

Only One Physical Reaction Which Constitutes Evidence



Foundations (Day 160)
by Derek Prince

Reactions of this kind are not confined to the Old Testament. One example is the vision of the Lord granted to Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus. Saul saw a very bright light; he heard a voice speaking to him from heaven; he fell to the earth; and his body trembled:

> "As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do.'" (Acts 9:3-6)

When John describes a vision of the Lord that he received on the island of Patmos, he concludes:

> "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead." (Rev. 1:17)

Here, too, there was obviously a very powerful and dramatic physical reaction to the immediate presence of the Lord.

In some of the older denominations of the Christian Church there is a tendency to dismiss all such physical reactions or manifestations as "emotionalism" or "fanaticism." However, this attitude plainly goes far beyond what Scripture warrants. Doubtless, there can be occasions when manifestations of this kind are the product of "emotionalism" or "fanaticism" or possibly of a carnal desire for self-display. But who would dare to bring charges such as these against men like the prophets Moses, Jeremiah and Daniel or the apostles John and Paul? Too often the tendency to reject all forms of physical reaction to the presence and power of God is based on false, man-made traditions of what constitutes true holiness or of the kind of behaviour that is acceptable to God in the worship of His people.

We see, then, that the Scripture gives room for unusual reactions in the bodies of God's people, caused by His immediate presence or power. However, nowhere is it ever suggested that any of these physical reactions or manifestations constitutes evidence that a person has received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

In the cases of the Old Testament prophets, we know that none of these received the baptism in the Holy Spirit because this experience was never granted to anyone before the day of Pentecost. In the cases of John and Paul in the New Testament, it is equally clear that their strong physical reactions to the presence of the Lord were not evidence of their receiving the baptism in the Spirit.

At the time when John received his vision on Patmos, he had already been baptised in the Spirit for more than fifty years. On the other hand, Saul's physical reactions on the Damascus road happened before he was filled with the Holy Spirit. He received this infilling as a separate, subsequent experience three days later when Ananias laid hands on him in Damascus.

No matter from what angle we approach this subject, we are always brought to the same conclusion: There is one, and only one, physical manifestation which constitutes evidence that a person has received the Holy Spirit. That manifestation is speaking with other tongues, as the Spirit gives utterance.

Devotional

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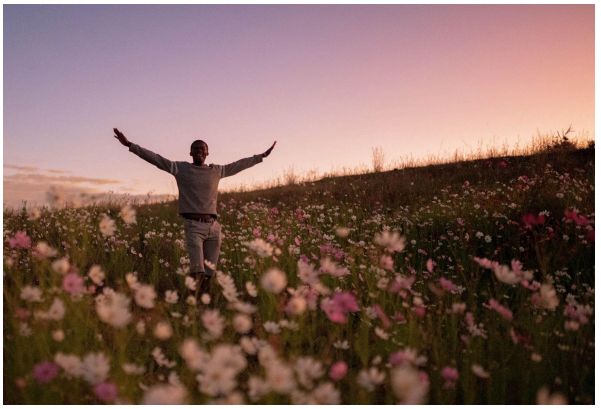

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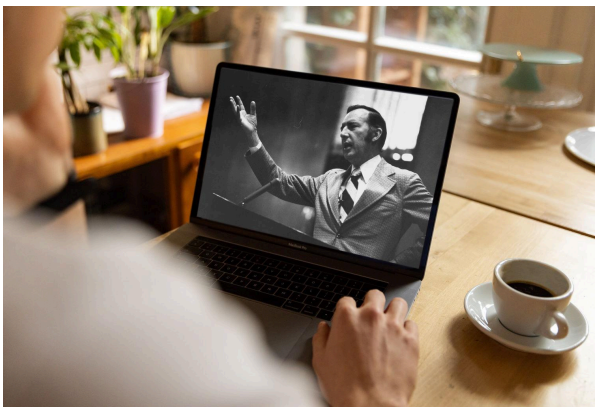

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