would surely be given to all.¹⁰² (5) If the purpose is private devotion directed to God why should there be a gift of interpretation?¹⁰³ (6) Anyway Paul says that tongues do *not* edify the believer; his mind remains fallow.¹⁰⁴ (7) It is clear that in 1 Corinthians 14:2 using a gift to speak 'only to God' is equivalent to 'speaking into the air' (14:9)¹⁰⁵: it is, for Paul, a negative concept, not something to be exercised. (8) In 14:14-16 Paul discourages praying with the Spirit alone (which is not tongues anyway) and urges praying with the mind also.¹⁰⁶

These points need not delay us long. We take them *seriatim*: (1) There is no contradiction between tongues viewed as an aid in devotion and what is said in 1 Corinthians 14:22; Mark 16:15-17 and Acts 2:1-13 unless one arbitrarily asserts tongues may only have one function. Edgar does just this, but he is inconsistent here for he is forced to admit that Acts 10:46; 19:6 do not denote sign-gifts of evangelistic import.¹⁰⁷ Edgar is wrong in giving exclusive place, or even primary place, to the function of tongues stated in the long ending of Mark and implied in Acts 2: in doing this he almost certainly misrepresents Paul. (2) As exercised in the church, with interpretation, the gift does edify. And if used privately to build up the individual this also (albeit indirectly) edifies the church.¹⁰⁸ But the notion that no gift could possibly be given to benefit the receiver/user (rather than the church he serves) is quite arbitrary and fails to see that all the other gifts build up the endowed *as well* (though we admit not exclusively). (3) Why can the gift not be *God-centred*? (4) If tongues is merely one gift amongst many by which an endowed person might be built up then he who has *not* received the gift is not thereby necessarily impoverished. (5) On Edgar's view it should be an anomaly that the gift of interpretation is required *at all*: but on the view presented above the speaker who has tongues *and* interpretation will not only edify the church more, but also edify himself more (note that Paul assumes that it is the tongues-speaker who should interpret usually, vv.5,

¹⁰⁰ W. J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (London 1972) 342; M. Poloma, *The Charismatic Movement* (Boston 1982) 50ff.

¹⁰¹ Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts* 173.

¹⁰² *loc. cit.*

¹⁰³ *ibid.* 176.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.* 178-81.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.* 188f.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.* 192ff.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.* 176.

¹⁰⁸ for discussion see, for example, Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* \$44.

13).¹⁰⁹ (6) Edgar's antithesis is false; Paul allows that spiritual activity not cognitively recognized by the practitioner *may* edify (*cf.* Rom. 8:26). (7) To be sure, Paul bans the phenomenon (if uninterpreted) from the *assembly*; but he fully recognizes that it is genuinely *a speaking to God* (14:2, 28)—the problem for the assembly is that unless interpreted it is 'only to God'. It is perfectly right of

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Edgar to say that Paul does not hereby positively advocate private devotional tongues; but what Paul says nevertheless entails that he considered it an appropriate use.¹¹⁰ Later, however, in 1 Corinthians 14:28 Paul commands that if *glōssai* are not interpreted the speaker should then be silent in church; he should speak rather 'to himself and to God'. As it is improbable that Paul is counselling private use of tongues in church when another is ministering, this seems to be a positive injunction to private use.¹¹¹ (8) Praying and singing with the Spirit are almost certainly tongues (or, at least, not forms understood to the speaker) else the contrast with prayer *en nō(i)* makes contextually less sense. This is confirmed by the contrast *en glōssē(i)/en nō(i) lalein* in verse 19.¹¹² However much we agree with Edgar that Paul encourages prayer 'with the mind also', he clearly recognizes—as valid—prayer that is not with the mind, but is merely *glōssē(i)* (14:14).

We conclude that Paul saw a variety of functions to be fulfilled by tongues-speech, but probably saw its major role to be a private one.

3.2.3 Did Paul Expect All to Speak with Tongues?

In 1 Corinthians 12:30 this question is put in a form which clearly indicates that Paul expected a negative answer. But it has been maintained by traditional Pentecostalism that this expected 'no' only relates to speaking in tongues *in the assembled church*. Private tongues was virtually universal (almost all having been baptized in the Spirit).¹¹³ This sounds like special pleading: are apostles only apostles *in the assembled church* etc. (12:28a)? And if not, how were the Corinthians to perceive that in 12:28b Paul was referring only to 'assembly' gifts rather than ordinary 'tongues'? And if there were a special and distinct inspiration for 'assembly' tongues how was it going wrong at Corinth? Why did Paul not simply tell them not to use their ordinary tongues in the assembly, but only speak in church if under the special charisma etc.? In fact, Paul makes no such distinction and offers no such obvious advice: for him tongues may be of different kinds, but the distinction of type is not between private and assembly speech.

3.3 Were New Testament 'Tongues' Ecstatic?

Much indeed depends on what is meant by ecstatic; and many New Testament scholars use the term carelessly with no knowledge whatever of sociological, anthropological or psychological typologies of ecstasy.¹¹⁴ Actually we do not *know* about the psychological state of New Testament tongues-speech. Those who speak of ecstatic utterance are either assuming that *glōssais lalein* denotes particular phenomena in non-Christian religions of antiquity

¹⁰⁹ correctly Thiselton, 'The "Interpretation" ' 32f.; Hemphill, *loc. cit.*: Edgar wrongly assumes this situation would be exceptional, *Miraculous Gifts* 193.

¹¹⁰ Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 126 n258.

¹¹¹ *ibid.* 149.

¹¹² so Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 245; Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 135-6.

¹¹³ *cf.* D. J. Bennett, 'The Gifts of the Holy Spirit' in M. P. Hamilton (ed), *The Charismatic Movement* (Grand Rapids 1975) 18f.

¹¹⁴ Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit* chap. 1 *cf.* 30.

(which are stated to be unintelligible and regarded by the ancients as 'ecstatic'), or they are assuming that New Testament tongues-speech is identical with reports of ecstatic glossolalia today *without* paying attention to the far greater stream of modern tongues-

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speech which is definitely *non*-ecstatic. Certainly when modern New Testament scholars maintain that New Testament tongues-speech was *compelled* speech they contradict Paul who assumes it was *not*: 1 Corinthians 14:28.

3.4 Did Luke Regard Tongues as an Initial Sign of Receiving the Spirit?

We shall consider this below.

4 The Gift of Healing in the New Testament.

4.1 Denotation Envisaged.

This hardly needs comment: the healing miracles of Jesus, the apostles and others (*e.g.* Philip) are strewn through the pages of Luke-Acts, and these are certainly amongst the *denotata* of the *charismata iamaton* ('gifts of healing') in 1 Corinthians 12:9. We note simply five points: (1) we are not primarily concerned here with divine healing in general, but with occasions where one individual is seen as the locus of God's healing of others: *allō(i) de charismata iamaton [didotai]*; (2) we should not take healings by apostolic shadow (Acts 5:15) or by pieces of apostolic clothing (19:12) as typical: Luke specifies them as 'out-of-the-ordinary healings' (*ou... tychousas* 19:11); (3) we must not assume all claimed healings were immediate (*cf.* Mk. 8:22ff.; Lk. 17:14ff.); (4) it is probably not possible to distinguish sharply between healings granted as response to prayer (*e.g.* the situation envisaged by Jas. 5:15f.) and those performed by someone with a gift of healing; especially where the latter prays for the one healed, or lays on hands; (5) we probably *should* distinguish Jesus, as one gifted to heal, from the disciples, at least at one point: for the author of Luke-Acts the miracles of the disciples (which parallel those of Jesus) are worked by Jesus: *cf.* the paradigmatic 'Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you.' (Acts 9:34, *cf.* 3:12; 14:3; 11:21 etc.).¹¹⁵

4.2 The Significance of Gifts of Healing

Traditionally, Jesus' miracles were understood as signs attesting his divinity and validating the gospel.¹¹⁶ They were viewed as independent, objective attestation. It fell principally to A. Richardson¹¹⁷ and those after him, to show that this was a complete misunderstanding. The healing miracles of Jesus could not have been understood by his contemporaries to evince deity as such. Responses were that he was a prophet (Lk. 7:16; Mk. 6:15; 8:28 and parallels; *cf.* Lk. 13:32f.); a sorcerer (Mk. 3:22 etc.); or the Son of God (not a title of divinity, before Pentecost, but a messianic title taking up the ancient theme of Israel's king as God's 'son', *cf.* Ps. 2:7 etc.). Similar miracles were performed by the disciples both before (Lk. 10:9-11, 17) and after Pentecost. Nor did Jesus work miracles to coerce faith (Mk. 8:11-12 and parallels): indeed faith was usually much

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¹¹⁵ for elucidation see Turner, *Luke and the Spirit* 139-46.

¹¹⁶ C. Brown, *Miracles and the Critical Mind* (Exeter 1984) chaps. 1-8.

¹¹⁷ A. Richardson, *Miracles Stories of the Gospels* (London 1941); for a good critical summary see Brown, *ibid.* 253-62.

more obviously a condition of healings than a goal (Mk. 6:5-6 and parallels in Mt.: cf. Lk. 7:1-10 (Q); Mk. 2:1-12 and parallels; Mk. 5:25-34 and parallels, especially verse 34 'Your faith has healed you. Go in peace.').

What Richardson (followed by Kallas¹¹⁸ and Van der Loos¹¹⁹) was able to show was that the healing miracles were part and parcel of Jesus' message. They were concrete expressions of God's inbreaking eschatological reign. This is to be seen against the background of Jewish belief that saw all illness, deformity, insanity, demonism and death as expressions of the work of Satan and his powers. Whether direct expressions, or very indirect ones,¹²⁰ they were part and parcel of Satan's dominion in the world. The longing for the kingdom of God—*God's* reign—was precisely that the rule of Satan be broken and evil destroyed. It was a hope for a new unmarred creation, and glorified physical bodies. Given this climate of thought, Jesus' hearers could hardly have failed to draw the connection between Jesus' preaching and his healing. He was preaching that God had begun his long-hoped-for reign; so Jesus' redemptive miracles (healings, exorcisms etc.) would naturally be understood as the beginnings of what he had promised. They would be interpreted as signs of the dawning of the promised kingdom, and as its very firstfruits. In, for example, the exorcisms, the powers of Satan were being thrown back—the kingdom of God was breaking in. The exorcisms thus become concrete expressions of Jesus' Good News that God has begun his reign (cf. Lk. 11:20 (Q)). The villages, towns and cities visited by the disciples in the ministry of Jesus are to witness people being healed (Lk. 10:9—Jesus' command to his disciples) and *thereby* to understand that the kingdom of God has dawned (Lk. 10:9-11), and their guilt is the more dramatic if they do not (10:11-15).

The miracles of Jesus have indeed a legitimating function. Primarily, they legitimate the *message*, of which they are a part, that the prophesied time of liberation from evil has dawned (so Lk. 7:20-22; Acts 10:38).¹²¹ They do this, not merely in parallel to the preaching, far less as external attestation of the speaker, but because they are concrete expressions of the message: the firstfruits of the dawning kingdom itself. In this capacity they also serve (incidentally, as it were) a personal legitimating function—for they raise the question 'Who can inaugurate God's kingdom?' And the answer is: 'Only "the Coming One".' (Lk. 7:20ff.).

In the post-resurrection church the situation is the same. The miracles of the church, for Luke, attest that Jesus *continues* his role as God's anointed, healing all those under the power of the devil (Acts 10:38; cf. 1:1 and 9:34, 'Aeneas, *Jesus Christ* heals you'). The miracles still primarily legitimate the message, and are part of it. If the apostles are especially marked by them (Acts *passim*, and 2 Cor. 12:12 etc.) that is because the apostles are *par excellence* manifestations of the dying-and-rising of Jesus (2 Cor. 4:1 Off.; 1 Cor. 4:9-13 etc.); but all Christians are incorporated in this, and so the New Testament evinces no surprise, but rather the

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¹¹⁸ J. Kallas, *The Significance of the Synoptic Miracles* (London 1961).

¹¹⁹ H. Van Der Loos, *The Miracles of Jesus* (Leiden 1965).

¹²⁰ Jews did not regard all illness as demonic. For the beginnings of a Jewish/Christian typology of medicine see P. Borgen, *Paul Preaches Circumcision and Pleases Men and Other Essays on Christian Origins* (Trondheim 1983) 115-30.

¹²¹ For Luke's view of Jesus' healing miracles see Turner, 'Jesus and the Spirit' 14-34. For a more general review of Jesus miracles in the Gospels see Brown, *Miracles* chap. 11 and G. Theissen, *The Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition* (Edinburgh 1983) *passim*, each of which has considerable further documentation.

expectation, that many *besides* apostles will work miracles and healings (1 Cor. 12:28f.).

The New Testament problem is not 'Why do others, besides the apostles, work healings?' The New Testament problem is 'Why, if healing etc. is part of God's eschatological restoration, is it not universal among Christians?' The answer to *that* question—which is beyond the scope of this paper—is to be found in the eschatological tension between the 'already' and the 'not yet' of the kingdom; especially in the character of present Christian existence as the manifestation of the *dying-and-rising* of Jesus (2 Cor. 4:10ff. etc., on which see the judicious contribution by Dunn).¹²²

5 Towards a Stereotype of 'Spiritual Gifts' in Paul?

We have examined three prototypical gifts from Paul's list in 1 Corinthians 12:10. Are we now able to provide a list of typical characteristics that unite the three and enable us to identify all further members of the expansion of the expression 'spiritual gifts'?

