

MINUTES OF THE
153rd GENERAL SYNOD

REFORMED
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CHURCH
EVANGELICAL SYNOD



HELD AT GENEVA COLLEGE
BEAVER FALLS, PENNSYLVANIA

MAY 30-JUNE 5, 1975

Rev. George Miladin
Lookout Mountain, Tennessee

Dr. John Sanderson
Lookout Mountain, Tennessee

Dr. John Young
Lookout Mountain, Tennessee

1. "keimai/keitai," **The Analytical Greek Lexicon**, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers), p. 227.
 2. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (eds.), **Theological Dictionary Of The New Testament**, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1968), Vol. VI, p. 554.
 3. John Calvin, **Institutes of Christian Religion**, John T. McNeill, (ed.), (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press), Book II, Chapter VII, Section 22, p. 388.
 4. **Ibid.**, Book II, Chapter IV, Section 1, p. 309.
 5. **Ibid.**, Book I, Chapter XVI, Section 13, p. 173.
 6. Kittel & Friedrich, **op cit.**, Vol. II, p. 18.
 7. Calvin, **Institutes**, Book I, Chapter XVI, Section 15, p. 174.
 8. Kittel & Friedrich, **op cit.**, Vol. II, p. 18.
 9. Calvin, **Institutes**, Book I, Chapter XIV, Section 17, p. 176.
- *DEFINITIVELY: When a particular act or activity is technically or in principal accomplished, so as to fix its result as an unquestionable fact, even though its total effects are not yet fully realized historically.
10. Kittel & Friedrich, **op cit.**, Vol. VII, P. 157.
 11. **Analytical Greek Lexicon**, p. 84.
 12. Kittel & Friedrich, **op cit.**, Vol. II, p. 18.
 13. John L. Nevius, **Demon Possession**, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, (1968), p. 277.
 14. **Ibid.**
 15. A letter from Rev. Jack Armes, Missionary to Kenya under World Presbyterian Missions (March, 1974). Note also similar accounts given by Jonathan Goforth, Dr. William Chisholm, John L. Nevius, Dr. Kurt Koch.
 16. "Minutes of Meeting", Committee on Demonic Activity, Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, August 22, 1973.

ACTION

On motion Synod commended the report to the churches as a useful tool in providing information helpful in understanding and dealing with the activity of Satan and that the committee be discharged.

At 3:20 Synod extended the orders of the day to 4:30 p.m.

STUDY COMMITTEE ON WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The report was given by Dr. Wilber B. Wallis.

Fathers and Brethren:

The 152nd general Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, meeting at Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, May 24-30, 1974, requested that a Study Committee be assigned the task of preparing a report, to be brought to the 153rd Synod, treating definitively the work of the Holy Spirit in his relationship specifically to the revelatory process, gifts of the Spirit, the baptism of the Spirit, and neo-pentecostalism.

The committee often felt the overwhelming nature of the assignment from the standpoint of the sheer breadth of the theological issues involved and decided that while in-depth studies were certainly warranted in each of these areas, the format of a synod report made that kind of treatment impossible. Committee has, however, attempted to center its and synod's attention upon the central issues in each of these specified areas of research.

Part I

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND REVELATION

As to the first—that dealing with the relationship of the Holy Spirit to revelation—some brief definition is in order. Revelation may be defined as God's self-disclosing activity in both deed and word, the latter of which is the expression of His will unto His church, as the Confession of Faith asserts, God committed "wholly unto writing" by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God (II Peter 1:21). The final product of such inspiration is a revealed body of inerrant divine truth in propositional terms.

Committee is aware that nothing in the preceding paragraph is under any debate among Reformed Presbyterians. The more critical question before us is this: Has the revelatory process, so evidently in progress throughout the Old and New Testament periods through the Apostolic Age (excepting, of course, the Intertestamental period) ceased? The Westminster Confession of Faith, both in I/1 and I/6, answers in the affirmative without the slightest equivocation. Taking them together and interpreting each statement in the light of the other, one can hardly conceive of a stronger assertion of the cessation of revelation than one finds here. Is the Confession correct? Committee believes it is, and in the following pages will attempt to state our reasons for believing so.

Before we begin, however, it will be in order to assure ourselves that we have properly understood the intention of the Confession. Warfield certainly would have agreed that we have. Commenting on the pertinent phrase in I/1, he declares: "The necessity of Scripture. . .rests on the insufficiency of natural revelation and the cessation of supernatural revelation. . ." On the latter article, he asserts: ". . .the absolute objective completeness of Scripture for the purpose for which it is given is affirmed, and the necessity of any supplements, whether by traditions or new revelations, denied" (*Shorter Writings of B. B. Warfield*, II, 563, 568).

Furthermore, a comparison of these statements with other Protestant Confessions will disclose that the Westminster position is not unique among Protestant statements of faith.

In *The Formula of Concord* (1576) we read:

We believe, confess, and teach that the only rule and norm, according to which all dogmas and all doctors ought to be esteemed and judged, is no other whatever than the prophetic and apostolic writings both of the Old and of the New Testament. . .But other writings, whether of the fathers or of the moderns, with whatever name they come, are in no wise to be equalled to the Holy Scriptures, but are all to be esteemed inferior to them, so that they be not otherwise received than in the rank of witnesses, to show what doctrine was taught after the Apostles' times also, and in what parts of the world that more sound doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles has been preserved. (I)

In the *French Confession of Faith* (1559) we are told:

Inasmuch as [the Bible] is the rule of all truth, containing all that is necessary for the service of God and for our salvation, it is not lawful for men, nor even for angels, to add to it, to take away from it, or to change it. (V)

Again, the *Belgic Confession* (1561) affirms:

[God] makes himself. . .known to us by his Holy and divine Word; that is to say, as far as is necessary for us to know in this life, to his glory and our salvation. (II)

Furthermore, the same Confession affirms:

We believe that these Holy Scriptures fully contain the will of God, and that whatsoever man ought to believe unto salvation, is sufficiently taught therein. . .it is unlawful for anyone, though an Apostle, to teach otherwise than we are now taught in the Holy Scriptures: . . .since it is forbidden to add unto or take away anything from the Word of God, it doth thereby evidently appear that the doctrine thereof is most perfect and complete in all respects. (VII)

The Second Helvetic Confession (1566) expressly declares:

We believe and confess the Canonical Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles of both Testaments to be the true Word of God. . .And in this Holy Scripture, the universal Church of Christ has all things fully expounded which belong to a saving faith, and also to the framing of a life acceptable to God; and in this respect it is expressly commanded of God that nothing be either put to or taken from the same . . .when this Word of God is now preached in the church. . .we believe that the very Word of God is preached. . .and that neither any other Word of God is to be feigned, nor to be expected from heaven.

The Sixth of *The Thirty-Nine Articles* reads:

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man. . .

