

## **10. CESSATIONISM – PART ONE**

### **THE WORD LEAVES NO DOUBTS**

When something of great consequence is being changed or superseded, the Lord, through His word, leaves us in no doubt. An example of this is the superseding of the Old Covenant by the new (more on this later). Another example is the passing of the old heavens and earth and their replacement by a new heaven and a new earth. It would be the same if the gifts of the Spirit and the apostolic ministries were to be replaced by something else. There is nothing in scripture that even gives a hint of this. There is not a single scriptural peg for the "cessationists" to hang their very dubious hats upon.

### **A POPULAR MYTH**

There is a popular myth that has gained credence in certain circles in recent years. Simply put, it is that some people feel more comfortable in describing themselves as "semi-cessationists". The paper thin case presented by cessationists depends on the spiritual gifts and apostolic ministries being replaced. Cherry picking is impossible. There is no middle road, either you are a cessationist or a non-cessationist, for there is nothing in between.

### **WHY SUCH A FANTASY?**

As far as the nine gifts of the Spirit, it is just remotely possible to consign some of them to the "not needed after the first century" bin. But things like Faith, Healing, Wisdom, Knowledge and Discernment are less easy to trash. As far as the apostolic order is concerned, a few of the ministries can be disposed of. But how can Pastors, Teachers and Evangelists be disposed of as "not fit for purpose after A.D. 100"? Obviously it's nonsense, it's a fantasy. So the phrase "semi-cessationism" has been coined as a fig-leaf to cover the fact that cessationism is naked of any sense and has no biblical warrant whatsoever.

### **BEGINNINGS**

The mind has to be cast back a long, long way to ones spiritual beginnings. The "born again" launch was in a Pentecostal denomination. It seems amusing now to recall that it was thought that all evangelicals were of a Pentecostal persuasion. It was in an aircraft factory where this newly converted apprentice cum would be pilot, soon found a Christian union. His two closest friends, one a Baptist, the other a Brethren, were naively asked, when they were baptised in the Holy Spirit, accompanied, of course, with "speaking in tongues". The reaction and subsequent discussions soon made clear the reality of the fact that not all evangelicals were of Pentecostal persuasion!! With both zeal and fervour, they endeavoured to rid me of what they considered were Pentecostal delusions.

### **NEVER TO BE FORGOTTEN**

Almost persuaded, I joined them one Sunday evening at a large local Baptist church. Afterwards I was introduced to a bright young believer. The way he was introduced was unusual to say the least. This is a "Baptist" friend of ours, with great emphasis on the "Baptist". His response was "never to be forgotten" and taken by your writer as the "Voice of God". "I'm no longer Baptist", he said with the joy of the Lord lighting up his bright countenance, "for last Friday evening I was gloriously baptised in the Holy Ghost and spake with other tongues as the Spirit gave me utterance". I had not the slightest doubt that God had spoken to my heart. Never, since that day, has there been any doubt whatever of the reality of the experience of the baptism in the Holy Ghost confirmed by speaking in tongues or prophecy.

## **MY PERSONAL PENTECOST**

Almost two years were to pass during which this "second blessing" was earnestly sought. Prayer, fasting and a further ordering of the life were part of the preparation for the receipt of a baptism or immersion in and with the Third Person of the Trinity. Then, wonder of wonders, in a tent, kneeling on a grassy floor at a youth camp in Devon, England in 1958, this fullness of the Holy Spirit was granted. It was confirmed as with the disciples on the day of Pentecost and millions since with "*speaking with the tongues of men and/or angels*". That was more than fifty years ago. Perhaps dear brother Paul could not be competed with as he could boast "*I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all*", but never a day goes by when that precious gift of tongues is not exercised and there has never been a shadow of doubt as to its authenticity.

## **CHALLENGING COUNTERFEITS**

The Pentecostal denomination that was the home of my beginning was very much a holiness movement, totally unrecognisable from the travesties that go under the name of Pentecostal today. To think that Elim, which was the cradle of my new birth and in which Bible College I graduated, having been taught by holy men of God and in which, for a period ministerial credentials were held, recently appointed an unfrocked homosexual as a Bible School principal. It was suggested that he was the one best able to train the coming generation of would-be ministers. Training them for what, one asks?! Modern Pentecost undoubtedly provides ammunition for cessationists.

## **THE CHARISMATIC PHENOMENON**

Many with far greater literary skills than your writer (more an Amos than a Daniel) have traced the hijacking of the charismatic movement, the Toronto delusion, the current Word of Faith money grabbers et al. There is no value in re-treading that ground, save to say, all these "*doctrines of devils*" that totally dominate the pentecostal/charismatic movement, also undoubtedly provide ammunition for cessationists.

## **WHAT IS COUNTERFEITED**

The forces of darkness have had a field day, even with assemblies that once manifested the gifts of the Spirit and taught the fullness of the Holy Spirit as was experienced on the day of Pentecost. Assemblies that believed the apostolic ministries remained intact have succumbed to the sinister pressure, and these once sound assemblies have removed from their "statement of Faith" any reference to the Holy Spirit baptism or the acceptance of the vocal gifts of the Holy Ghost. This is nothing short of a major tragedy. Never before, just to take one example, has the gift of *discerning of spirits* been a needed and vital part of the Christian ministers armoury. It is very possible that the coming generation may have to choose between Christ and Satan in a way no previous generation has ever experienced. How they need the fullness of the Holy Spirit to discern and resist the greatest counterfeit the world has ever seen, that is the Antichrist and his blasphemous demands to receive his mark and to worship his image.

*REVELATION 13 v 7 - 9*

*And it was given unto him (the Antichrist) to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

*And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

*If any man have an ear, let him hear."*

## REVELATION 13 v 16 – 18

*And he (the False Prophet) causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:*

*And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

*Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.*

### **AN INDICTMENT OF CESSATIONISM**

So, as we draw to the end of PART ONE, we are forced to conclude that “cessationism” is in fact a *doctrine that demons teach* A.N.T.

1. It renders countless deluded adherents less able to both warn and evangelise with the unction granted by the immersion in the Third Person of the Triune Godhead, having been *baptised with the Holy Ghost and fire (Luke 3 v 16)*.
2. It renders those countless deluded adherents less able to prepare the coming younger generation for the horrors soon to engulf Planet Earth.
3. Because of their posture of unbelief that cessationism must bring, they cannot introduce the coming generation into the wonderful God glorifying experience of being baptised in the Holy Ghost.
4. As we shall present in PART TWO, “cessationism” has no biblical warrant whatsoever.

### **I THANK MY GOD**

I never cease to thank God for the Bible believing saints that encouraged me to long, pray, fast and to tarry in my Jerusalem to *receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon (me)*. Also, to order my life, including making needed restitutions and to pray with me until my *day of Pentecost was fully come*.

### **FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT OF PART ONE**

As we close PART ONE, I would encourage all who may be wavering over the truth of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and whether to seek for His fullness, to make that journey that, next to conversion, could bring such blessing into your life of a transforming power such as you have never known.

I would also encourage the many that, because of witnessing false fire, have come to doubt their own experience of a personal Pentecost. Begin again to daily use that precious enlivening gift of tongues. Worship and intercede in your natural tongue and also with your other tongue of men and of angels.