We note immediately the problem raised by the diversity of prophecy, tongues and healing. What unites them? What features have they in common? Only the six factors Paul lists in 1 Corinthians 12:1-7: (1) they are *energēmata* ('workings') of God (v.6) (2) they are *diakonai* ('acts of service') related to the Lord (as agent? as beneficiary?) (v.5) (3) they are *phanerōseis* ('manifestations') of the Spirit (v.7) and so (4) *pneumatika* (1, probably, cf. 14:1); (5) for the common good: *i.e.* of the church (v.7) and, finally (6) they are *charismata* given by the Spirit (vv.4, 8).¹²³

The scarlet thread running through the whole discussion in 12:1-10 is that the phenomena Paul lists are regarded as events in which the Spirit is made manifest (*phanerōseis*): that is, the Spirit's activity coming to relatively clear, even dramatic expression. They are events in which the presence and activity of divine power is judged—rightly or wrongly—to be a matter of immediate perception. They are an expression of the Spirit's activity in which man's natural talents and abilities, honed in this world, are least visible.

Are we then to assume that for Paul *pneumatika* and *charismata* are semi-technical terms for what Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement¹²⁴ has called 'supernatural spiritual gifts' (however problematic it might be to define the borders of the extension of such an expression)? May we simply give as a stereotype of 'spiritual gifts' that they be immediately-perceived workings of God; events in which the Spirit is made manifest, in the service of Christ and for the common good? No! We contend that this would misrepresent what Paul is trying to teach at Corinth. Such a stereotype would be closer to the Corinthians' own view than to Paul's, and merely provides the starting point which he modifies. We must analyse this more fully now.

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¹²² Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 326-38.

¹²³ Dunn, *ibid.* 37 and 38.

¹²⁴ For attitudes in this sector see, for example, F. D. Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (London 1970) chap. 4; Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* chap. 25; Poloma, *The Charismatic Movement* Pt. 2 especially chaps. 4, 5; J. I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit* (Leicester 1984) chap. 5. Unfortunately A. Mather's, *Theology of the Charismatic Movement in Britain from 1964 to the Present Day* (unpublished Ph.D. University College of North Wales 1982) came to my attention too late to be used, but see her article 'Talking Points: The Charismatic Movement' *Themelios* 9 (1984) 17-21.

6 The Theological Context and Nature of Paul's Teaching on Spiritual Gifts in 1 Corinthians 12-14; Romans 12 and Ephesians 4.

Under this broad heading we can only point briefly and in summary fashion to *some* of the ways in which Paul connects his teaching on the prototypical gifts we have examined with some other areas of his theology. The literature on the subject is enormous, and the reader is simply directed to the summaries of issues and secondary sources by H. Schürmann 1970,¹²⁵ Dunn 1975¹²⁶ and S. Schulz 1976,¹²⁷ and to the standard theologies.¹²⁸ In the discussion below we broadly follow the position set forth by K. S. Hemphill in his recent Cambridge dissertation on the pauline concept of charisma, but with some amendments.

6.1 Paul's Teaching in 1 Corinthians 12-14.¹²⁹

The list of gifts Paul specifies in 12:8-10 is not a neutral one but reflects (1) the interest of the Corinthians in the spectacular and (2) Paul's preparation for his specific pastoral advice on the manner and practice of gifts in 1 Corinthians 13-14: issues which have been raised by the Corinthian letter to him. Paul starts in 12:1-3 by broadening what was probably a narrow Corinthian view of who were *pneumatikos*—he points out that all who affirm 'Jesus is Lord' do so by the Spirit,¹³⁰ and so, in a sense, are spiritual. He then interprets the Corinthian *pneumatikos* terminology in the light of a theme already important earlier in the epistle, that of *grace* (*charis*: 1:4-7; 3:10). Accordingly, '*pneumatika*' is replaced by '*charismata*' (v.4—until Paul can safely switch back at 14:1), and manifestations of the Spirit are thus presented to the Corinthians as concrete results and activities of God's universally bestowed *charis*. As such they are not the objects of prideful boasting.

After the brief characterization of gifts of the Spirit in verses 4-7, and Paul's initial list thereof in verses 8-10, he returns to the point that the Spirit distributes the gifts to each as he wills. The *hekastō(i)* of verses 7, 11 are still ambiguous: is the point merely that the Spirit distributes to each who receive charisma, or is Paul saying that each Christian receives some gift? So far the Corinthians could read the letter on the assumption that *charismata/pneumatika* denote only the sort of gifts listed in verses 8-10, and that Paul is only talking about the Spirit's work amongst an inner circle of *pneumatikoi*.¹³¹ But that he is not becomes clear in 12:12-31. He starts with the insistence that the Spirit has made all members one body and that all are made to drink (or be watered by) the same Spirit. The body imagery, which he next develops, not only allows him to insist on the need for diversity making up the one unity, but permits him also to raise the possibility that the parts of the body that seem weaker, less honourable, or less presentable, may prove indispensable and more honoured (vv.22-24), God giving greater honour to the 'inferior' part. In this Paul is preparing to say that some divine workings which the Corinthians have played down

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are in fact of greater significance than the list of highly prized items in verses 8-10.

¹²⁵ H. Schürmann, 'Die geistlichen Gnadengaben in den paulinischen Gemeinden' in his *Ursprung and Gestalt* (Düsseldorf 1970) 236-67.

¹²⁶ Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*.

¹²⁷ S. Schulz, 'Die Charismenlehre des Paulus. Bilanz der Probleme and Ergebnisse' in J. Friedrich *et al* (eds) *Rechtfertigung* (Tübingen 1976) 443-60.

¹²⁸ especially H. N. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of his Theology* (Grand Rapids 1975) #70-72.

¹²⁹ for an outline of the problems relating to these chapters see the introductory essay by J. Dupont, 'Dimensions du probleme des charismes dans 1 Co. 12-14' and all the essays in De Lorenzi, *Charisma und Agape*.

¹³⁰ see Grudem, *Gift* 156-73 especially 170ff.; Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 68ff.

¹³¹ for the view that Paul does not believe all have gifts see the list of writers in U. Brockhaus, *Charisma und Amt* (Wuppertal 1975²) 204 n3.

The trap is now sprung in verses 28-31. In verse 18 Paul had spoken of God setting the members in the body, and earlier still he had spoken of *all* being gifted—but the precise range of ‘members’, or ‘gifts’, was unclear. Now in verses 28-31 it is spelt out. God has set in the church (v.28 *cf.* v.18) first apostles, then prophets, then teachers etc.—a listing which immediately gives priority to leadership which some of the Corinthians were wont to downplay (*cf.* 1 Cor. 1-4; 16:15-16). Paul is pointing out that these functions, too, are grounded in charismata (v.31). The abilities enabling teachers etc. to function are no less ‘spiritual’ than those vaunted by the self-styled *pneumatikoi*. Under the same rubric come ‘helps’ (*antilēmpseis*) and ‘administrations’ (*kybernēseis*), which the Corinthian enthusiasts probably did not reckon amongst ‘God’s workings’ at all: these may well have been what Paul had in mind when he introduced the ‘unseemly’ and the ‘weak’ members earlier. These, too, God ‘set’ in the church, and by the *charis* they received, their functions, as well, are to be characterized as the outworking of *charisma*. So Paul broadens out the notion of the locus of the Spirit’s work, and can finish ‘seek the greater *charismata*’—presumably excluding that which enables apostleship, ranked first, but certainly not excluding that which gave access to the second in rank, the *prophēteia* encouraged in chapter 14, and which constitutes one *prophētēs* (v.28).

Chapter 13, which follows, does not attempt to marginalize the issue of gifts, but to state the manner in which the genuine *pneumatikos* exercises the gifts¹³²—in love, for the upbuilding of the church (and it is precisely the *charismata* that build up most which constitute the greater gifts to be sought)¹³³—and this is spelled out in practical terms in chapter 14.¹³⁴

In sum, this discourse begins by suggesting a narrow range of denotata for the term charismata—namely the dramatic demonstrations of the Spirit—but by the end of the discourse Paul has demanded a totally different perspective; one that recognizes even the allegedly ‘mundane’ services performed in the body of Christ as God’s work, as *charismata*, and manifestations of the Spirit.¹³⁵ It is not (as Dunn would have it) that Paul is saying *striking* acts of administration or ‘help’ are *charismata*, *because* they demonstrate the Spirit’s work; but rather that even ordinary ‘weak’ services that are ‘not honoured’ are perceived by the spiritual man as God’s work; as *charis* individuated as *charisma*.

6.2 Romans 12

This need not delay us long. The teaching made pointedly and contingently in 1 Corinthians 12 is offered more neutrally here. Once again (12:3, 6 *cf.* 15:15) Paul grounds *charisma* in *charis* (as at 1 Cor. 1:4-7); once again the issue of *charismata* is raised within an ethical structure (here Paul’s treatment of the theme is the filling in an

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ethical/paraenetic sandwich, 12:1-3, 9ff.); once again the unity and diversity in the one body is the main illustration, and, as in Corinthians, Paul stresses the need truly to understand the role of each as contributing to the whole (12:3)—to know the limits and functions of one’s

¹³² Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 100; S. Lyonnet ‘Agape et Charismes selon 1 Co 12, 31’ De Lorenzi *Paul de Tarse* 509-27.

¹³³ Hemphill, *ibid.* 97-122.

¹³⁴ for the argument of chap. 14 see L. Hartman, ‘1 Co. 14, 1-25: Argument and Some Problems’ in De Lorenzi, *Charisma und Agape* 149-69.

¹³⁵ Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 82-92; *cf.* Brockhaus, *Charisma und Amt* 204 ‘Die Korinther engten den Kreis der Pneumatiker ein; Paulus weitete ihn aus.’

charisma(ta) and to use them fully in the light of the fact that they are individual expressions of God's *charis* (v.6). A clear feature of the passage is the universality of the gifts in the church (*cf.* the 'all' and 'to each' of vv.3f.), and in this neutral context Paul is free to number leadership, teaching, and service roles amongst the *charismata*, along with prophecy. The exact denotation of the members of the list, especially of *diakonia* ('diaconate'? or 'service?'); *ho proistamenos* ('leader'? or 'one giving aid?') etc., is disputed; but its mixed quality is not.¹³⁶

6.3 Ephesians 4

Whether pauline or not (I believe the former) this section is in continuity with both 1 Corinthians 12 and with Romans 12, though some themes are developed in a specialized way in accordance with the perspective of the letter as a whole. Here again we find the ethical framework (4:1-3, 5, 16); similarly we meet the same insistence that each believer is part of the one body of Christ constituted by the one Spirit, and that each receives an appropriate *charis* apportioned by Christ (4:5-8; *cf.* 1 Cor. 12:5). This *charis*, however, is not said to be revealed in *charismata* but in *domata*—a word forced on the writer by its appearance in Psalm 68:18, which is quoted. The Old Testament passage takes the author's thought in a slightly new direction. If G. Smith¹³⁷ is right the psalm is speaking about God's appropriation to himself of the priests and levites who are then also given back, as it were, to the people of Israel. In accordance with this, Ephesians specifies as the *domata* of Christ; apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, whose function it is to equip the saints to partake in the building up and service of the body as a whole (v.12). An alternative, but much less probable, reading of the second half of this verse is that the specified *domata*, and not the saints, are the agents of the *ergon diakonias and oikodomē tou sōmatos*; in which case verse 12 is usually read (but need not be) as an early catholic emphasis on a more institutionally orientated structure, and a departure from Paul's concept that every member is a gifted minister.¹³⁸

We judge this second reading of verse 12 less probable, not primarily on syntactic grounds but contextually. The letter as a whole has stressed Christ's riches received by *all* the saints (1:3-19 and 3:20); the immediate context speaks of *all* receiving apportioned *charis*, the *whole* body receiving growth from the head as *each part* (4:16) does its work. The letter accordingly expects each to show mutual concern and care (2:16; 4:25-9 and 5:30), and 5:19 envisages worship that strongly evokes the charismatic congregation of 1 Corinthians 14:26f. If pride of place is given to teaching and leadership gifts this exactly accords with Romans 12, and even with

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the ranking of 1 Corinthians 12:28. It may, further, have been occasioned by the situation of the letter.¹³⁹

6.4 Charismata in Paul

We may now examine a few specific questions raised by the more general treatment above:

¹³⁶ contrast Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 42; Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 189ff. J. S. Bosch, 'Le Corps du Christ et les Charismes dans l'épître aux Romains' in L. De Lorenzi (ed) *Dimensions de la Vie Chrétienne (Rom 12-13)* (Rome 1979) 51-72.

¹³⁷ G. V. Smith, 'Paul's Use of Psalm 68:18 in Ephesians 4:8' *JETS* 18 (1975) 181-90.

¹³⁸ Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 235ff. for discussion.

¹³⁹ *ibid.* 243.