The Irish Articles of Religion (1615) reads on this point:

The ground of our religion and the rule of faith and all saving truth is the Word of God, contained in the Holy Scripture. . .The holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation, and are able to instruct sufficiently in all points of faith that we are bound to believe, and all good duties that we are bound to practice. (6)

From these statements it is clear that the Westminster assertion is in no way unique to Protestant confessionalism, but rather that it simply has lent its voice to the combined testimony of many before it, a testimony, not simply of Presbyterianism, but of Protestantism as a whole, to the effect that revelation has ceased and that the only rule of faith and practice is the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. If the *Westminster Confession of Faith* is more explicit, it is simply to its credit and its glory as a precise and articulate statement of faith. Certainly a Confession of Faith should not equivocate in stating a studied theological position. In the face of such overwhelming testimony, the Protestant today should not lightly brush such a testimony aside.

Only on equally overwhelming and incontrovertible evidence should he insist otherwise to the effect that revelation has *not* ceased and that it comes from God directly to men today.

In spite of Protestantism's historic confessional testimony, however, many people under the influence of the claims of the charismatic movement are calling into question the position of historic Protestantism on this matter and are being persuaded by the most extravagant claims that God is speaking directly to men today (as a case in point consider David Wilkerson's *The Vision*), shortcircuiting thereby the *absolute necessity* for the Scriptures so far as a revelation from God is concerned, and calling into question its sufficiency. Committee would emphasize that this is precisely the immediate result of such teaching, for *just to the degree that men claim to receive revelations from God directly, and propagate these so-called "revelations," just to that degree, men who hear and accede to them do not need the Scriptures.* The Christian who asserts that he or others receive such revelations, to be consistent, must cease to speak of the Bible as the *only* infallible rule of faith and practice, for he or they have *another*, namely, the *new* revelations. Such revelations, by their very nature would be on a par with Scripture respecting their authority. Paul Woolley is absolutely right when he says, "If such communications were actually being made, every Christian would be a potential author of Scripture. We would only need to write down accurately what God said to us, and we would be legitimately adding to the Bible, for such writings would be the Word of God" (*The Infallible Word*, p. 192). Committee asks, how is the Christian to respond to the first verb in the imperative mode in such a *revelation* when it comes, and it will come, indeed, it already has! How can he be sure it is genuine? Must he heed it? Is it not true that he faces nothing less than a crisis in authority? The answer is obvious. This inevitable result, as the outcome of the denial of the Westminster position, should be clearly understood as we consider now two reasons for urging the accuracy of the Confession of Faith.

I. The argument from history.

It is clear from the writings of the first generation of post-apostolic writers that they were aware that an epoch had ended with the passing of the Apostles from the scene through death. R. Laird Harris declares: "Clement, Irenaeus, and Polycarp all clearly distinguish themselves from the apostles, and they named no other apostles than those within the circle of the Twelve" (*Inspiration and Canonicity of the Bible*, p. 231). Let us hear them directly. Clement of Rome, our first witness, dates to about 95 A.D. According to Irenaeus, he had seen the Apostles and had the highest regard for them. He writes, "The apostles received the Gospel for us from the Lord Jesus Christ." They are "the greatest and most righteous pillars of the Church." Of Paul he declares, "Truly under the inspiration of the Spirit he wrote to you." Ignatius of Antioch, who wrote in approximately 117 A.D., deprecates himself as not being "competent for this, that being a convict, I should write you as though I were an apostle. . . I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commandments unto

you. They were apostles; I am but a condemned man” (Letter to Romans, chapter 4). Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, wrote around 118 A.D. Irenaeus tells us that Polycarp had been instructed by the Apostles and in fact had been appointed bishop of the Church of Smyrna by the Apostles. He declares: “For neither am I, nor is any other like unto me, able to follow the wisdom of the blessed and glorious Paul, who, when he came among you, taught face to face with the men of that day the word which concerneth truth carefully and surely, who also, when he was absent, wrote a letter unto you.” Testimonies from Papias (c. 140 A.D.) and the epistles of Diognetus and of Barnabas could also be cited. The last named source expressly limits the number of the Apostles to the Twelve and declares that Jesus chose them. Here is an explicit disclaimer to apostleship for himself and for anyone else. If anything is clear from these writings it is that Christ’s gift to the Church of *apostles* had terminated with the death of the Apostle John. Warfield tells us that the anxiety of the Apostolic Fathers “with reference to themselves seems to be lest they should be esteemed overmuch and confounded in their pretensions with the Apostles” (*Counterfeit Miracles*, p. 10).

Now what is the immediate conclusion that must be drawn from the fact of the close of the Apostolic Age—the Age during which the canon was completed—if it is not that the revelation was then completed, and that as far as a Word from God is concerned, the completed canon sufficiently meets the need.

II. The argument from Scripture.

Careful attention should be given to what Paul writes in 2 Tim. 3:16-17. Note that it is of Scripture—that which is *written*—that he speaks: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” Now it has been often suggested that Paul speaks only with reference to the Old Testament when he says “All Scripture is God-breathed.” While it is true that such a phrase as *pasa graphe* certainly includes the Old Testament, it is extremely doubtful that Paul restricted it to the Old Testament. By the time he wrote this statement, a good portion of the New Testament had already been written. Note that in 1 Tim. 5:18 Paul under the single term *Scripture* coordinates a statement from his companion Luke’s Gospel (10:7) with a statement from Deuteronomy (25:4). Clearly Luke’s Gospel is already in existence and is regarded by Paul as *Scripture*. Moreover, Paul was certainly aware that what he himself spoke and later wrote was the Word of God and carried divine authority (cf. 1 Cor. 2:13; 14:37; 1 Thess. 2:13; Gal. 1:1, 11-12). Peter acknowledges this in so many words in his second letter (3:16), for he places Paul’s epistles on a par with “the other scriptures” which earlier he had declared were the product of men who spoke from God (1:21). He declares that those who wrest Paul’s writings away from their intended meaning do so “unto their own destruction.” Could anything be clearer than that the word *Scripture* for the Apostles included the apostolic writings? To speak of “all

Scripture” is to speak of the totality of that particular group of writing which falls under the classification of that which is technically called *Scripture*, whether already written or to be written, just as the phrase, “all dogs are animals,” includes all those creatures which fall under the animal classification *dog*, whether they have lived in the past, are living now, or shall live in the future. Warfield declares: (*Inspiration and Author.*)

What must be understood in estimating the testimony of the New Testament writers to the inspiration of Scripture is that “Scripture” stood in their minds as the title of a unitary body of books, throughout the gift of God through His Spirit to His people; but that this body of writings was at the same time understood to be a growing aggregate, so that what is said of it applies to the new books which were being added to it as the Spirit gave them, as fully as to the old books which had come down to them from their hoary past. It is a mere matter of detail to determine precisely what new books were thus included by them in the category “Scripture.” They tell us some of them themselves. Those who received them from their hands tell us of others. And when we put the two bodies of testimony together we find that they constitute just our New Testament. It is no pressure of the witness of the writers of the New Testament to the inspiration of the Scripture, therefore, to look upon it as covering the entire body of “Scriptures,” the new books which they were themselves adding to this aggregate, as well as the old books which they had received as Scripture from the fathers. Whatever can lay claim by just right to the appellation of “Scripture,” as employed in its eminent sense by those writers, can by the same just right lay claim to the inspiration which they ascribe to this “Scripture” (p. 165; cf. also p. 133).