6.4.1 *The Meaning of Charisma in Paul*

Strangely, there is no textually-secure pre-Christian occurrence of the word *charisma* though it occurs 17 times in the New Testament, and all but once (1 Pet. 4:10) in the Paulines.¹⁴⁰ Not surprisingly, it is claimed that Paul brought the word into theological currency. We still await a good lexical study, and those with competence in linguistics would probably be amused with what New Testament scholars have claimed so far. One can only judge misled the claims of Grau¹⁴¹ and Käsemann¹⁴² to the effect that *charisma* is a technical term; the one *charisma* of Romans 6:23 being the basis of all *charismata*. It may be theologically true that the *referent* of the word *charisma* in 6:23 is the source of other *charismata*; but it is a blunder in the realm of lexical semantics to confuse the *referent* of a predicate (in a referring expression) with its *sense*, and it leads to forced interpretation of Romans 1:11; 1 Corinthians 7:7; 2 Corinthians 1:11; Romans 5:15 and 11:29. More soberly, it is usually admitted that the word *charisma* has the general sense of 'gift' or 'favour bestowed' but that it acquires semi-technical force in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12.¹⁴³ Even this is open to doubt. There is no occasion of an absolute to *charismata* referring to 'spiritual gifts' (in 1 Cor. 12:31 the definite article is merely anaphoric); the word is used either indefinitely (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4) or (in the three remaining occurrences) in the modified form *charismata iamaton*. The evidence is readily enough explained if Paul is using the word *charisma* to characterize as God's 'gracious favour' a thoroughly diverse set of activities of God concerned with the upbuilding of the church. In 1 Corinthians the word was probably chosen polemically to pull the rug out from beneath the self-vaunting *pneumatikoi* who prided themselves on what Paul tactically terms 'gifts'—'free expressions of God's favour'.¹⁴⁴

The attempt to make the word semi-technical could only succeed if a fairly strict stereotype could be offered. Grau and Dunn have tried to give this by defining *charisma* strictly in terms of *energēma* (1 Cor. 12:6) or *praxis* (Rom. 12:4).¹⁴⁵ For Dunn, this means that in Paul *charismata* are 'concrete actions, actual events, not... latent possibilities and hidden talents'.¹⁴⁶ Consequently, only particular occasions of teaching, leadership, pastoralia etc., or specific *events* of prophecy, tongues etc., can be *charismata*. Now, as long as we restrict our analysis to 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, Dunn's gloss on Paul may seem appropriate. But to force it on his broader list of *charismata* in 1 Corinthians 12:28f. and Romans 12:6ff., so

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that only what we might in twentieth-century terms designate as 'strongly charismatic' *acts* (of leadership, administration, help etc.) are accounted *charismata*, seems totally unjustified. Hemphill rightly criticizes Dunn's formulation of the antithesis as between either activities of the Spirit in the moment or latent possibilities and hidden talents. There is room for middle ground—especially concerning activities which demand a wide range of competence such as leadership or pastoralia. Could not Paul speak of an ability possessed, which was recognized and dedicated to God, and used for the upbuilding of the church (even recognized ultimately

¹⁴⁰ for analysis see Schulz, 'Die Charismenlehre des Paulus' 445f.; Brockhaus, *Charisma und Amt* 128f.

¹⁴¹ I only know F. Grau's *Der neutestamentliche Begriff χάρισμα* (unpublished Ph.D, Tübingen 1946) through secondary sources: for critique see Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 73 n81, 180 n64 and 187 n77; Brockhaus, *Charisma und Amt* 128-39.

¹⁴² Käsemann, *Essays* 64f.

¹⁴³ this is the view of Brockhaus, *Charisma und Amt* 128ff.; Schutz, 'Die Charismenlehre des Paulus' 445f.; Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 74; H. A. Lombard, 'Charisma and Church Office' *Neotestamentica* 10 (1976) 44.

¹⁴⁴ Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* chap. 3.

¹⁴⁵ *contra* Grau, see Hemphill, *ibid.* 187 n77.

¹⁴⁶ Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 209.

as being the work of a God who fashions man from the womb) as *charisma* (cf. 1 Cor. 7:7!)? As Hemphill points out, if Paul thought of *charismata* merely as momentary activities of the Spirit he could effectively have quenched all Corinthian boasting by saying no-one *possesses* any gifts. But in fact he speaks freely of people 'having' gifts, and gives practical instructions for utilizing the gift one 'has' (ch. 14)—indeed *charismata* can only threaten the community at all if they are 'possessed in stewardship' (cf. 1 Pet. 4:10) and hence subject to immature misuse by the one who 'has' the gift.¹⁴⁷ We conclude that 'charisma' has a much broader sense than the narrowly restricted one Dunn and Grau attempt to force on it, and we doubt whether the designation 'semi-technical' can be justified.

Charisma also has a correspondingly wider denotation than is often assumed. While Paul enumerates nine gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, he widens the class considerably in 1 Corinthians 12:28ff.; Romans 12:6-8 and Ephesians 4:11 f. The lists are clearly *ad hoc* and incomplete and they suggest that for Paul virtually anything that can be viewed as God's enabling of a man for the upbuilding of the church could and would be designated a *charisma*, if Paul's purpose was to underline its nature as given by God.

6.4.2 One 'Gift' Per Christian?

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 could give the impression that Paul is saying each member of the body receives just one type of spiritual gift: each has his own *charisma* from God, as 1 Corinthians 7:7 puts it (quoting out of context!). But such a view would misunderstand Paul. Certainly he expects the church to be characterized by a variety of gifts, and for these to be distributed in such a way that individual members of Christ are dependent on each other—but this must be made to suggest neither that each is a specialist with just one operation of the Spirit, nor, worse, that the Spirit's distribution of gifts is like some endless heavenly game of musical chairs with a different allocation of types of *charismata* each time the assembly meets. The point, I think, is that the broad sense Paul attributes to '*charisma*' allows him to use it at different levels. He does actually speak of individual instances of healing as *charismata iamaton* (1 Cor. 12:9), but he might equally have said *allo(i) charisma iamaton*, thereby summing up all the specific instances generally as God's gracious

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enabling. Similarly he could easily have spoken of one receiving *charismata* of prophecy or interpretation of tongues (viewing each instance as God's gift) but as readily speaks of God giving the *charisma* of interpretation of tongues (12:10—an expression denoting a regular ministry of this, rather than a specific instance: cf. 1 Cor. 14:28 *diernēneutēs*); even of God giving 'prophets' (e.g. Eph. 4:11 cf. 1 Cor. 12:28f.). *Charisma* can denote the instance, or sum up a series of instances of the same enabling. But similarly, Paul expects that a man might have the gift of more than one gift—if one may put it that way. He expects the one with tongues to pray for the gift to interpret his tongues (1 Cor. 14:13). No doubt, too, he expects those with the *charisma* of celibacy to have more to offer than just that! But more to the point is that Paul recognizes as God's gifts to the church; pastors, evangelists, teachers, and administrators (1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12; Eph. 4). Whether we view these as functionaries or as functions the point remains that each 'gift' itself comprises *a whole nexus of charismata*. For example, the teacher needs understanding of scripture and tradition, personal insight into his congregation, power of *paraklēsis* (cf. Rom. 12:8) etc. And certainly Paul says that his apostolate is God's working (Gal. 2:8), and that it is God's grace (Rom. 1:5; 15:15)—he could as easily have said it was God's *charisma* (cf. Eph. 4:11)—yet this apostleship seems to

¹⁴⁷ Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 78 n92.

include the charismata of wonders, healing, tongues, prophecy and teaching etc. Whatever God enables a man to do for the church is at the same time his gifts (severally) and his gift (viewing the separate instances of gracious enabling constatively), or, better, the result of *charis* given him.

6.4.3 Fixed Gifts?

1 Corinthians 12 emphasizes that *God* has apportioned the *charismata* (6-11, 18, 28f.) and that there is consequently no room for boasting, jealousy or inferiority (vv. 12-30). This has led not a few commentators to portray Paul as a fatalist in respect of the distribution of gifts. Grudem,¹⁴⁸ probably rightly, sees Paul as countering such an attitude in verse 31—'Eagerly desire the greater gifts.'¹⁴⁹ (*cf.* 14:1, 39). God's wise distribution is his choice—and not all will receive the same gift—but his choice is not independent of man's humble prayerful *seeking*. The sovereignty of the giver does not negate human responsibility.¹⁵⁰ Some, overimpressed by Paul's statements of divine sovereignty in the passage, have claimed for *zēloun* its classical meaning 'to practice zealously' rather than 'to seek'.¹⁵¹ This does not really circumvent what they perceive to be the difficulty; for Paul, as we have seen, definitely advises in 14:13 that the one who speaks in tongues should pray to be enabled to interpret *too*. Further, it seems most natural to interpret *zēloun* semantically (in 14:1) as something like 'seek', for it is qualified 'especially that you might prophesy'.

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6.4.4 Spiritual Gifts and Natural Abilities

For Paul, as for the Old Testament, God is sovereign in the world, and that means that all that he enables are his 'gifts' amongst men (*cf.* 1 Cor. 7:7?); though the apostle would probably not characterize them as *spiritual* as such (we can only surmise how he may have integrated Balaam or Cyrus, Isaiah 45:1ff., into his theological structure!) outside the church. For Paul only Christians receive the Spirit—for reception of the Spirit is an eschatological and christocentric experience of God in Spirit that will be consummated to the individual at the parousia.¹⁵² (Outside the church Paul might well have said the Spirit was not yet.) And it is in this context alone, of Christian reception of the Spirit, that Paul speaks of *pneumatika*, *charismata*, *domata* etc.

In the case of the three prototypical gifts that we examined it is quite clear that Paul does *not* consider them to be in any way linked to natural abilities. The same may be said for the rest of the gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. But when Paul includes apostleship, teaching, pastoralia, administration and service in various ways in his listing of *charismata* it is obvious that the question of the relationship of natural abilities to spiritual gifts becomes more relevant. For all Paul has to say in 1 Corinthians 2:11-13, it is clear that not a few of the fundamental structures of his teaching only awaited christocentric focusing, reorganization and crystallization in the Damascus Road epiphany to become his apostolic teaching¹⁵³—and for which of his rhetorical and communication skills did he not serve at least some measure of apprenticeship in Judaism? Ultimately Paul's language of *charisma* is neutral with respect to

¹⁴⁸ Grudem, *Gift* 54-7, 259-61.

¹⁴⁹ The hortatory character of the passage and the parallel with 14:1 demands *zēloute* be imperative, not indicative; so Grudem, *Gift* 56.

¹⁵⁰ Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 124.

¹⁵¹ *e.g.* Van Unnik (according to Hemphill, *ibid.* 123) and Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts* 319ff.

¹⁵² *cf.* M. M. B. Turner, 'The Significance of Spirit-Endowment for Paul' *Vox Ev* 9 (1975) 56-69 [http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/vox/vol09/spirit_turner.pdf].

¹⁵³ so, forcefully, Beker, *Paul* and Kim, *Origin*.

the question of the part played by 'natural ability'—which is only proper for one who can say 'God... set me apart from the womb' (Gal. 1:15).

6.4.5 *Spiritual Gifts and Church Office*

In this paper no attempt will be made to trace the vigorous debate from R. Sohm (1892)¹⁵⁴ onwards on the question of the relationship between charismatic ministry and church office: I am not competent to do it, it would take too long, and, anyway, the task has already been performed fully by U. Brockhaus¹⁵⁵ and (much more briefly) by H. A. Lombard.¹⁵⁶ What I propose to do, instead, is to address some comments to Dunn's position¹⁵⁷ which stands at this end of the broad (albeit wiggley) line from Sohm through von Campenhausen (1965),¹⁵⁸ Käsemann¹⁵⁹ and Schweizer (1961)¹⁶⁰ to today.

For Dunn the issues are relatively clear: Paul's concept of *charismata* as events manifesting the Spirit—'gifts given for a particular instance'; never a talent 'on tap'—means that for Paul there is no place for formally appointed church office, merely for charismatic leadership *functions* which could be regularized in an individual (*e.g.* prophet or teacher) and in

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less well-defined ministries. Starting with the latter, let Dunn speak for himself:¹⁶¹

They included preaching, a wide range of services, administration and/or some kinds of leadership, and acting as a church delegate or serving in the Gentile mission as a co-worker with Paul (see particularly Rom. 12:7-8; 16:1, 3, 9, 21; 1 Cor. 12:28; 16:15-18; 2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 1:1; 2:25; 4:3; Col. 1:7; 4:7; 1 Thess. 5:12f.). These diverse forms of ministry were by no means clearly distinguishable from one another—for example, the ministry of exhortation overlaps with that of prophecy (Rom. 12:6-8) and the ministry of 'helping' (1 Cor. 12:28) with the 'sharing, caring and giving' of Romans 12:8. The explanation of this diversity is obvious: any form of service etc. which any individual member of the charismatic community found himself regularly prompted to by the Spirit and which benefited the church was (or at least should have been) recognized as a regular ministry by the church (1 Thess. 5:12f.; 1 Cor. 16:16, 18). Consequently these ministries should not be thought of as established or official ministries, and they were certainly not ecclesiastical appointments or church offices. Indeed we are told specifically in the case of Stephanas and his household that 'they *took upon themselves* their ministry to the saints' (1 Cor. 16:15). The only ones which took a form which may have provided the beginnings of a pattern for the future were the 'overseers (bishops) and deacons' of Philippi (Phil. 1:1). There it would appear that some of the less well defined areas of administration and service mentioned above had begun to be grouped together or to cohere into more clearly outlined forms of ministry, so that those who regularly engaged in them could be known by the same name (overseer or deacon). The 'evangelists' and 'pastors' of Eph. 4:11 may also denote more clearly defined ministries, though in Ephesians the (universal) Church is possibly viewed from a later (post-

¹⁵⁴ R. Sohm, *Kirchenrecht* (Leipzig 1892).

¹⁵⁵ Brockhaus, *Charisma und Amt* pt. 1.

¹⁵⁶ Lombard, 'Charisma and Church Office' 31-37.

¹⁵⁷ Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* 44-57, or more briefly, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (London 1977) 29, 30.

¹⁵⁸ H. von Campenhausen, *Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries* (London 1969).

¹⁵⁹ Käsemann, *Essays* 63-94.

¹⁶⁰ E. Schweizer, *Church Order in the New Testament* (London 1961).

¹⁶¹ Dunn, *Unity and Diversity* 112f. (Quoted by kind permission).

Pauline?) perspective.... Yet even here the words seem to denote functions rather than offices and are not yet established titles.

Dunn goes on to emphasize the congregational responsibility for ministry in Paul's letters. In contrast to all this, he finds the Pastorals much closer to Ignatius than to Paul. Elders, overseers and deacons are now church offices (I Tim. 5:1ff., 17-19; Tit. 1:5; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:7ff.), and Paul's concept of *charisma* has become narrowed and regulated: it is a single gift, given once for all in the course of ordination: it has become the power and authority of office (1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). This is seen as the result of the fusing of Pauline and Jewish-Christian patterns, and as the decay of Paul's charismatic vision.

A *propos* of this structure we make the following observations:

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(1) The whole structure rests on the unsubstantiated claim that *charisma* can only denote an *event*, or a gift given for a particular instance, the latter being regarded (quite arbitrarily) as of short duration. Ultimately this may be much closer to the Corinthian view of *pneumatika* than to the Pauline understanding of *charismata*,¹⁶² and certainly is not reflected in Paul's view of his own apostolate.

(2) Dunn argues that Paul's preference for participles such as *ho didaskōn*; *ho parakalōn*; *ho proistamenos* (Rom. 12:7-8); *ho katēchoumenos* (Gal. 6:6) indicates that he conceives the *charismata* as *functions* not *offices*. This is true in what it asserts and false in what it denies. The participles do denote functions because the discourse contexts and themes are concerned with *ethics* and *praxis*, and so with what the Spirit *enables* and how those *charismata* are to be exercised. Paul is not discussing, far less defining, church polity as such.¹⁶³ Dunn's statement is wrong in what it denies for two reasons: (i) to say, for example that in Romans 12 Paul is concerned to emphasize *how* the one who teaches should teach, and that he does so by God's *charis*, in no way suggests or implies that Paul had reservations about using the titular form *ho didaskalos* (*cf.* 1 Cor. 12:28f.; Eph. 4:11); nor can we infer that he probably did not know of an 'office' of 'teacher' (as Dunn virtually admits). But by the same reasoning, the use of participles to denote other leadership functions (when it is the functions as such which are in focus) in no way suggests that Paul was unaware of corresponding 'offices'. (ii) Dunn's statement implies that there is some *necessary* antithesis between charismatic functions and church offices. The writers of the Pastorals (even on Dunn's hypothesis) and of Luke-Acts¹⁶⁴ certainly did not think this to be the case. Nor is the 'necessity' a logical one.

(3) Indeed, for Paul we are forced to accept that some of the charismatic functions were simultaneously church 'offices' (at least of a rudimentary type)—if by 'office' we mean a function (i) with an element of permanency, (ii) recognized by the church (*e.g.* with a title), (iii) authorized and hallowed in some way (iv) with formal commissioning (*e.g.* through laying on of hands) and possibly (v) legitimated (*e.g.* through letter of commendation) and (vi) remunerated.¹⁶⁵ Thus Brockhaus and Holmberg can point, for example, to Paul's

¹⁶² *cf.* D. Fraikin, ' "Charismes et Ministères" à la lumière de 1 Co 12-14' *EgTh* 9 (1978) 455ff.

¹⁶³ a point well made by Lombard, 'Charisma and Church Office' especially 47.

¹⁶⁴ see M. Dumais, 'Ministères, charismes et Esprit dans l'oeuvre de Luc' *EgTh* 9 (1978) 413-53; V. C. Pfitzner, 'Office and Charism in Paul and Luke' *Colloquium* 13 (1981) 28-38 argues that Paul and Luke take a similar stance on the question of office and charism.

¹⁶⁵ the criteria of 'office' are essentially those of Brockhaus, *Charisma und Amt* 24f.; *cf.* B. Holmberg, *Paul and Power* (Lund 1978) 110f.

legitimation of the leaders in 1 Thessalonians 5:13, and of Stephanas and household in 1 Corinthians 16:15f. (to whom Paul requests congregational *hypotassesthai*); to *paid* teachers (Gal. 6:6) and to the *titles* such as *diakonoi*; *episkopoi* etc. (Phil. 1:1 etc.) as indications of *office* even if we would be hard pressed to define their precise nature.¹⁶⁶ How Dunn knows these last were *not* offices, but functions, entirely eludes scrutiny. His conclusion probably rests on the fact of unsubdued chaos in Corinth (1 Cor. chs. 5, 6, 10, 12-14). This, of course, hardly shows that Corinth had *charismatic* leadership as opposed to *institutional* leadership—it merely shows that Corinth had *ineffectual* leadership. But that could be

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due to a variety of causes, including: (i) personal failures (ii) lack of precedents and norms at this early stage by which *episkopoi* might guide, and especially, (iii) unclear specification of role-responsibilities between leaders and, in particular, the other strongly charismatic elements in the congregation. Are there no modern church leaders, even with definite ecclesiastical polity, who find it difficult to know how to relate their office to strong charismatic elements in their churches? In the earliest days of Paul's churches, when recognition was of *episkopoi*—a very unspecific title and one that carried none of the theological and organizational baggage associated with *presbyteroi* (at least, not until the period of the close of Paul's ministry)¹⁶⁷—lack of clear definition of role must at times have been quite paralyzing.

(4) The antithesis between the earlier paulines and the Pastorals on ministry is vastly overdrawn. Interestingly, J. S. Bosch confesses he started *his* essay on pastoral charisma in the paulines with the firm conviction that the Pastorals were non-pauline, but changed his mind in the writing. The similarity (at deep-structure level) of what Paul had to say on the issue in the earlier letters and what is said in the Pastorals forced him to regard the question of authorship as open after all.¹⁶⁸ Dunn's handling of the question of *charisma* in the Pastorals seems quite inadequate. Why must *charisma* now be nothing other than the power and authority of *office*? No office is actually mentioned (in connection with Timothy). Is Dunn merely reading these letters through the spectacles of second-century ministerial patterns? It does not seem any less plausible, for example, to envisage a scene modelled on Acts 13:2 where Paul during worship prophesies God's setting apart and empowering of Timothy (*cf.* 1 Tim. 4:14) and accordingly consecrates him for the specified purpose with laying on of hands. Did Paul himself not receive a divine commission (in an initiating event) with empowering to carry it out?

(5) We conclude by quoting some words from Holmberg¹⁶⁹ and from Lombard.¹⁷⁰ Holmberg writes: 'In Paul's mind there exists no opposition between *charisma* and office, or *charisma* and institution, as the term signifies any gift, task, or benefit to the whole church that a Christian has been enabled by God to practise.' Lombard sums up a section of his findings:

In no passage of Scripture whatsoever does one encounter the alleged antithesis between charisma and church office, between Spirit and church polity, between Gentile pauline charismatic church and Jewish Palestinian institutionalized church in Jerusalem:

¹⁶⁶ see the further discussion in Holmberg, *ibid.* 110-23.

¹⁶⁷ This does not mean Luke is wrong to report Paul setting up *presbyteroi*, *e.g.* Acts 14:23 In Luke's day the terms *presbyteroi* and *episkopoi* were virtually synonyms.

¹⁶⁸ J. S. Bosch, 'Le Charisme des Pasteurs dans Le Corpus Paulinien' in De Lorenzi, *Paul de Tarse* 394.

¹⁶⁹ Holmberg, *Paul and Power* 123 (The Greek has been transliterated.)

¹⁷⁰ Lombard, 'Charisma and Church Office' 48; *cf.* Brockhaus, *Charisma und Amt* 210-18.

Charismata were and are by no means church offices! As gifts of the Spirit they enable and make one competent to serve Christ and his church. It must be clearly understood that the institutional church (with its offices, laws and polity) could and still can in no way exercise and fulfil its duty otherwise than by endowment of the Spirit; *viz.* by the received and operating charismata.

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That is the lesson of Paul's teaching for the relationship of spiritual gifts and church office.

With these comments we end our discussion of charismata in the early church, and turn to the question of their significance for today.

PART II THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GIFTS FOR TODAY

1 Introduction

We shall not take up the question of *ministry* and spiritual gifts today: it will be assumed that the implications of Paul's teaching are relatively transparent. Equally we hope that Paul's more general teaching on the scope of gifts requires no further elucidation. Certainly we are unwise to limit the *scope* of the term *charismata* more narrowly than Paul does, and that will include a very wide spectrum indeed—including those abilities usually artificially cut off from discussion of gifts because Paul chanced to use a different metaphor, and to call them 'fruits of the Spirit' (Gal. 5:22f.). Nor will we take up the subject of evaluation of religious experiences *outside* the church. We shall confine ourselves to the agenda raised in the introduction.

2 Are There Modern Counterparts to the Prototypical Gifts?

First we must ask whether the New Testament explicitly, or even implicitly, assumes the cessation of these gifts.

2.1 Expected Continuation or Cessation of Gifts from the New Testament Perspective

2.1.1 Healings

Nothing in the New Testament suggests that healings would cease. Of course, if there were any evidence that healings were *restricted* to the apostles—or to delegates on whom they laid their hands—then this would lend some weight to the traditional Reformed argument—classically stated by B. B. Warfield—that healing miracles were for the *authentication of the apostles* and their message, and ceased thereafter.¹⁷¹ But there is no evidence, whatsoever, that healings were restricted to those on whom apostolic hands were laid to impart a ministry of healing (as Bishop Kaye suggested).¹⁷² Indeed there is no evidence that the latter ever took place. To say the Samaritans in Acts 8:14-17 'all received the power of working signs by the laying on of Apostolic hands', and that this was paradigmatic,¹⁷³ is sheer nonsense and needs to be labelled as such: it totally misses Luke's point. Laying on of hands indeed there was, and signs there were too—both at the time and possibly later—but Luke is concerned to depict the Samaritan reception of the Spirit promised in

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¹⁷¹ B. B. Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles* (London 1972) 21 who deliberately excludes the older and more general hypothesis that miracles lasted until the church was fully established.

¹⁷² Warfield, *ibid.* 23.

¹⁷³ Warfield, *ibid.* 22.

Acts 2 (vv.17-21, 33, 38f.) *to all*; not a special charism for working apostolocentric authenticating signs!¹⁷⁴

It is more worrying that Warfield and those who relied on him, failed to perceive that, for the New Testament writers, the healings were not externally attesting signs, but part of the scope of the salvation announced (*cf.* section 4.2 above), which reached beyond the merely spiritual to the psychological and physical.¹⁷⁵ The dawning of salvation, viewed holistically, was the beginning of the reversal of Satan's oppression (Lk. 4:18-21; 7:20f.; Acts 10:38 etc.). As such, the healings were still regarded as having legitimating function with respect to Jesus and to the apostles (around whom they clustered with especial intensity), but essentially the healings belonged as part of the firstfruits of the kingdom of God, and so as part of the message of salvation which the church announced. So, if there are sick in the church, James can expect (at least as a rule of thumb) that the elders' prayer of faith will bring healing (Jas. 5:15). The relationship which healing sustains to the kerygma of the dawning kingdom of God suggests that the New Testament writers did not envisage the two ever being separated.

2.1.2 Tongues and Prophecy

2.1.2.1 1 Corinthians 13 and the Pauline Evidence

Paul does explicitly state the expectation that prophecy, tongues and knowledge will cease or be done away with (1 Cor. 13:8ff.). The reason they will cease, Paul states, is that they are 'partial' (*ek merous*) and when 'the perfect' (*to teleion*) comes they will be done away with as unnecessary (vv.9-10). Three interpretations of this have become widely current. The *first* is that by *to teleion* Paul denotes the completed canon of scripture. This position is exegetically indefensible, and is not held in serious New Testament scholarship. The objections to it are strong: (1) There is no evidence that Paul expected the formation of a canon after the death of the apostles; indeed he half expected he *might* survive to the parousia (1 Thess. 4:15 f.; 1 Cor. 15:51), though he was not sure. (2) He cannot have expected the Corinthians to perceive from the phrase *to teleion* that he was referring to a canon of scripture (and he was not aware of writing to anyone *else!*); (3) anyway, the completed canon of scripture would hardly signify for the Corinthians the *passing away of merely 'partial' knowledge* (and prophecy and tongues with it), and the arrival of 'full knowledge', for the Corinthians already had the Old Testament, the Gospel Tradition (presumably), and more pauline teaching than finally got into the canon (certainly)! (4) More important still is that in verse 12b Paul states that (with the coming of 'the perfect') our 'partial knowledge' will give way to a measure of knowledge that is only matched by the way *we are now known (by God)*.¹⁷⁶ This contrast between Corinthian knowledge before and after the arrival of *to teleion* is so sharp that Paul can express it 'Now we see but

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¹⁷⁴ See J. D. G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (London 1970) chap. 5, though I do not agree with Dunn's precise interpretation either: see below pages 39-41 and, specifically on the Samaritan episode, Turner, *Luke and the Spirit* 161-70.

¹⁷⁵ I am not entirely happy with R. B. Gaffin's qualification, in his *Perspectives on Pentecost* (Phillipsburg 1979) 45, that the miracles appropriately and necessarily disclose the essence of the kingdom and its blessing but without at the same time constituting or embodying that essence. A healing may truly embody the kingdom without either fully embodying it or irreversibly doing so. Exorcisms are a case in point.

¹⁷⁶ G. Bornkamm, *Early Christian Experience* (London 1969) 185.

a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face' (v. 12a, NIV). This last statement is in fact the language of theophany,¹⁷⁷ and makes it all but certain that Paul is talking of the parousia—so sure that Calvin was able to say: 'It is stupid of people to make the whole of this discussion apply to the intervening time.' However much we respect the New Testament canon, Paul can only be accused of the wildest exaggeration in verse 12 if that is what he was talking about. (5) Finally, we note that this view rests partly on the assumption that prophecy was an interim revelation of doctrine to be transcended by the canon. But, as we have seen, prophecy was not primarily authoritative revelation of theology, but had much wider content and function, much of which would not be affected in the least by completion of the canon.