Of course, this includes just the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments. Now, note very carefully what the Apostle affirms about *these* Scriptures in verse 17. Not only are they divinely “breathed out” and hence profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness (verse 16), but also as *inscripturated* revelation (note: inscripturated alone and not additional so-called *extra*-Scriptural revelations) they render the man of God “complete” (*artios*), thoroughly equipping (*exertismenos*) him unto every (*pan*), (not just some or many) good work”: If this means anything, it means that when the New Testament Scriptures were finally written, revelation for this age was completed. The man of God *needs no further revelation*; otherwise, Paul’s statement to the effect that *inscripturated* revelation equips the man of God to *every* good work is false and misleading. It also explains Paul’s insistence in 4:2 that Timothy “preach the *Word* it is Scripture and nothing else that can meet the need of men for a revelation from God. The New Testament prophets (Ephesians 2:20, 3:5; I Cor. 14:29-30) and glossolalists (I Cor. 14:2) were also organs of revelation during the apostolic age, and enough has already been said to lead us to conclude that with the completion of the canon and the passing of the apostles from the scene, these and other revelatory charismatics also passed out of the Church. But some additional discussion, however, is in order.

First, Committee does not deny that “miracles of grace” and remarkable answers to prayer occur today. Committee does, however, question the occurrences today of what are referred to as genuine “miracles of power.” Such miracles in the days of the Apostles had for their purpose, as indeed such miracles had earlier even for Christ himself (John 5:36, 10:38; Acts 2:22),

the *authentication of the apostolic message*. As Warfield declares,

“These gifts. . . were part of the credentials of the Apostles as the authoritative agents of God in founding the church. Their function thus confined them to distinctively the Apostolic Church, and they necessarily passed away with it” (*Miracles*, p. 6).

In the churches founded by the Apostles, God granted to Christians many and diverse gifts. All such gifts were to be exercised for the edification of the church, but the immediate end they served—the overarching purpose for which they were intended—was “not *directly* the extension of the church, but the authentication of the Apostles as messengers from God” (*Miracles*, p. 21). In II Corinthians 12:12, Paul writes in defense of his apostleship: “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you. . . by signs and wonders and mighty works” (cf. Rom. 15:18-19). Clearly, if the Apostles possessed special signs which authenticated their claim to authority, they necessarily passed from the scene with the passing of the Apostles. As an illustration of this very claim, we are told in Acts 14:3 that when Paul and Barnabas were in Iconium, they spoke boldly in the Lord, “who bore witness unto the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.” Clearly miracles served here not as ends in themselves, but as “authenticating” means to an “authority end.” The writer of Hebrews (2:3-4) states this fact very clearly: “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard: God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will.”

Warfield, with great perception into these passages, recognizes a deeper principle here,

. . . of which the actual attachment of the charismata of the Apostolic Church to the mission of the Apostles is but an illustration. This deeper principle may be reached by us through the perception, more broadly, of the inseparable connection of miracles with revelation, as its [the latter’s] mark and credential; or more narrowly, of the summing up of all revelation, finally, in Jesus Christ. Miracles do not appear on the pages of Scripture vagrantly, here, there, and elsewhere indifferently, without assignable reason. They belong to revelation periods, and appear only when God is speaking to His people through accredited messengers, declaring His gracious purposes. Their abundant display in the Apostolic Church is the mark of the richness of Apostolic age in revelation; and when this revelation period closed, the period of miracle-working had passed by also, as a mere matter of course. It might, indeed, be *a priori* conceivable that God should deal with men atomistically, and reveal Himself and His will to each individual, throughout the whole course of history, in the penetralium of his own consciousness. This is the mystic’s dream. It has not, however, been God’s way. He has chosen rather to deal with the race in its entirety, and to give to this race this complete revelation of Himself in an organic whole. And when this historic process of organic revelation had reached its completeness, and when the whole knowledge of God designed for the saving health of the world had been incorporated into the living body of the world’s thoughts—there remained, of course, no further revelation to be made, and there has been accordingly no further revelation made.” (*Miracles*, pp. 25-26).

Warfield by no means is alone in understanding the purpose of miracles in this way. In his Prefatory Address to King Francis I of France at the beginning of his *Institutes*, John Calvin writes:

[Our antagonists] do not cease to assail our doctrine and to reproach and defame it with names. . . They ask what miracles have confirmed it. . . In demanding miracles of us, they act dishonestly. For we are not forging some new gospel, but are retaining that very gospel whose truth all the miracles that Jesus Christ and his disciples ever wrought serve to confirm. But, compared with us, they have a strange power: even to this day they can confirm their faith by continued miracles! . . . Perhaps this false hue could have been more dazzling if Scripture had not warned us concerning the legitimate purpose and use of miracles.

He proceeds then to discuss Acts 14:3 and Hebrews 2:4, and draws precisely the same conclusion that Warfield did almost four hundred years later as to their purpose: the authentication of the Apostolic message. He then continues:

. . . we may also fitly remember that Satan has his miracles, which, though they are deceitful tricks rather than true powers, are of such sort as to mislead the simple-minded and untutored [cf. II Thess. 2:9-10]. Magicians and enchanters have always been noted for miracles. Idolatry has been nourished by wonderful miracles, yet these are not sufficient to sanction for us the superstition either of magicians or of idolaters.

He then concludes this section by expounding Christ's teaching with respect to false prophets in Matt. 24:24, who "with lying signs and prodigies would come to draw even the elect (if possible) into error." In sum, for Calvin, it was the man who has a new message, *another* Gospel, who needs new attesting miracles. He was content with the apostolic miracles as sufficient attestation to the truthfulness of their (and his) gospel.

We should also listen to Herman Bavinck, A. Kuyper's successor to the Chair of Systematic Theology at the Free University of Amsterdam:

According to the Scriptures, special revelation has been delivered in the form of a historical process which reaches its end-point in the person and work of Christ. When Christ had appeared and returned again to heaven, special revelation did not indeed, come at once to an end. There was yet to follow the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, and the extraordinary working of the powers and gifts through and under the guidance of the Apostolate. The Scriptures undoubtedly reckon all this to the sphere of special revelation and the continuance of the revelation was necessary to give abiding existence in the world to the special revelation which reached its climax in Christ. . . Truth and life, prophecy and miracle, word and deed, inspiration and regeneration go hand in hand in the completion of special revelation. But when the revelation of God in Christ had taken place, and had become in Scripture and church a constituent part of the cosmos, then another era began. . . New constituent elements of special revelation can no longer be added; for Christ has come, his work has been done, and his Word is complete. (cited by Warfield, p. 27)

Here then is a united testimony to the cessation of revelation and miracles of power in one continuous confessional tradition from the Reformation to the present.

Some moderns argue that a reading of the history of the church will ade-

quately demonstrate that both revelations and charismatic gifts have continued throughout these almost twenty centuries. Committee would make two comments. First, the fact that there are on record many claims to both new revelations and charismatic gifts in no way establishes the legitimacy of either after the apostolic age. The rankest heresies in the church have been “authenticated” by appeal to both. Just because men today speak in an ecstatic fashion or come forward with a new “Thus saith the Lord” or work great wonders in no way furnishes infallible proof that they (the men) are legitimate “charismatics.” Second, Committee suggests that Warfield’s thoroughly researched insistence that “there is little or no evidence at all for miracle-working during the first fifty years of the post-Apostolic church; [that] it is slight and unimportant for the next fifty years; [that] it grows more abundant during the next century (the third); and [that] it becomes abundant and precise only in the fourth century, to increase still further in the fifth and beyond” (*Miracles*, p. 10), may be explained, as he says elsewhere, by the fact that the Gospel of the first century in its propagation did not advance upon a world that was anti-supernaturalistic but, to the contrary, was permeated with all kinds of superstitions and marvels and with a readiness of mind to believe on little or no evidence almost any kind of claim to supernatural occurrences, however grotesque in character they might be. Thus, as the Church brought into its fold peoples already conditioned to such extravagances, these peoples brought with them the “unbaptized” elements of their past religious and cultural affections. This alone would explain the ever-increasing number of claims “to have seen” or “to have heard of” great and miraculous events. Listen to Warfield’s conclusion from his own pen:

. . .this great stream of miracle-working which has run. . .through the history of the church was not original to the church, but entered it from without. . .The fundamental fact which should be borne in mind is that Christianity, in coming into the world, came into a heathen world. It found itself, as it made its way, ever more deeply immersed in a heathen atmosphere which was heavy with miracles. This heathen atmosphere, of course, penetrated it at every pore, and affected its interpretation of existence in all the happenings of daily life. It was not merely, however, that Christians could not be immune from the infection of the heathen modes of thought prevalent about them. It was that the church was itself recruited from the heathen community. Christians were themselves but baptized heathen, and brought their heathen conceptions into the church with them, little changed in all that was not obviously at variance with their Christian confession. He that was unrighteous, by the grace of God, did not do unrighteousness still; nor did he that was filthy remain filthy still. But he that was superstitious remained superstitious still; and he who lived in a world of marvels looked for and found marvels happening all about him still. In this sense the conquering church was conquered by the world which it conquered. (*Miracles*, p. 74)

The Reformation, then, in addition to its many other “purifying” accomplishments which we all already recognize, when it limited by its Confessional statements revelation and that activity’s authenticating miracles to Apostolic times, was only purging the Church of its many ancient and medieval heathen superstitions, all of which greatly clouded the glory of apostolic *doctrine*. It is sad that well-meaning Protestant Christians are once again on the move away

from pure Reformation theology back to an experience-oriented religious commitment which requires continuing bolstering up by recurring external phenomena of “miraculous” import, rather than remaining with a faith that possesses a clear and final “Thus saith the Lord” from prophetic and apostolic Scriptures, already thoroughly authenticated by Christ and His apostles.

Your Committee then recommends (1) that we take this opportunity as a Church to reaffirm our hearty acceptance to the historic Protestant principles of Scripture and revelation as expressed in our Confession of Faith; and (2) that any Presbyter who has doubts or reservations on these matters should make them known to his Presbytery.

Part II THE HOLY SPIRIT AND SPEAKING IN TONGUES

It is the opinion of the majority of the committee that the gift of tongues is not a present gift of the Holy Spirit in the Church. This will be argued more at length in the third part of this report. At this point, we offer a preliminary proposal that if one believes speaking in tongues is a present gift, he must exercise it as Paul commands in 1 Corinthians 14.

1. We believe that the glossolalia of the Corinthian church was an utterance of real human languages. Paul seems to speak with Pentecost in the background, and it is generally agreed that specific human languages were uttered and heard at that time. There was a difference between the Pentecostal and Corinthian tongues-speaking in that the Pentecost utterance was immediately understood, while the Corinthian glossolalia needed to be translated.

2. Paul lays great stress on the edification of the church. Comprehension of what was spoken in prophetic communications was indispensable to that end. Hence, he commanded that if there was no interpreter the speaker was to keep silent in the church (1 Cor. 14:28).

3. We believe that since real languages were involved, and intelligent comprehension was necessary, actual *translation* of the utterance was commanded by Paul. This is the meaning of the word *diemeneutes* (1 Cor. 14:25). Dr. Buswell properly says, “If Paul’s restrictions were literally carried out in the modern church, making sure that the translator, *diemeneutes*, is a genuine translator, following known rules of grammar and syntax and vocabulary, the actual miracle of language as it occurred on the day of Pentecost would never be interfered with. Rather it would be better attested; but the counterfeit ‘miracle’ would be eliminated” (*Theology* I, 180).

4. Paul further specifies: “If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God” (1 Cor. 14:27-28, NIV).

5. Since Paul in 1 Timothy 2:12 forbids women to teach in the church, it follows that any tongues-speaking in the church is forbidden to women.

The committee therefore recommends that, if one believes that speaking in tongues is a present gift of the Spirit in the church, he exercise the gift as the Apostle Paul commands.

Part III

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND NEO-PENTECOSTALISM

I. Introduction:

In this third part of the committee's study, we address ourselves to the third item assigned to us: the problem of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It will appear that our understanding of this expression forms part of a larger argument which will present the classical Reformed argument for the mediation of the special charismatic gifts through the Apostles and the consequent cessation of those gifts after the passing away of the Apostles.

II. The Problem of Pentecost:

A. The origin of the charismatic movement.

In arguing the case for the cessation of the special charismatic gifts, we think it is important to remember that the present day claim of charismatic gifts has grown out of the original Holiness or Perfectionist movement. Donald W. Dayton aids us in understanding the origin of Pentecostalism in his careful statement: "Many interpreters fail to distinguish between the holiness movement and Pentecostalism. There are many similarities and historical connections. In the late nineteenth century, holiness writers began to speak of entire sanctification as a 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' on the model of Pentecost. It was in this milieu and thought pattern that Pentecostalism was born in America" (*The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 475).

Thus the original Wesleyan and holiness theme of entire sanctification began to be understood on the model of Pentecost. This development crystallized one of the two principal errors which underlie the Holiness and Pentecostal movements.