A *second* widely-held interpretation is that *to teleion* means 'maturity'. Lexically this is possible, and the illustration in verse 11 is often taken to confirm it. But to suggest that this may apply to some *pre*-parousia maturity of the church is, once again, simply to trivialize the language of verses 10 and 12. Besides which we must note (1) that Paul so highly ranks prophets and prophecy that it is unlikely he would envisage them excluded from even the most mature church (*cf.* 1 Cor. 14:37) and (2) Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:7 clearly regards the charismata as strengthening the church as it awaits the Lord's return. The point in verse 11 is not that the apostolic church will give rise to a more mature one *on earth*, in which knowledge will no longer be *ek merous*; but that the whole existence of the church on earth is characterized by partial knowledge (prophecy etc.) when seen from the perspective of the coming parousia. Paul's polemical point is that 'the spiritual manifestations of this age, no matter how magnificent they may seem (to the Corinthians) are childish in comparison with the fullness to be possessed when the kingdom is fully realized'.¹⁷⁸ *Love will then prove eternal*, but all phenomena characterized by partial revelation will be transcended: so the former must now be the matrix for the latter, and the gifts must be exercised for loving upbuilding of the church which awaits Christ.

Only the *third*—the eschatological—interpretation of verses 8-12 satisfactorily accounts for Paul's language.¹⁷⁹ With it, however, goes the corollary that Paul *expects* prophecy, 'knowledge' and (possibly) tongues to continue (note the adversative *de* of v.10); it is *only* the advent of the parousia, and the conditions it introduces, that makes prophecy otiose (*cf.* *katargēthēsetai* vv. 8, 10); not some unspecified event or condition before it.

2.1.2.2 *The Evidence of Acts 2:16-39*

The nature of the gift of the Spirit which Peter promises *to all* (Acts 2:38f.) on the day of Pentecost is also significant. All too often this gift has been portrayed *either* as the beginning of the disciples' experience of the new age, the matrix of their Christian existence (so Dunn¹⁸⁰ and Bruner),

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or as a *donum superadditum* of empowering (traditional Confirmationists and Pentecostalists). Neither position accords with Luke's view. For Luke the disciples have certainly recognized, enjoyed and preached the inbreaking kingdom of God within the ministry. The joy of forgiveness, the table-fellowship with Jesus, the renewing of their lives,

¹⁷⁷ Grudem, *Gift* 213 n57.

¹⁷⁸ Hemphill, *Pauline Concept of Charisma* 116.

¹⁷⁹ For detailed discussion see Grudem, *Gift* 210-21; Hemphill, *ibid.* 113-20 and, more popularly, E. H. Andrews, *The Promise of the Spirit* (Welwyn 1982) 242-6 (drawing different conclusions for today).

¹⁸⁰ Dunn, *Baptism passim*, against which see Turner, *Luke and the Spirit passim* or, more briefly, Turner, 'Jesus and the Spirit' 3-42.

minds and spirits as they lived in discipleship to him—all so beautifully described by Jeremias¹⁸¹—*were* their participation in the kingdom of God announced by Jesus. But the passion and the ascension posed a problem. Given that these men have experienced God's rule in their discipleship to Jesus, and under the influence of the Spirit working through him, how will they continue to experience the powers of the new age shaping their existence when Jesus is removed into the heavenlies? The answer to that question in John's gospel is given in chapters 14-16: when Jesus is ascended the disciples will not be left as orphans (14:18) because the Spirit will be given to the disciples to act as their new Paraclete, and to bring them the presence of the Father and of the glorified Son (14:23).¹⁸² Luke's answer, along very similar lines, lies in the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost *as the Spirit promised by Joel* (*cf.* Acts 2:17ff.).

Joel's promise is of what we may (with Lindblom) call the Spirit of prophecy; that is, the organ of communication between God and a man enabling, for example, dreams, visions and words which are the basis of prophecy. In the Old Testament it was a gift given, for instance, to Moses, the seventy elders (Num. 11:16ff.), kings and prophets, to enable them to bring God's will and wisdom to the people. The eschatological hope of Jeremiah 31:34 was that one day *all* the Lord's people would know their God as directly (*cf.* too Moses' wistful desire in Num. 11:29 that God would put the Spirit of prophecy on all, not merely the seventy). *It is this hope that Joel expresses in the form of a divine promise.* And it was exactly *this* promise of the Spirit (*i.e.* as the Spirit of prophecy; the organ of communication between God and a man) which the Judaism of Jesus' day most widely expected to be fulfilled at the eschaton. To any Jew listening to Peter's sermon *this* is what he would be understood to be promising; the only surprise being that *Jesus* was said to be at its *origin* (Acts 2:33). It is precisely this that solves the problem posed by the removal of Jesus in the ascension: for (by virtue of what is said in Acts 2:23) *Jesus can continue to exercise his lordship* in and *through the disciples through the Spirit of prophecy* acting as the organ of communication between the Father and Jesus in the heavenlies, and the disciples on earth.¹⁸³

And this is confirmed in the pages of Acts. Just as the Spirit of prophecy in Judaism was expected to bring God's revelation in *visions* and *dreams* (so Joel in 2:17f.) so in Acts we find the risen Lord giving such to the disciples: sometimes crucial theological visions (*cf.* Acts 10:10ff. with its staggering import for the admission of Gentiles and for the Law); sometimes merely incidental personal direction (Acts 9:10ff.; 16:9ff.) or comfort (Acts 7:55f.; 18:9-10). Similarly, by the same gift, the risen Lord

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gives direction in words (without vision): *e.g.* 13:2; 10:19 etc. *Charismatic wisdom* and *discernment* are also given through the same Spirit of prophecy, as expected in Judaism (*cf.* the fulfilment of Lk. 21:15 in Acts 6:9-10, and *cf.* 5:3; 16:18 etc.). This last is closely associated with, and can result in, *power in preaching*—a major emphasis in Acts but *not* to be confused with the *essence* of the Pentecost gift. Power in preaching is merely one aspect of the activity of the Spirit as the christocentric Spirit of prophecy. Finally, of course, the Spirit *qua* Spirit of prophecy revealed himself in tongues—a form of inspired speech which Judaism would immediately recognize as belonging in the category of prophetism.

¹⁸¹ J. Jeremias, *New Testament Theology* I (London 1971) *passim*; *cf.* Turner, *Luke and the Spirit* chap. 3; 'Jesus and the Spirit' 29-34.

¹⁸² as E. Holwerda, R. E. Brown *et al.*: see M. M. B. Turner, 'The Significance of Receiving the Spirit in John's Gospel' *Vox Ev* 10 (1977) 26-28 [http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/vox/vol10/spirit_turner.pdf].

¹⁸³ Turner, *Luke and the Spirit* chaps. 4, 5 for elucidation.

Quite clearly, *after* the ascension, this gift promised by Peter is a *sine qua non* of Christian existence. The man who knows the presence of the Lord; who experiences Jesus speaking to him in his heart, and leading him; the man who on occasions in his life has felt the hand of the Lord upon him giving him (christocentric) wisdom or guidance or empowering to speak: any such man owes all this to the Spirit experienced as what Luke means by the Spirit of prophecy promised by Joel. *Equally clearly*, however, the character of the gift Luke envisages, as Joel's promised Spirit of prophecy, virtually guarantees that he expected visions, dreams, prophecy etc. to be *continuing* phenomena. Not a few exegetes have dismissed such gifts as merely the dispensable signs of the presence of the Spirit. But this is a misunderstanding: according to what Peter says such gifts *correspond to the essential character* of the Spirit as the Spirit of prophecy; they are instances of the Spirit acting as the organ of communication of God's revelation to a man, enabling him to receive Jesus' word and direction.

At the end of this section we may summarize quite simply: the New Testament does not envisage the cessation of the prototypical gifts; on the contrary, every indication suggests that Luke and Paul expected them to continue.

2.2 Can We Say Any of the Gifts Did In Fact Cease? If So What Are the Theological Consequences?

The question is only asked to enable us to table some laments and some rather speculative comments. The first lament is that there is, to my knowledge, *no* critical history of any of the three gifts we chose to discuss; though this is not to say we lack for semi-popular or highly partisan surveys. This introduces our second lament, which is that, where detailed work has been performed, it has all too often been vitiated by strong confessional or theoretical bias. In the area of healings, some of these confessional or theoretical biases have been well exposed by C. Brown, in his *Miracles and the Modern Mind*; and, perhaps surprisingly, nowhere more obviously than in the work of Warfield, whose book swings violently from a confessionalist, and somewhat naïve evidentialist, treatment of miracle in the apostolic age, to an extreme scepticism towards *any* claims of miracles in the church in the *post*-apostolic period, quite clearly

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dependent on Conyers Middleton.¹⁸⁴ Had he shown the same openness—some would say credulity—towards post-apostolic claims that he evinced when discussing New Testament miracles, which of the miracles of the saints would not have received his defence, if not indeed his approbation?! And, had he turned the degree of scepticism manifest in his treatment of post-apostolic writers onto the New Testament accounts, what scant few miracles of the apostles (or of the Lord himself) would have escaped his sharp wit and criticism! Certainly the church never universally *claimed* the gift of healing to have ceased—as Warfield would have preferred. As far as the 'facts' behind such claims are concerned we are unfortunately not really in a good position today to test many of them with any rigour.

Is the matter different with respect to tongues and prophecy? For the former, Middleton once bravely ventured:

And I might risk the merit of my argument on this single point; that, after the Apostolic times, there is not in all history one instance, either well attested, or even so much as

¹⁸⁴ see Brown, *Miracles* 64-68, 198-204.

mentioned, of any particular person, who had ever exercised this gift, or pretended to exercise it, in any age or country whatsoever.¹⁸⁵

But John Wesley was able to respond fairly quickly with a reminder that the phenomenon was known as close to home, and as recently, as amongst the Camisards¹⁸⁶—and historians have shown that Wesley's counterclaim could be widely illustrated in other centuries too.¹⁸⁷ Of course we have no guarantee that these claims were authentic, but we simply cannot, in true Middletonian fashion, try to read church history as though they were *not there*. They were. And the evidence for the critical early church period is that tongues were a *claimed* phenomenon at least to the time of Chrysostom, Augustine and Pope Leo the Great, who were the first to argue that tongues had ceased and to attempt a theological rationale (namely that apostolic and later tongues were symbolic of that extension of the church through the nations which was now fulfilled).¹⁸⁸ As for 'prophecy', the word itself has suffered such redefinition (principally in terms of 'preaching') that it will be especially difficult to write a history of the phenomenon.

We have implied that it is not possible to answer the question whether any of the prototypical gifts ceased. All that we can say is that claims to them were made, but nevertheless *relatively sparsely*; from which it may probably be inferred that these gifts were at least much less prominent in the later church than at the beginning.

What theological significance would such an observation carry? Certainly the outright claim that all 'spectacular gifts' ceased with the immediate apostolic circle would require a sharp end of all such Christian claims by Justin's day. And not a few dispensationalists have attempted to read the patristic evidence that way, at some cost to their claim to objectivity.¹⁸⁹ The sharp line is not there; nor anywhere else. And, anyway,

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the New Testament itself does not encourage the view that these gifts were *merely* 'signs', or provisional substitutes for the canon.

The only claim that can be made with confidence is that our prototypical gifts were *marginalized*. But it would be very unwise to give a single and theological reason for this, such as, for example, the alleged sinfulness or dryness of the post-apostolic church.¹⁹⁰ The factors concerned were probably very complex. Prophecy may well have become increasingly peripheral, as Aune suggests, (1) because Christian doctrine, tradition and norms were gradually established and fell within the province of teachers and pastors to administer, and (2) as, sociologically, the church became more integrated with its environment, and less prone to the dynamics of a millenarian sect. As for incomprehensible 'tongues', they had little built-in survival value, and it is hardly surprising that they mainly fell out of view until they were

¹⁸⁵ C. Middleton, *A Free Enquiry* (London 1749) 120, cited in Hamilton, *Charismatic Movement* 78.

¹⁸⁶ In a letter to Middleton (4 January 1749): for details see Hamilton, *ibid.* 78f. On the Camisard phenomenon see G. H. Williams and E. Waldvogel, 'A History of Speaking in Tongues and Related Gifts' in Hamilton, *ibid.* 75-80; D. Christie-Murray, *Voices from the Gods: Speaking with Tongues* (London 1978) 47ff.

¹⁸⁷ To the list of historical studies in R. Laurentin, *Catholic Pentecostalism* (London 1977) 94ff., 213ff. add Williams and Waldvogel, *art. cit.*; Christie-Murray, *ibid.*; H. Hunter, 'Tongues Speech: A Patristic Analysis' *JETS* 23 (1980) 125-37 and the works they cite.

¹⁸⁸ see Williams and Waldvogel, *art. cit.* 77f.; H. Hunter, *art. cit. passim*.

¹⁸⁹ see the criticisms in Hunter, *art. cit. passim*.

¹⁹⁰ *cf.* the reasons offered by the Pentecostal churches for the withdrawal of gifts, Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit* 73 f.

made the hall-mark of Spirit-baptism in early Pentecostalism, and until later culturally and existentially orientated factors could undergird them in Charismatic circles. Healing of the body soon came to be detached from the gospel proper, by platonizing of the latter, and so become eclipsed, only to re-emerge in the church with an entirely different theological significance.