The first error is the Wesleyan doctrine of separating sanctification from justification and speaking of it as Wesley did as "a still higher salvation. . . immensely greater than that wrought when he was justified" (*Plain Account*, p. 7). B. B. Warfield states accurately the relation of sanctification to justification, and it is important to have this conception before us so as to appreciate how it differs from the Wesleyan idea of sanctification supposedly obtained directly and immediately by faith. He says:

Justification and sanctification. . . are thought of as parallel products of faith. This is not, however, the New Testament representation. According to its teaching, sanctification is not related to faith directly and immediately, so that in believing

in Jesus we receive both justification and sanctification as parallel products of our faith; or either the one or the other, according as our faith is directed to the one or the other. Sanctification is related directly not to faith but to justification; and as faith is the instrumental cause of justification, so is justification the instrumental cause of sanctification. The *vinculum* which binds justification and sanctification together is not that they are both effects of faith—so that he who believes must have both—because faith is the *prius* of both alike. Nor is it even that both are obtained in Christ, so that he who has Christ, who is made unto us both righteousness and sanctification, must have both because Christ is the common source of both. It is true that he who has faith has and must have both; and it is true that he who has Christ has and must have both. But they do not come out of faith or from Christ in the same way. Justification comes through faith; sanctification through justification, and only mediately, through justification, through faith. So that the order is invariable, faith, justification, sanctification; not arbitrarily, but in the nature of the case” (*Perfectionism* I, p. 363).

The Wesleyan theory throws this order into chaos by proposing a new beginning, a new act of faith specifically for sanctification. This is not open to us, nor necessary, for we had the beginning of our sanctification in our regeneration, which in turn was not separated from the faith through which we were justified.

Further confusion is added to the first Wesleyan error by calling the experience of entire sanctification a Pentecostal experience. Dayton’s statement above quoted shows that this was a datable historical development of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This brought the demand for speaking in tongues, as it occurred at Pentecost. As Williams and Waldvogel show (*The Charismatic Movement*, pp. 98-100), Pentecostal speaking in tongues, after the Azusa Street revival of 1906, became “. . .the initial evidence of Spirit baptism in the tri-partite *ordo salutis*. . .” (p. 100).

B. B. Warfield also has demonstrated that historically, Pentecostalism is a development of the Wesleyan idea of a second work of Grace. This is abundantly documented in the two volumes, *Studies in Perfectionism*, and is illustrated in the commentary on Warfield’s work on Perfectionism, which accompanies this report. This development is recognized by the Pentecostal-Holiness movement itself. The conception rests on the misinterpretation of “the baptism of the Spirit,” and particularly on the misconstruction of the events in the book of Acts which are Spirit-baptisms: Pentecost and the conversion of Cornelius. The root exegetical problem is the choice as to whether we will have an unique Pentecost and unique and unrepeatable sign miracles in the Apostolic age, or have these miracles continued throughout the present age.

B. Neo-Pentecostalism:

The committee believes that the term neo-Pentecostalism does not raise any further doctrinal issues, but is simply a convenient historical expression. It refers to the extension of Pentecostal practices and doctrines into “main-line” churches which lie outside the Pentecostal orbit.

The following description of neo-Pentecostalism is taken from a pamphlet, reprinted from *Present Truth* (exact reference not given in pamphlet), pp. 17-19

The Neo-Pentecostal, or Charismatic, Movement

From 1900 to 1960, the Pentecostal movement continued to grow outside the mainstream of Protestantism. Yet by 1960 it had attained a worldwide membership of about eight million. At that time, men like Dr. Henry Van Dusen began to call the movement the "third force" in Christendom.

Then about 1960 a remarkable change took place. Pentecostalism began to jump the denominational boundary lines and to penetrate the mainline Protestant churches. As John Sherrill says in his book, *They Speak With Other Tongues*, "the walls came tumbling down." Soon there were thousands and then millions, of Episcopalian, Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist and other Protestant Pentecostals. This inter-denominational phase of the movement became known as the neo-Pentecostal, or charismatic, movement. It was no longer a separate denomination but an experience that transcended all denominational boundary lines. Those sharing the experience in different denominations saw themselves as having more in common with each other than with non-charismatics of the same church. Many confidently predicted that this was the beginning of the greatest revival the world had ever known.

Toward the end of the decade, the neo-Pentecostal movement made two further astounding strides. It entered the new youth culture and became known as the Jesus movement. (It is estimated that ninety per cent of the Jesus People, as they are called, have some form of Pentecostal experience.) Many from the drug culture became "high" on Jesus instead of drugs. Then, to crown its success, the neo-Pentecostal movement entered the Catholic Church in 1967. After a modest beginning in its great centers of learning (Duquesne and Notre Dame), it is now spreading rapidly in the Catholic Church, attracting the support of cardinals, bishops and thousands of priests and nuns. Since Roman Catholics are now receiving the identical Pentecostal experience as Protestants, the old-line Pentecostals are having to re-evaluate their attitude toward Roman Catholicism. Traditionally anti-papal, the classical Pentecostal churches are changing their stance since "Pentecost" has come to Rome.

Although Pentecostalism was introduced to the Catholic Church initially by Protestant Pentecostals, it is meeting even less resistance in Catholic circles than in Protestant circles. In fact, as many Catholic authors are pointing out, Pentecostalism is more at home in the ancient church. It is more at home there because the overwhelming Pentecostal emphasis on the subjective experience is in essential harmony with the tradition of the Roman Church. Says Benedictine monk, Father Edward O'Conner of Notre Dame:

Although they derive from Protestant backgrounds, the Pentecostal churches are not typically Protestant in their beliefs, attitudes or practices.—Edward O'Conner, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame, Ind. Ave Maria Press, 1971), p. 23.

. . . it cannot be assumed that the Pentecostal movement represents an incursion of Protestant influence.—*Ibid.*, p. 32.

. . . Catholics who have accepted Pentecostal spirituality have found it to be fully in harmony with their traditional faith and life. They experience it, not as a borrowing from an alien religion, but as a connatural development of their own.—*Ibid.*, p. 28.

. . . the spiritual experience of those who have been touched by the grace of the Holy Spirit in the Pentecostal movement is in profound harmony with the classical spiritual theology of the Church.—*Ibid.*, p. 183.

. . . the experience of the Pentecostal movement tends to confirm the validity and relevance of our authentic spiritual traditions.—*Ibid.*, p. 191.

Moreover, the doctrine that is developing in the Pentecostal churches today seems to be going through stages very similar to those which occurred in the early Middle Ages when the classical doctrine was taking shape.—*Ibid.*, pp. 193-194.

Moreover, neo-Pentecostalism certainly does nothing to unsettle the faith of Catholics in their church and traditions. Says Father O'Conner:

Similarly, the traditional devotions of the Church have taken on more meaning. Some people have been brought back to a frequent use of the sacrament of Penance through the experience of the baptism in the Spirit. Others have discovered a place for devotion to Mary in their lives, whereas previously they had been indifferent or even antipathetic toward her. One of the most striking effects of the Holy Spirit's action has been to stir up devotion to the Real Presence in the Eucharist.—Edward O'Conner, *Pentecost in the Catholic Church* (Pecos, N.M.: Dove Publication, 1970), pp. 14-15.

C. Exegesis of the phrase "Baptism of the Holy Spirit."

1. The 1971 committee addressed itself to the question, Is the baptism of the Holy Spirit a definitive work of grace subsequent to conversion and attested by speaking in tongues? We believe that the exegesis of the 1971 committee, found on pp. 88-92 of the *Minutes*, is sound, and supports adequately their negative answer to the question stated.

We add the following considerations in further support of their conclusion, and in explanation of the meaning of the phrase, "Baptism of the Holy Spirit."

2. The meaning of the phrase, "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" is very clearly explained in Pauline usage. There is a comprehensive theological statement in Titus 3:4-8: the Spirit is poured out on us generously by God through Jesus Christ, that being regenerated and justified, we may become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. A parallel and confirmatory statement is given in I Corinthians 12:13: by the Spirit we are all baptized into the one body and are all made to drink of the one Spirit.

The language of these passages—baptism and pouring out—are the key motifs used to describe Pentecost. It appears that Paul is writing with the model of Pentecost in mind. These passages explicitly relate the pouring out and baptism to regeneration and union with Christ. Yet the baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost happened to people who were already certainly regenerate (cf. John 7:37-39). Bruner's conclusion that Pentecost was the day of their conversion is absurd (*A Theology of the Holy Spirit*, p. 196). James D. G. Dunn also commits this incredible theological blunder: "The *beginning* for the apostolic circle was the beginning of the Church at Pentecost. The reception of the Holy Spirit was the beginning of their *Christian* experience as it was for Cornelius, their baptism in the Spirit into the new covenant and the Church as it was for him" (*Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, p. 52).

Peter declared at Pentecost that in the light of what the people of Israel had seen and heard poured out by Jesus Christ, they should conclude that Jesus was Lord and Messiah. The fact that Jesus had caused the great miraculous sign in fulfillment of Joel's prediction suggests the answer to the ques-

tion, what is the meaning of the baptism of the Spirit at Pentecost? If indeed the baptism of the Spirit is associated with regeneration by Paul, how can this be if the people at Pentecost were already regenerate? Do not these facts suggest the true meaning of Pentecost? It is the climactic attestation of the claims of Christ at the conclusion of His earthly ministry, parallel to the striking attestation by the Spirit at the beginning of His ministry. John 1:33, 34 is the key passage here. The one on whom the Spirit came and remained was marked as the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit (v. 33). In the climactic parallel of John 1:34, John the Baptist says he has seen and witnessed that this is the Son of God. Peter says in Acts 2:38 that the baptism with the Holy Spirit proves that Jesus is Lord and Christ. Thus his doctrine is exactly parallel to that of John.

Note further: John says that the one on whom the Spirit came was the one who baptized with the Holy Spirit. This may indirectly predict Pentecost, but it also agrees with Paul's statements that the regenerating Spirit is given through and by Jesus Christ. Obviously, the Pentecost situation is again parallel: by the demonstration of the Spirit, Jesus is proved to be the sovereign Lord and Christ who gives the Spirit of regeneration. Pentecost teaches not only the supreme deity of Christ, but also His peculiar saving work of imparting the redemption He purchased, applying it by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Pentecost further assures us of the unity of the church. In the light of Pentecost we are assured that Jesus is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. In this way and at all times since His mediatorial work began in a sinful race, His elect have been regenerated.

Pentecost, then, was an unique sign-miracle, attesting the claims of Christ and teaching the central Biblical doctrine of the application of redemption by the Spirit. The same interpretation holds good for the one other occasion which is said to be a baptism with the Holy Spirit: that is the reception of Cornelius into the Church (Acts 10). Peter draws the parallels, and we are warranted in concluding that, just as at Pentecost, there was a demonstration of the Spirit on persons who had been regenerated. In Acts the *outward* demonstration is called the baptism and outpouring of the Spirit, whereas by Paul the *inward* regeneration is called the baptism or the outpouring. Clearly, Pentecost and the reception of Cornelius were unique divine attestations of the inward miracle of regenerating grace. Pentecost said emphatically that salvation is applied by the Spirit poured out by Jesus Christ. In the reception of Cornelius God said with the same clarity that He was pleased to accept regenerated Gentiles. Thus, we believe there is a way of viewing Pentecost and the conversion of Cornelius which is in harmony with Biblical and Reformed doctrine. We do not see in Pentecost the indication of a radical new departure in the relationships of the Holy Spirit. Rather we see a great sign miracle testifying to the claims of Jesus to be Lord and Christ. The central fact of His person and work—enshrined in His very name Christ, the Messiah, the One anointed by the Holy Spirit—is that He, the Savior, applies by His Spirit to His elect in all ages the virtue and benefits of His death and resurrection. We are not adopting cramped and inadequate categories in thus

interpreting Pentecost. We accept the wonder of the sign-miracle. What does it prove? As Peter said, "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ."

Further, like all miracles, this miracle has a great didactic function. The miracle of Pentecost, an event in history, definite and unrepeatable, is a great object lesson showing that Jesus is the one through whom the Spirit is given each time one of His elect is regenerated. Dr. Buswell is correct when he says:

Combining all the actual references to baptism by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, the promise in the four gospels, the promise of Acts 1:5, the experience of the day of Pentecost, the experience of Peter in the household of Cornelius, and Paul's general statement with regard to all Christians, it seems to me we must hold that this expression refers to the initial work of the Holy Spirit in making the elect of God members of the true church, the body of Christ, or marking them as such. (*A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, II, pp. 209).

III. The Apostolic Miracles:

Miraculous outward attestations by the Spirit were given through the laying on of hands of the Apostles on two significant occasions: at Samaria (Acts 8) and at Ephesus (Acts 19). God thus attested the authority of the Apostles by the miraculous display of charismata when they laid their hands on persons who were already regenerated. Thus, with exquisite discrimination, God showed that the *inward* gift of regeneration was in His own hands and sovereign power: that cannot be given by human instrumentality, even that of an Apostle. Baptism with water, as Peter said at the reception of Cornelius, and as the Lord had commanded (Mt. 28), then follows as the appropriate *continuing* symbol of regeneration in the church. Thus Warfield quotes Hermann Cremer with approval:

The Apostolic charismata bear the same relation to those of the ministry that the Apostolic office does to the pastoral office; the extraordinary gifts belonged to the extraordinary office and showed themselves only in connection with its activities" (*Counterfeit Miracles*, p. 23).

The case for the cessation of the charismata is well argued by Warfield in the first chapter of *Counterfeit Miracles*, and has been cogently restated by John Skilton in an excellent pamphlet published by Westminster Seminary, "Special Gifts for a Special Age."