In general, we may echo, at least as a suggestive possibility, the commonplace hypothesis that searching before God for personalized spiritual experiences, including the more spectacular gifts, is characteristically a phenomenon of the church in periods of insecurity, introspection and historical instability, rather than in those of consolidation and selfconfidence. In addition, the phenomena sought of God (*e.g.* in revivalist periods) seem to have been determined to some extent by culturaltheological expectations within the church. So a wide range of cultural, sociological and theological factors may have been at play in the shaping of the expectation, and consequent distribution, of gifts in the church. And the theological significance—or insignificance—of the cessation of any one manifestation is almost impossible to assess.

2.3 What Relationship Exists Between the Gifts Discussed in the New Testament and Those Exhibited in Charismatic Circles?

In his sensitive and penetrating discussion of life in the Spirit, J. I. Packer forcefully poses the question whether we can identify modern healings, tongues and prophecy with the New Testament phenomena of the same name—a question to which leading Charismatics were already open.¹⁹¹ His answer, in a word, is 'No'.¹⁹² So let us examine the issues briefly with respect to the three gifts.

2.3.1 Tongues

Let us begin with two definitions which we adopt (with modification) from V. Poythress.¹⁹³ *Free Vocalization* (glossolalia) is a term used to denote the production of connected sequences of speech sounds, not

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identified by the speaker as a language known to him, lexically opaque to him, not capable of being repeated by him (except in very small snatches), and which sounds to an average hearer like an unknown language. We may more narrowly circumscribe the area of our interest (to exclude baby-talk etc.) by defining *Tongues Speech* (henceforth TS) as Free Vocalization for religious purposes by one competent in his native tongue. (Poythress includes in his definition the criterion that the speaker be a Christian—but this makes a useful term inapplicable to the closely related phenomena in other religious circles. In practice we shall only be discussing TS amongst Christians, but we desire to leave the definition more open.)

What is today's TS, and how does it relate to the phenomenon of *glōssais lalēin* in the New Testament? Modern glossolalia and TS has been subject to widespread research.¹⁹⁴ With respect to Christian TS we may offer the following summary of contemporary conclusions.

¹⁹¹ so for example, A. Bittlinger, 'Der neutestamentliche charismatische Gottesdienst im Lichte der heutigen charismatischen Erneuerung der Kirche' in Panagopoulos, *Prophetic Vocation* 186.

¹⁹² Packer, *Keep in Step* 207-17, also J. McArthur, *The Charismatics: A Doctrinal Perspective* (Grand Rapids 1978).

¹⁹³ V. S. Poythress, 'Linguistic and Sociological Analyses of Modern Tongues-Speaking: Their Contributions and Limitations' *WTJ* 42 (1980) 369f.

¹⁹⁴ The best summary account and documentation is Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit*. 195.

(1) Contrary to earlier claims, there is no evidence that TS is correlated with low intellect, education, social position or pathological psychology. The distribution figures are normal with respect to psychological types.¹⁹⁵ Early studies to the contrary by Cutten, Clark, Thomas etc.—widely quoted as authoritative in anti-charismatic circles—were based on studies made of psychotic patients in mental institutions, and even (in Thomas' case) of counselees in a suicide prevention clinic.¹⁹⁶ Who is now surprised that glossolalia examined at such centres was heavily correlated with disturbed psychology?! (2) Psychologically, TS is *not* the product of what is usually meant by ecstasy (though it *may* attend it). Those who claim the facility of TS can usually start and stop at will; usually, again, without any acknowledged loss of awareness of surroundings, or even, necessarily, loss of concentration on some other activity (reading a book; driving a car etc.).¹⁹⁷ There is an unresolved argument between F. D. Goodman and W. J. Samarin as to whether there is *any* necessary dissociation involved at all; but such as there is (if any) is not usually strong, and regularly consistent with that in other types of willed activity (such as thinking about tea while driving home etc.). (3) In form, most TS is *not* xenolalia.¹⁹⁸ (i) Some claims to be recognized xenolalia have been made this century, but most of them are ill-documented, often at second or third hand, and the languages prove to have been 'recognized' by people who were not competent speakers of the tongue in question, and who merely thought they recognized some words. In *none* of the numerous examples of taped TS of known pedigree submitted to competent linguistic analysis has there yet been any occasion of recognized xenolalia. Now, there *have* been a number of what sound like reliable testimonies of recognized xenolalia where the documentation of the incident, and reliability of those testifying, is such that it makes the claims *believable*;¹⁹⁹ but even these do not meet the very rigorous criteria required before a case of xenolalia would be said to be scientifically proven (*viz.* a good tape-recording of considerable length; living authorities

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recognizing the language; full documentation of the speaker's history to exclude earlier subconscious contact with the language etc.). But such cases of possible xenolalia are very *rare*. (ii) Of the many tapes of TS submitted for analysis, few if any have been recognized as demonstrating the linguistic structure, or grammar, of human languages. What is more, the frequency of repetition of consonants seems usually to be that of the speaker's *native* language, and the vowels the open vowels of his vernacular. In other words, according to W. J. Samarin, the pioneer of serious linguistic research of TS, the samples prove to be 'strings of syllables, made up of sounds taken from among all those that the speaker knows, put together more or less haphazardly'.²⁰⁰

Not surprisingly, many Charismatic leaders have acknowledged that the evidence at present is against the view that tongues are usually miracles of xenoglossy; especially as it is clear that Free Vocalization can be a *learned* phenomenon inside and outside of Christian—even of religious—settings. They tend instead to elucidate it as a *natural* phenomenon which simply

¹⁹⁵ see E. M. Pattison, 'Behavioural Science Research on the Nature of Glossolalia' *JASA* 20 (1968) 76; J. P. Kildahl, 'Psychological Observations' in Hamilton, *Charismatic Movement* 124-42 and the extensive documentation by Williams, *ibid.* 126-35.

¹⁹⁶ *cf.* Williams, *ibid.* 126f.

¹⁹⁷ Williams, *ibid.* 135-46.

¹⁹⁸ see Williams, *ibid.* chap. 8 for the best short summary or, at length, W. J. Samarin, *Tongues of Men and Angels* (London 1972) chaps. 4-6.

¹⁹⁹ with Poloma, *Charismatic Movement* 65 For documentation see, for example, Laurentin, *Catholic Pentecostalism* 69f.; Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit* 180-83; Poythress, 'Analyses' 374 n17.

²⁰⁰ Samarin, *Tongues of Men and Angels* 81.

becomes a spiritual gift when orientated towards the Lord, in a way similar to that in which speech in the vernacular *can* become a spiritual gift.²⁰¹

(4) Functionally, TS *can* convey meaning: even the more hostile analyses admit that TS conveys meaning in its prosodic contour (metre, stress, intonation etc.) and one can distinguish pleading, grieving, thanking, praising TS etc. Just how much more information is being precognitively coded in the TS, however, is beyond direct scrutiny. But that TS is not usually human language does not require that it cannot *function* as language.²⁰² So it would be possible to suggest that in TS the Spirit interreacts with man at the subconscious level (*cf.* Paul's 'my spirit prays') and communication is 'encoded' non-lexically through the otherwise natural mechanism of free vocalization.²⁰³ (5) Beyond conveying meaning, the Christian may well claim his TS has *functioned* to deepen his relationship with, and worship of, the Lord; has made him more aware of the indwelling christocentric Spirit, and so has led, in turn, to fuller dedication. And all these claims could, of course, easily be true even were the tongues itself explicable on a naturalistic basis. For any one individual the benefits could have been inextricably linked with the TS itself; for example, the TS may have become the focus for a renewed faith that God is at work in his life and hears even the Spirit's unutterable groans through him (*cf.* Rom. 8:26f.).²⁰⁴

How, then does all this tie in with the New Testament? It is certainly a far cry from the evangelistically orientated sign on the day of Pentecost, and on *that* basis Edgar and Packer (*inter alios*) have said modern tongues are *not* the same phenomenon as we discern in the New Testament. But, as we have argued, the whole interpretation of New Testament tongues is at fault. Pentecost was rather the exception than the rule in the New Testament—and, as such, it could be paralleled by some of the excep-

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tional cases of recognized xenolalia reported this century. But, we noted, neither Luke nor Paul generally presents tongues as an evangelistic sign-gift; *that* interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14:22f. completely misreads Paul's irony. On the whole (*contra* Edgar, we argued) Paul considers TS a gift mainly (but not exclusively) for private worship—and what Luke has to say elsewhere in Acts is also tolerant of this view. Here the New Testament understanding matches the present day phenomenon.

But there are still problems involved in identifying the New Testament phenomenon with today's TS. Paul's language more naturally suggests he was thinking of xenolalia. And one may feel this is enough to justify the view that what Paul denotes, and TS today, are in the final analysis *different* phenomena. However, caution is required. It would have been virtually impossible for Paul to distinguish xenolalic TS from nonxenolalic TS performing a similar function—so he could well simply have lumped together, phenomenologically, what we would regard as two distinct types of TS. Alternatively, his rather enigmatic *genē glōssōn* could include not only xenolalia and angelic speech, but also TS of the type highlighted by modern research. There is certainly no room for the dogmatism that today's glossolalia are *not* the same phenomena as Paul knew.

²⁰¹ e.g. F. A. Sullivan, *Charisms and Charismatic Renewal* (Dublin 1982) 143f.; Laurentin, *Catholic Pentecostalism* 93f.

²⁰² Poythress, 'Analyses' 374f.

²⁰³ though some Charismatic writers no longer appear to assume that semantic content is encoded, only mood: *cf.* Sullivan, *Charisms* chap. 8 especially 133-4.

²⁰⁴ Poythress, 'Analyses' 377ff.

However, even if Paul were speaking about a different thing, that does not necessarily mean that TS today is less of a spiritual gift. As we have suggested above, following Poythress, the question is ultimately one of whether modern TS *functions* in a christocentric, faith supporting (e.g. personality integrating, cohesive, anxiety minimizing) and upbuilding way—perhaps along merely parallel lines with Paul's *glōssais lalēin*. Here the testimony of those who claim the gift—and of a number of specialist psychiatric observers; but not all—is that it *does* (and, indeed, like the Corinthian phenomenon, that it can be subject to misuse too).²⁰⁵ It is precisely in this area that we need further research.

2.3.2 Prophecy

At present I am unaware of any attempt at a comprehensive, critical discussion of the phenomenon of 'prophecy' in the modern church. By 'prophecy', it will be remembered, we do not mean to denote expository preaching (see e.g. Best, Grudem and Hill), nor even charismatic exegesis (*contra* Hill), but Christian oracular speech; the rendering of a message considered by a Christian to have been imparted to him directly by the Spirit in a 'word' or vision.

From examples heard, directly or on tape, and from popular literature, my impression is that modern prophecy roughly coheres with the New Testament pattern at the following points: (1) the understanding of prophecy is that it is oracular speech based on a perceptible revelatory event or impulse, and this is usually marked by some standard formula such as 'The Lord says...' or the like, followed either by direct or indirect speech understood as expressing the content of the oracle; or by descrip-

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tion of a visionary phenomenon. (2) The condition of the prophet varies from that of mild dissociation to (controlled) trance state; usually some where nearer the former. (3) The *content* of prophetic pronouncements is very rarely if ever primarily doctrinal; rather, it is parallel to oracles of assurance (the majority of the 'I am with my people...' type), prescriptive oracles, oracles of judgement (rare) or of salvation, legitimation oracles and personalized predictive oracles (rare)—*i.e.* the sort we have noted in the New Testament. In other words, modern Charismatic prophecy seems to operate chiefly within the area which is not directly the focus of scripture, and where specific knowledge or guidance may be required. (4) Prophetic oracles share the same mixed and enigmatic quality of authority evinced in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Thessalonians 5. They are *not* to my knowledge treated at the same level of authority as scripture, but sometimes even passed over quite rapidly and without comment if the congregation evaluates them as lacking in charismatic authority. More striking oracular speech usually provokes actual response by way of discussion or leadership comment, which in turn is guided, where relevant, by scripture and tradition. If, then, the prophecy is prescriptive (or if diagnostic, but implying required action) the church may decide that the oracle is binding on it—but only in the way more traditional churches might feel 'led' to some specific decision by God, and so adopt it. Some churches may (accidentally) have marginalized biblical exposition in their zeal for the prophetic word for today, but I have no reliable account of any congregation actually formally accepting a proposition to the effect that charismatic authority stands on a par with scripture, far less above it. Almost invariably, scripture is given an absolute authority—at least in theory—while prophetic words are

²⁰⁵ see Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit* chap. 7 especially 163; for a positive appraisal of the religious function of TS see Laurentin, *Catholic Pentecostalism* 79-82 and note Samarit, *Tongues of Men and Angels* chaps. 7-10.

accorded only relative, albeit sometimes substantial, authority. Even in those movements which claim 'apostles', the title is not used to imply that their prophetic speech is to be regarded as carrying canonical status. (5) Modern prophecy is especially seen to fulfil the role expressed in 1 Corinthians 14:3 of encouragement, strengthening and exhortation of the church.²⁰⁶

Moving to points of difference, we might note (1) except for somewhat stereotyped openings and (more rarely) endings, modern oracular speech is *relatively* lacking in distinctive prophetic forms²⁰⁷ (though archaizing language is commonplace). This difference may be more apparent than real for (i) it is precisely the well-formed oracles embedded in the early literature that tend to be 'rediscovered'; (ii) in the New Testament there is already a tendency to mixture of Old Testament forms, and to the formless (so Aune);²⁰⁸ (iii) there is evidence that some oracular speech in the New Testament period consisted not merely of declaration of revelation, but that this was mixed with response by the prophet (*e.g.* Acts 21:4 where Paul is urged 'through the Spirit not to go on to Jerusalem': this is often—rightly I think—interpreted as revelation of Paul's fate and a prophetic responsive urging that he should avoid it. *Cf.* 1 Cor. 14:30 where one

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actually prophesying is expected to draw his speech to a close if another signals he has received revelation. This makes most sense if what the first stops is not the declaration of his revelation as such but his exposition or elucidation thereof.) If revelation were declared in *indirect* speech and integrated with response, typical oracular speech-forms would be lost. (2) Another difference lies in the fact that *some* modern 'prophecy' does not rest on *previous reception* of the word of the Lord by the individual; but is regarded as a simultaneous reception and transmission of the oracle or vision. Where the Old Testament prophet said 'I saw...', the modern prophet more often says 'I see...'²⁰⁹ Philo provides an example of the latter type; that is, of simultaneous charism and delivery (*De Vita Mosis* ii. 280ff. and 250ff.); and so does Stephen (Acts 7:55f.),²¹⁰ but this does not seem to have been the norm—and the practice today is a slightly dangerous one, eliminating the possibility of prior evaluation of a 'word' before it is given out.²¹¹

These differences, however, do not appear to be material, and New Testament prophetic speech seems functionally and formally to resemble the modern phenomenon of the same name. Prophecy today cannot, however, expect to play the same *foundational* role as it did in the earliest period (*cf.* Eph. 2:20 etc.) for the reasons mentioned above and to be discussed further below.