To limit the miraculous signs of the baptism of the Spirit and speaking in tongues to the Apostolic Age is harmonious with the idea that the Apostles are organs of revelation, and that the miracles are the divine confirmation of their mission. When their mission of revelation was done and the Scripture completed, and they passed from the scene, the miraculous accompaniments ceased: a revelatory epoch had been completed. (Heb. 2:1-4)

An additional consideration confirming the judgment that revelation and miracles are not occurring today is the testimony of students of the charisma-

tic movement that none of the specimens of speaking in tongues that have been recorded and studied have been proved to be languages. John P. Kildahl says:

There are no reported instances of a glossolalist speaking a language which was then literally translated by an expert in that language. Of the hundreds of thousands of occasions on which glossolalia has been uttered, there is no tape recording that can be translated from a language spoken somewhere in the world. My point is this: If glossolalic utterances were somehow real languages, it would seem that there would exist somewhere in the world evidence that the speaking in tongues was in fact in such a foreign language. (*The Charismatic Movement*, ed. Michael P. Hamilton, pp. 137-138)

In this connection, note again the judgment of Dr. Buswell, quoted in Part II of this report that the basic meaning of *hermeneuo* and *dierneneutes* is *translate*, and should be insisted on in modern situations. Also, J. G. Davies, as indirectly quoted by Krister Stendahl (*The Charismatic Movement*, p. 60) says that the primary meaning of *hermeneuein* is *translate* rather than *interpret*. In any case, one cannot rationally interpret without translation of a genuine communication.

We wish to say emphatically that in arguing for the cessation of special charismatic gifts, we are not impoverishing the church. We have the Scriptures, and we have prayer. Our Lord said, "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:13). Here is a comprehensive promise parallel to and supportive of the command to be ever filled with the Spirit. Our Lord's comprehensive invitation should not be dispensationalized. The infinitive *didonai* of Lk. 11:13 is in the present tense, implying that our Heavenly Father is ready to give as often as we ask.

IV. Conclusion:

We are convinced that in the Protestant horizon, at least, Pentecostalism and the tongues movement has its origin in the Wesleyan Holiness movement, and in the original error of separating justification from sanctification. That error was aggravated by the Pentecostal practice of speaking of the experience of sanctification on the model of Pentecost. "Pentecostalism proper, as distinguished from the Holiness teaching postulated a third stage in the application of redemption by regarding tongues speaking as "initial evidence of the completion of the *ordo salutis*. . ." (*The Charismatic Movement*, pp. 98-100).

We have offered a viable alternative interpretation of the Scriptural facts. The cases of the miraculous displays at Samaria and at Ephesus when the Apostles laid hands on certain individuals are not baptisms of the Spirit and are not said in Scripture to be such. These are sign-miracles, harmonious with Apostolic claims of authority, vindicating these Apostolic claims and authority. The Acts incidents clearly teach that the supernatural displays and the speaking in tongues in Acts 8 and 19 were mediated through the Apostles. Since the office of the Apostles was unique and not continued in the Church, we may confidently conclude that the miracles which attested their office and claims were unique and have not been continued in the Church.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee is ready to recommend the following propositions for adoption by Synod:

1. Speaking in tongues is not to be sought as an attestation of the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
2. Speaking in tongues is not to be sought as a gift of the Spirit. Already within the New Testament the spectacular gifts come to occupy a lesser role. Also, the New Testament encourages seeking gifts which edify the body rather than merely the individual.
3. With Paul's strong emphasis on the unity of the church, those who have had special experiences with God should guard against the divisiveness of making their private experience with God normative for all believers.
4. If one believes that speaking in tongues, as described above, is a present

gift of the Spirit in the church, he exercise the gift as the Apostle Paul commands.

Charles Anderson
James Ranson
Robert Reymond
William Kirwan
Wilber Wallis, Chairman

Minority Report

With regret of dissent from the majority report both because of the committee's procedures and because of its interpretation of *charismata*.

I. The Committee Procedures and Report

Regarding procedures, the committee did not begin work until after December, 1974. No attempt was made to convene the entire committee, nor was there exchange and debate by mail among committee members of their various view. In January 1975 I was informed that the late date and the scope of the matter precluded a full report to this year's Synod. I heard nothing more until mid-May when I received this majority report.

Regarding the substance of the majority report I believe that it fails to deal adequately with the essential problems involved in the current debates over charismatic gifts, and that its treatment only reiterates a traditional opposition to continuing *charismata*. It seems therefore ineffectual and irrelevant in the main. I do not accept the assumption that the Reformed doctrine of Scripture and its sufficiency is necessarily compromised by continuing *charismata* nor that these gifts were essentially in lieu of a completed canon. Furthermore no truly Reformed theologian accepts the Arminianism, perfectionism, or subjectivism of the Wesleyan holiness movement or pentecostalism. Acceptance of the possibility of *charismata* today no more implies acceptance of pentecostal interpretations and practice than accepting a real biblical sanctification implies agreement with the Wesleyan view of it.

Part II of the report concedes a "tolerance" for modern belief in "tongues" which is consciously inconsistent with its dogmatic assertions in Part III. How the committee majority can tolerate something it thinks (wrongly, I believe) violates the sufficiency of Scripture is a mystery. This approach seems likely to breed confusion and do nothing to heal strife over these matters. Furthermore it lacks in-depth study of other *charismata* and gives little help for discernment, instruction, discipline and pastoral care for our people in general and in particular for those who believe they have a spiritual gift.

Finally, while there is much reference to classical Reformed creeds and scholarship and to ancient Christian opinion, there seems little direct exe-

gesis that focuses on the possibility of *charismata* today and on their correct interpretation. The Westminster Confession insists that:

The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture” (1/10)

Although we believe them to be the product of the Spirit’s illumination of his Word to our Reformed fathers, even our Confessional Standards cannot have the *final* word, much less individual scholars. Otherwise we invest them with an authority not unlike Romanism accords its dogma and traditions.

In summary, Synod’s concern to appoint a committee to study and report on this entire matter would seem to have been misplaced if it only wanted to rehear the traditional arguments against continued *charismata*. A few references would have sufficed. Because of its inadequate work and conclusions, I do not believe this majority report will help our church correctly respond to the issues raised by the “neo-pentecostal” movements of our day. I have suggested before that the 1973 Synod Report of the Christian Reformed Church on “Neo-Pentecostalism” offers us an excellent model both in comprehensive coverage and pastoral concern for such a report.

II. Summary of My Understanding of *Charismata*

The key biblical section which speaks to this issue is I Corinthians 12-14 with necessary supplement from Acts 2 and 10; Romans 12 and Ephesians 4:1-16. We must first separate the modern problems (and our feelings about them) from the biblical material and concentrate on careful exegesis and exposition of the latter. Then we may address the contemporary situation more objectively and convincingly. In this regard I must dissent from a position on *charismata* like that of B. B. Warfield (although I highly regard him otherwise). This position (that of the majority report) does not rest on exegesis per se but on inference which I question is really “good and necessary.” That, I believe, is the “achilles heel” of the position. “Good and necessary inferences”—infant baptism, the Trinity, presbyterian order, etc.—must and do have strong exegetical bases. Infant baptism is supported and required by the whole structure of covenant theology; it has exegetical ground in passages like Genesis 17 and Colossians 2:11-12. That kind of support for Warfield’s position seems singularly inadequate.