2.3.3. Gifts of Healing

Pentecostalism and its spiritual children have forcefully reminded us that the kerygma addressed whole men (as part of a physical creation that was to be restored) not platonic or

²⁰⁶ Hill, *NT Prophecy* 210 (following Hollenweger) believes Pentecostal prophecy is dominated by exhortation; Poloma, *Charismatic Movement* 57 finds this unusual in Pentecostal circles but more characteristic of neo-Pentecostal gatherings.

²⁰⁷ the examples cited by Poloma, *ibid.* 58, however, have clear form.

²⁰⁸ Aune, *Prophecy* chap. 10.

²⁰⁹ not exclusively, see Poloma, *Charismatic Movement* 59.

²¹⁰ on this phenomenon, see Aune, *Prophecy* 148-51.

²¹¹ see the warning by Grundem, *Gift* 261.

aristotelian disembodied 'souls'.²¹² They put healing back into the spiritual agenda, and located it firmly in the atonement (*cf.* Mt. 8:17; Isa. 53:4), where it rightly belongs—indeed what benefit of salvation does not derive from the atonement? However, we do not enjoy *all* the benefits *yet*; and Pentecostalism has set an ideal for itself that it has not been able to live up to, where it has maintained that God certainly wills to heal *all* (with faith) *now*.²¹³ Amongst those who have come forward there have been many failures, which have been blamed either on the lack of faith of the seeker, or, more compassionately, on the minister, in his self-assessment as a 'wounded healer'.²¹⁴

Either way, the 'healers' have opened up ground which has been captured by their critics who urge that here, clearly, we do not have the same gift as was vouchsafed to the apostolic church. *There*, healing was instantaneous, without failure, irreversible, covering all manner of diseases, dependent on the charisma of the healer not the faith of the seeker, and so a sign to the unevangelized.²¹⁵ But perhaps the contrast is overdrawn. We need not doubt the apostles were marked by occasionally dramatic events of healing (Acts and 2 Cor. 12:12); but, as we warned before, we need to remember that the descriptions in Acts are sometimes

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self-consciously of *extraordinary* healings (*cf.* 19:11), not the 'ordinary' ones. Even here, however, there is little evidence of frequent healing *independent* of seeking faith; quite the contrary. Nor do we know the apostles experienced no failures or relapses (2 Tim. 4:20; Mt. 12:45; Jn. 5:14). As for the 'ordinary' gifts of healing (1 Cor. 12:10 etc.; *cf.* Jas. 5:15) they may well have been less immediate and spectacular.

There again, at the twentieth-century end of the question, it needs to be said that many of the modern phenomena claimed are dramatic and have served a positive evangelistic 'sign' function. We do not attempt to document these and to analyse them critically, for that would require exhaustive case histories.²¹⁶ Suffice it to say, perhaps, that it is a measure of the type of phenomenon being experienced today that Fuller Theological Seminary—not especially known for tolerating fools gladly—has an extremely well-subscribed course on 'Signs, Wonders and Church Growth', taught by John Wimber. The course, conducted at the School of World Mission, is both *theoretical and practical*—and healing miracles are being documented amongst the students and even in respect of an erstwhile sceptical faculty member. The point we are making is not that any miracle has been scientifically demonstrated as beyond doubt, but that men of critical faculty today believe they are seeing parallel phenomena to at least some of those in the New Testament; and they feel the matter is sufficiently documented, and sure, not to put the reputation of the seminary at risk in backing the modern claims in this rather striking way.

²¹² for Pentecostal attitudes to healing see Hollenweger, *Pentecostals* chap. 25; for neo-Pentecostalism see Poloma, *Charismatic Movement* chap 5 There were, of course, nonPentecostalist antecedents: Hollenweger, *op. cit.* 353f.; C. E. Hummel, *Fire in the Fireplace* (London 1979) 197ff.; M. T. Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity* (London 1973) 232ff.

²¹³ Not by any means all Pentecostalist or Charismatic practitioners of healing believe that God heals all today, conditional only on faith: see, for example, the warnings voiced by Hummel, *ibid.* 203ff. and F. MacNutt, *Healing* (Notre Dame 1974) chap. 18.

²¹⁴ on Charismatic minimizing of dissonance see Poloma, *Charismatic Movement* 98-100.

²¹⁵ *cf.* Packer, *Keep in Step* 213.

²¹⁶ for bibliographical material see especially Poloma, *Charismatic Movement* chap. 5; for Catholic parallels see L. Monden, *Signs and Wonders: A Study of the Miraculous Element in Religion* (New York 1966).

If we disregard, for the moment, the more spectacular claims, we are still left with countless testimonies to healings made in books, journals, newspapers and on television programmes.²¹⁷ Many of these are moderately documented for the period before and after the claimed 'healing'; and they come from a broad cross-section of ecclesiastical affiliation, professions and ages.²¹⁸ It is difficult simply to reject these testimonies *en masse* (unless, of course, one has dogmatic or philosophical *a priori* which exclude the possibility of their being true); but if we accept them they suggest some considerable degree of continuity between New Testament and modern claims for healing. And, as most of them centre on the ministry of specific persons (K. Kuhlman, Oral Roberts etc.),²¹⁹ it would seem not inappropriate to speak of such as demonstrating something like New Testament *charismata iamatōn*.

We must repeat, firmly, that these remarks are not meant to be taken to suggest that we consider the various claims to healing, and other spectacular miracles, to be proved true. We merely insist, on the one hand, that the idealized picture of apostolic healing drawn from some sections of Acts should not be taken necessarily as *representative* (certainly not of *charismata iamatōn* operating *outside* the apostolic circle, 1 Cor. 12:28f.) and, on the other hand, that serious modern testimony points to phenomena so congruent with even some apostolic experiences that only *a priori*

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dogmatic considerations can exclude the possibility that New Testament *charismata iamatōn* have significant modern *parallels*.

3 Is the Charismatics' Experience Unique?

We are compelled to answer 'No',²²⁰ at least with respect to the three prototypical gifts we chose to study. Whereas the only parallels to 'tongues' in the church are historical (and Charismatics unwarrantedly tend to take them as evidence that the practitioners were 'baptized-in-the-Spirit' arch-Pentecostals), claims to healing (though less widespread and less emphasized) can be found outside the Charismatic tradition and independent of it, for example, typically in 'the Guild of Health' and 'the Guild of St. Raphael' in Anglicanism; the Iona Community etc.²²¹ Prophecy too, when rightly understood, is located in many if not all streams of evangelicalism. By this we do not mean to condone the generalizing of the term to the point where it connotes God-enabled preaching, teaching, or 'any verbal enforcement of biblical teaching as it applies to one's present hearers'.²²² These are spiritual gifts indeed (so Paul would teach us), and related in different ways to prophetism, but they are not oracular speech. But the phenomenon of oracular speech itself, in some forms, *is* being exercised in evangelical circles, albeit not given the name 'prophecy'. Most spiritually-minded evangelicals seek God's guidance on decisions which they know the Bible cannot settle for them; and many expect that God will sometimes give them a definite and direct indication—a 'word from the Lord' on the matter. Where such is experienced, and related to others *to whom*

²¹⁷ Poloma, *ibid.* 87f.

²¹⁸ amongst the widely circulated testimonies cf. especially K. Kuhlman, *I Believe in Miracles* (London 1963) and *God Can Do It Again* (London 1970).

²¹⁹ The best general overview of healing ministries and their typologies known to me is only available on cassette: J. Wimber, Vineyard Christian Fellowship, *Healing: IV. Models and Methodology* (8 tapes; part of 36 taped seminar sessions on the subject of healing, and containing more nuanced discussions than are at present available in print).

²²⁰ see Packer's telling criticism, *Keep in Step* 197ff. and *passim*.

²²¹ see Kelsey, *Healing and Christianity* chap. 9.

²²² Packer, *Keep in Step* 215.

it is also directed,²²³ we have the dynamics of what the New Testament means by 'prophecy', and of what is experienced in Charismatic circles and labelled 'prophecy' there. There are *differentia of form*: the evangelical tends to say, 'The Lord laid on my heart last night...' or 'The Lord told me...' and *invariably* proceeds to *indirect* speech where the Charismatic often prefers *direct* speech.²²⁴ There are also *differentia of frequency* and of *range of content* (Charismatics tend to have greater expectation here, and not merely to approach God for 'solicited oracles' in answer to specific questions) and of *power of delivery* (some Charismatics become skilled practitioners)—but the evangelical experiences cannot be sharply divided off from the Charismatic: they too lie within the boundaries of the ancient patterns of oracular speech. As to the clarity of perception of the initial revelatory experience there are, amongst those I have questioned, no necessary differences between the two groups: some evangelicals claim (occasionally) remarkably strong and clear 'words' (rarely, however, visionary leading) on an issue; many Charismatics would confess very indistinct 'reception' of some prophecies. The biggest dividing line within these phenomena lies not across the evangelical/Charismatic border, but *within* Charismatic circles—it is the line between those who open their mouths and speak out a 'prophecy' without any idea of what is coming (for which there is no actual New Testament basis) and

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those who at least have some notion of the message before they speak at all (in accord with the New Testament).²²⁵ If evangelicals hesitate to use the term 'prophecy' to denote the sort of phenomenon we have described, it is perhaps due to a mistaken understanding of New Testament prophecy, namely as a primarily doctrinal revelation parallel in authority to canonical prophecy. Here Grudem's thesis may serve to tumble the barriers between the two groups.

When we say the Charismatic experience is not unique, but found in other churches, to some degree, we do not of course imply that it is found in those churches in biblical or ideal measure. If Charismatic churches are in danger of overemphasizing some gifts in relation to others, it may well be that evangelical churches have marginalized and underemphasized them.

4 Is There any Biblical, Theological or Practical Reason to Assume that Reception of Charismatic Gifts Depends on a Post-Conversion Crisis Experience?

We now draw together the threads of what we have said so far. (1) There is no Pauline basis for restricting charismata to a special, 'Spirit-baptized' group. The lesson of Paul in 1 Corinthians 12-14 and Romans 12 is that the whole body of Christ is differently enabled for mutually supportive acts of service. And Paul's very point is that the charismata dealt with in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 *cannot* be segregated from the rest; they are not allocated to a special group of pneumatics—that is precisely the Corinthian *misunderstanding*.

²²³ It seems pointless to use the term 'prophecy' as such to denote 'messages' which are primarily, or exclusively, intended for the one to whom the revelation comes. That this is a gift with identical dynamics, however, need not be doubted. For Judaism such an operation would certainly be a function of the 'Spirit of prophecy': cf. Targ. Ps. Jonathan Ex 33: 16; Gen R 75.8; Tanh (Buber) ר"ש"ב etc.

²²⁴ We say 'prefers' intentionally, for the 'prophet' can choose whether to speak in archaizing English or modern English; whether in direct speech or indirect speech; cf. B. Yocum, *Prophecy: Exercising the Prophetic Gifts of the Spirit in the Church Today* (Ann Arbor 1976) 82ff.

²²⁵ see Yocum, *ibid.* 75ff.: sometimes at least the first words of a 'message' are received, 78f.

(2) Similarly, the gift of the Spirit, promised in Acts 2, is no *donum superadditum* of power. It is rather the gift of the Spirit of prophecy promised by Joel; the organ of communication between the risen Lord and the Father, in the heavenlies, and the disciples on earth. Without this gift the disciples could not have continued meaningful Christian existence as we know it; nor could any others come under Christ's lordship and rule. So the advent of the Spirit of prophecy does not create a special class of spiritually gifted Christians over against others. Rather, it brings to each the means of receiving not only 'communion with the Lord' viewed generally, but also the same concretely specified in charismata of heavenly wisdom and knowledge. These may then inform the teacher, guide the missionary, lead in individual decisions, give diagnosis to the pastor, 'irresistible wisdom' and power to the preacher, or be related as prophecy to the congregation or other individuals. The 'power' received by the apostles (*cf.* Acts 1:8) was not something in *addition* to Joel's promised gift, but precisely an *intense experience* of some of the charismata which are part and parcel of the operation of the Spirit as Joel's promised Spirit of prophecy.

Far from indicating some new post-conversion Spirit-baptism (a whole concept which rests on a misunderstanding of Luke's terminology),²²⁶

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tongues and prophecy, where they are initially expressed (Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6), *appropriately signal* the advent of the Spirit *qua* the Spirit of prophecy described above. The reception of this gift initiates and enables that relationship to the heavenly Lord which both marks true Christian existence and which readily comes to expression in the various charismata of prophetism noted above. The reasons for the initial display of charismata with the illapse of the Spirit (*cf.* Num. 11:25ff.), at Pentecost, Samaria and in Cornelius' home,

²²⁶ The phrase, 'baptize in (the) (Holy) Spirit (and fire)' in the NT is found on the lips of John the Baptist, Jesus (Acts 1:5) and Peter (Acts 11:16) and, perhaps, in the writings of Paul (1 Cor 12:13). It is only just beginning to be realized (*cf.* Hummel, *Fireplace* chap. 14) that these usages are not uniform but amount to different metaphors-topic and illustration being subtly different in each case:

(a) John the Baptist uses the phrase as a metaphor for the end-time 'deluge' of Spirit-and-fire that will destroy and recreate the world (Mt. 3:11 f.). All will experience that. (b) Jesus uses the same language, this time as a metaphor for the deluge of Spirit experienced by the 120 at Pentecost (Jesus' re-use of end-time language in connection with events in salvation history is characteristic: *cf.* his use of 'kingdom of God' language at Lk. 11:20 for example). At Acts 1:5 there is no suggestion that any further such mighty deluge of Spirit (before the end) is actually indicated.

(c) Peter (Acts 11:16) sees Cornelius' experience and 'remembers' Jesus' vivid metaphor. (The inference is that this was not the usual experience and 'baptize in Spirit' *not* the usual language of Peter's circle: *this* surprising experience recalled *that* metaphor.)

In conclusion we can say that the speakers in Luke-Acts use 'baptize in Holy Spirit' as a metaphor for being 'deluged' or 'overwhelmed' by the Spirit (albeit in different ways). Luke, like Josephus (see Turner, 'Spirit Endowment' 50ff.), uses 'baptize' metaphorically to compare an experience of the Spirit (or wine, or sleep or whatever) with how a deluge or floodtide overcomes and engulfs a man. The phraseology is used to denote a *dramatic* experience which *overwhelms*. Few in the NT are described as having such an overwhelmingly powerful experience of the Spirit as to suggest the metaphor (Pentecost and Cornelius in Luke-Acts); and few today have such a powerful experience that this language commends itself.

(d) Paul's use in 1 Cor. 12:13 'for by one Spirit we were all baptized into the one body' means God, in Spirit, 'immerses' us into Christ's body. *All* experience this, but Paul's metaphor is not Luke's. He is using 'baptize' language to compare the Spirit's placing of us into the body of Christ with the way a man immerses or sinks an item into a fluid. The point of comparison is 'total incorporation', not 'overwhelming experience'. Stott, Dunn and Bruner are right to insist (in Pauline terms) that all Christians are baptized by the Spirit into Christ: but they wrongly read Luke's language this way. Charismatics rightly see that Luke's phrase denotes overwhelming experience, but wrongly assume Luke thinks it happens to all before the parousia (then, of course, it *will* happen to all!) and wrongly apply it to many experiences today for which the language can only charitably be called a gross exaggeration.

should be obvious: they are, on these occasions, appropriate divine attestation of the beginning of the whole post-ascension Christian work of the Spirit, subsequently of his (to Jewish eyes most improbable) extension to Samaritans, and finally attest the otherwise unacceptable fact of divine salvation and messianic blessing of *uncircumcised* Gentiles (*cf.* Acts 11 and 15 for hostile Jewish Christian response). We certainly need not assume that, elsewhere, reception of the Spirit was universally attested by such immediate manifestations of charismata, though neither should we assume that they were necessarily unusual (Acts 19:6 does not help us here: it is part of Luke's final picture of Paul's mission proper, and, as such, is set in a crescendo of missionary success at Ephesus where God did 'out-of-the-ordinary miracles' through Paul, *cf.* 19:11).

The separation of reception of the Spirit by the Samaritans from their faith in Christ certainly is not blamed by Luke on inadequate faith, as Dunn suggests, but nor can the separation be regarded as paradigmatic—had Philip, or the apostles, left the situation unrectified, the Samaritans' faith, aroused by Philip's preaching could never have been consummated in ongoing Christian life under the active day-to-day lordship of Jesus.²²⁷

(3) It is not surprising that scholars in the Charismatic movement have tended to concede that post-ascension reception of the Spirit in Paul and Luke marks the beginning of Christian life, not a second level. Nor can the language of 'filled by' or 'full of the Spirit' be successfully correlated with a second-blessing theology.²²⁸ There has consequently been a tendency, especially in Catholic Charismatic circles, to differentiate between theological and objective Spirit baptism/reception, tied to initiation, and *subjective* experience of the same, introducing people to the world of charismata.²²⁹ The immediate response must be that there is no separate theoretical, biblical, basis for this, and so the position is really a theologizing of the practical argument to be looked at next.

(4) It is often alleged today that *in practice* Christians only receive empowering and charismatic gifts *after* some initiating, and consciously realized, spiritual experience. This is usually, though not always, expected to be associated with speaking in tongues, and the whole package is read back into Acts and consequently labelled 'baptism in Spirit'. However, reality, one suspects, is much more complex than the theory. Of those who claim to fit the pattern there seem to me to be at least three types: (i) A few who have had an intense crisis-experience of the Spirit with vigorous mani-

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festations. Testimonies to this are not lacking.²³⁰ Such people call themselves 'Spirit-baptized'. (ii) A much larger group who, for example, were prayed for at a Charismatic meeting and who have a *subjectively* strong, but not especially vigorously manifested experience, probably spontaneously speak in tongues and may even be 'slain in the Spirit', or the like. (iii) Again a large group, who, when prayed for, had no *spontaneous* experience (other than mild euphoria), but were persuaded to initiate Tongues Speech, and, on achieving this, accepted (by faith) that they had received the same package as types (i) and (ii)—though they may even register disappointment concerning their experience if pressed.

²²⁷ *contra* Dunn, *Baptism* chap. 5, see Turner, *Luke and the Spirit* 161-71.

²²⁸ see Turner, 'Spirit Endowment' 53-55.

²²⁹ *cf.* Hummel, *Fireplace* 171; T. Smail, *Reflected Glory: The Spirit in Christ and Christians* (London 1975) chaps. 6, 10; L. J. Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* (London 1975) 80f.

²³⁰ *cf.* the composite 'testimony' in Kildahl, 'Psychological Observations' 125.

All types usually discover changes in their pattern of spirituality after the crisis experience, perhaps most marked in type (i), but not necessarily so. There are usually claims to greater awareness of the Lord, deepened and more expectant faith, greater joy, and development of a new range of charismata. *But* this tends to lead to preaching and teaching of an exaggerated experiential dualism (much, or all, was sin, doubt and weakness before; much, or all, is faith, power and victory now); and where such teaching is accepted it is liable to become self-fulfilling, creating a negative expectation in people with respect to the possibility of 'gifts' before their own 'crisis-experience', and a positive one afterwards.

Worse, the exaggerated personal experiential dualism tends to be projected onto the Charismatic/evangelical divide to create a claimed experiential dualism between relatively powerless evangelicals, lacking charismata, and Charismatics living in victory, power and the plenitude of charismata. It is this last dualism which popularly undergirds the 'practical argument' for pursuing a post-conversion 'Spirit-baptism'.

But the problem for the practical argument is that the dualism breaks down when examined. Healing is not a gift confined to 'Charismatics'; even if practised more often by them. Similarly, we have seen, 'words of the Lord' or 'revelations' (in the general New Testament sense, not in the technical Systematic-Theological one) are not just imparted to neo-Pentecostals. They are widely reported (albeit in different language) in the evangelical literature too. In other words, on closer examination there is no sharp dividing line between evangelical experience and the neo-Pentecostal one. There is no question of 'leaving the realm of natural Christianity' and entering, by the gateway of Spirit-baptism, into 'supernatural Christianity', as it is popularly put; nor of leaving a *charismaless* Christianity for a charismatic one. The basic difference is one of degree and not of kind; one of emphasis, and not absolute. Pentecostalism and its spiritual children happen to enjoy and emphasize charismata many of which are exercised under a different name, and paid less attention, in evangelical circles. Being forced to accept that one stands on the wrong side of an experiential dualism, and so to seek 'Spirit-baptism' as the gateway to greener pastures, may be one way of passing from the evangelical pole to the Charismatic. But it is neither a necessary way, nor an

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appropriate way, for the very reason that it suggests passage from one *kind* of Christian experience to another of a *different kind*. And if the evangelical Christian wishes in his heart to become a 'Charismatic' (we only mention that direction of 'conversion' as it is the more common), what he should need is not laying on of hands and a crisis-experience, but merely the sort of teaching given in 'Charismatic' circles to the 'freshly Spirit-baptized' as to how to 'develop their gifts'. In other words, the Charismatic teacher considers his fledglings to have the potential of any of the 'gifts', and to need only to learn how to discern and use them. In such circles Christians are regarded as having this potential *by virtue of having been Spirit-baptized*. Our counter-thesis is simply that it is *not* by virtue of some second 'Spirit-baptism', but by initially receiving the Spirit as Luke's promised Spirit of prophecy, that any Christian has such potential. Indeed the evangelical is already experiencing many of the charismata of this same Spirit and, were he to wish to become a 'Charismatic' he should only need, before God, to redirect his emphases.

In sum, the practical argument for the actual need for 'Spirit-baptism' rests on a misunderstanding. The essence of this lies in the creation of a set of false experiential dualisms and the absolutizing of one of them thereby suggesting that 'Pentecostal' experience

is fundamentally different in kind—in a different realm from—evangelical experience. Such a view, but only such a view, should require a second and gateway 'Spirit-baptism'.

5 What is the Relation Between Revelatory Experiences and Theology, Yesterday and Today?

To keep within the scope of this paper we must remember that we are asking what relevance the 'word of wisdom', 'word of knowledge', 'prophecy' etc. have for theology. We confine ourselves to some brief remarks.

(1) Paul expects the gifts he mentions in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 to be widespread in the churches. 'Knowledge' and 'wisdom' are what the pneumatics at Corinth were claiming to have received; and 'prophecy' Paul can hardly be said to restrict narrowly. The determination of the gospel, by contrast, Paul regards as an *apostolic* function (Gal. 1-2 etc.); and this revelation is the test of all else: it provides the test of the revelatory charismata, not vice versa. Indeed, although Paul's wording in Ephesians 2:20, and his ranking of prophets second only to apostles in 1 Corinthians 12:28, suggest that the prophetic word of some established prophets contributed to the laying down of precedents, norms and traditions in the church (an activity which ultimately marginalized the prophets), *Paul nevertheless clearly subordinates the authority of the prophetic phenomena at Corinth to his own* (cf. 14:37ff.). He does not feel able to allow the Corinthian prophets to decide the agenda for worship, but specifies *how* they are to operate, and further relativizes their authority by demanding congregational sifting of their utterances. *It would seem that*

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Paul did not regard the Corinthian practice of the revelatory gifts, which he describes in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, as of primary significance in the shaping of theological structures. Their purpose seems more intended to have been to operate within the rough confines of the gospel and of apostolic teaching—either to illuminate these, or to elucidate their personal significance and application, or, again, to give direction in situations where neither scripture, nor gospel, nor tradition could do so, or, yet again, to set particular Corinthian events, practices or spiritual states in heavenly perspective; to indicate how the risen Lord perceived the church's condition in general and in particular, and to give it spiritual direction.

(2) Today we would be surprised and alarmed if anyone tried to add to or tamper with the fundamental structures of theology in the name of some revelatory experience (albeit that, as theologians, we sometimes tamper with them in the name of less godly authorities!). In practice, such prophetic adjustment is not attempted outside sectarian movements. But within the broad framework of established (?) theology, there is still need for the illumination, the interpretation (in the sense of application of original sense to 20th century situations), and the fresh and timely 'representation' of gospel truth and apostolic praxis. There is need, too, for deep spiritual diagnosis of individuals and congregations, and of specific leading on a host of practical issues. And these are the areas in which the revelatory gifts of 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 have contemporary relevance.

Of course the wise pastor, leader or interpreter today has infinitely more by way of aid in the precedents and norms laid down in centuries of church history and reflection. But ultimately it is still only by the Spirit's work that God gives shape to his church and directs its growth, and we cannot identify the Spirit's work with the natural workings of the pastor's mind *simpliciter*. The Spirit works sovereignly in the mind of the man of God without his necessarily being conscious of it (cf. 1 Cor. 2:16)—this we need not deny. He brings fruit

through our disciplined study. But the New Testament lesson is that the Spirit *also* works at the level at which he is *immediately perceived* as giving direction. The pastor or leader today is as much in need as ever of such immediate charismata of wisdom, direction and heavenly knowledge—occasions where he is aware of these things breaking in on his existence as events of the Lord's grace and guidance, given specifically in answer to prayerful seeking, or sovereignly in response to a prayerful life. Where evangelicals seek the Lord this way, the difference between them and 'Charismatics' on the issue of the relation of theology and revelatory events is minimalized.

Ultimately, the issue raised for this question by the so-called 'Charismatic Movement' is *not* one of the dangerous possibility of new authoritative revelation: that is a red herring. Nor does the real question concern which, if any, of the revelatory gifts in I Corinthians 12:8-10 are still possible today. When those gifts are truly understood it becomes clear that

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at least some of them are in operation today in *both* evangelical *and* 'Charismatic' camps. The real issue raised is not ultimately so much a theoretical one as a practical one. It concerns how we find the right balance between the Spirit's sovereignly creative work in our disciplined and prayerful study of scripture, and the Spirit's more immediately perceived leading.

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