This exegetical lack in that position is particularly significant because it does not adequately deal with the exegesis of one key passage, I Cor. 13:10-12. This sets the terminus ad quem for these gifts at that point “when that which is perfect is come.” Attempts have been made to read this as a prediction of the completed canon; however, this seems an arbitrary intrusion into the text of a fact it does not have in view. Can anyone seriously claim that with even Scripture we have perfect knowledge; Most Reformed expositors (and others) take this to be an eschatological reference. If so

(and I believe it it), Scripture would appear to set the end of this age specifically as that point when the *charismata* are terminated. Within this age the bestowal of any gift is determined by the sovereign decision of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:11) and is governed and tested in the church by the doctrine and discipline of the Apostles (i.e. the New Testament).

In light of these foregoing observations, I summarize five conclusions relative to *charismata* per se.

First, these spiritual gifts are abilities which serve the church's edification; they are not direct evidence that one so gifted is of high spiritual quality. The Corinthians were abundantly gifted, but their spiritual state was gravely deficient. Hence, none is a sign one is filled or "baptized" with the Holy Spirit; none guarantees one's conversion or commitment. Misunderstanding at this point underlies the error of pentecostalism in seeing "tongues" as a sign of or means into a state of sanctification. Paul's emphasis in I Corinthians 14 is correcting perversion, abuse, and excess. Modern pentecostals usually choose to ignore the fact that Paul's emphasis tends to *discourage* "tongues" in the assembly, only stopping short of prohibition. On the other hand, he does accept them as a genuine gift having some practical benefit when translated.

Second, the phrase, "baptized in the Spirit" in a general sense seems scripturally to refer most properly to the initial Pentecost outpouring of the Spirit on the whole church, fulfilling Joel's prophecy. Christ, our high priest enthroned at the Father's right hand, has baptized his covenant people once for all with the Holy Spirit. In a more specific sense, the phrase describes that spiritual incorporation into the body of Christ that accompanies a believer's regeneration. (I Corinthians 12:13). As such it seems to relate to the sacrament of water baptism.

Third, the uniqueness of the apostles' office must be maintained (Cf. N. Geldenhuys, *Supreme Authority*.) Their commission included extensive miraculous powers to confirm and establish their authority and message because their ministry was an extension through the Spirit of Jesus' ministry. (Cf. Acts 5:12; 9:38, 40-41. 2 Corinthians 12:12.) The apostle's qualifications and mission were such (Acts 1:21-22) that once their foundational ministry was complete and their generation passed the active office could not continue as such. However, Paul lists healing and miracles as distinct from apostles which implies that certain other believers received similar but lesser gifts for the edification of the church. These could not have compromised the apostles' authority. In one sense the apostolic ministry continues; i.e. their canonized writings continue to bear their witness to the risen Christ and his Word. Are we exegetically required to eliminate the possibility that in certain circumstances the Spirit might also use miraculous signs to confirm the truth and authority of that apostolic Word today, particularly in pagan areas new to the gospel or in fact of manifest Satanic opposition; As spiritual conflict mounts toward the end of this age, might not the church witness miraculous activity from God for the sake of the elect?

Fourth, what positively are the *charismata*? In all of Paul's discussions of these gifts (Romans 12, I Corinthians 12-14, Ephesians 4:1-16), he emphasi-

zes, not their miraculous character, but the unity and edification of the church as their proper context and purpose and love as necessary to their valid use. This, plus the term *charisma* itself, emphasizes the grace of God as their source. Apart from those occasions when they were used as vehicles of revelation, they seem to be *means of grace* provided in the Word specifically conferred by the Spirit, for the continuing welfare of His covenant people and the glory of God. Applied to “tongues” their practical significance in Corinth seems to have been as an expression of prayer and praise. It is indisputable that they were intelligible communication, capable of translation. Here again the pentecostals fall short of biblical understanding. Tongues were not irrational ecstatic expressions which Paul would forbid in the congregation and eschews in private.

Central among these gifts are the four ministries of the Word discussed in Ephesians 4:7-12. (The more general Greek terms for giving and gift (*didomi* and *dorea*) are used here as a manifestation of the grace (*charis*) of Christ.) No other gift or service in the church can function properly and effectively apart from them. (For us the gift of *apostle* is contained in the New Testament; it is not a continuing authority to declare new revelation.) Any claims to have or use a *charisma* must be tested and disciplined by the church, the cardinal tests being their adherence to the Word and their benefit to the church. As such *charismata* need no more add to the Scripture than other means of grace that apply the Word like preaching or counselling. As preachers we seek to declare the Word under the power and illumination of the Spirit, applying it to contemporary living; can that not be described as a prophetic ministry in a true biblical sense without implying new revelation? When we speak of the sufficiency of Scripture, does that not include the use of the means of grace provided by the Spirit in the Word and used alongside of it and under its authority, like preaching, prayer, the sacraments, the *charismata*?

Fifth, related to the above, what relationship do the *charismata* have to *special revelation*? Are these gifts *necessarily* and *only* revelatory? Obviously some were used as vehicles for revelation, notably prophets, apostles, and miracles, but the Word also indicates a ministry of prophets and apostles which operated on a secondary, non-revelatory level. In I Corinthians 14 neither glossolalia nor prophecy as practiced by the Corinthians are given the authority and honor accorded revelation; rather they are subservient to apostolic word. So although God used some of these gifts as vehicles to bring new revelation until the canon was complete, the gifts themselves do not appear inherently necessarily revelatory. Is all communication from God *special revelation* in the sense that the Westminster Confession means it? When someone would interpret a “tongue”, would that be special revelation unless it conveyed new truth? The use of the term *musterion* relative to glossolalia (I Corinthians 14:2) appears to mean little more than their unintelligibility without translation. The context does not support the concept they were in Corinth (or elsewhere ordinarily) a form of God’s revealing his divine mysteries. While he does not apply it to this verse, Kittel recognizes this lesser sense as one use of *musterion*.

Finally, a brief comment about our pastoral care. We must receive the “neo-pentecostals” who become part of our congregations and who give credible profession of faith as fellow-members of the body of Christ, brought to us in the providence and grace of God. They are subject to the biblical ministry and authority of the Word as much as everyone else. However, we must not treat them as a “spiritual plague” to be forced out just because they believe they have a *charisma*.

III. Conclusion

I offer this report not as a definitive study but as a first effort to hear the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture to instruct, correct, and unify the church in these controversial matters. I raise questions about the “Warfieldian” position not out of sympathy for pentecostal doctrines but out of concern to hear his Word clearly.

The winds of pentecostal doctrines come out of a subjectionist “hermeneutic” in which “spiritual experience” rather than the Word itself controls doctrine and practice. They will not cease to blow just because we object. We must address their challenge with clear doctrine that convinces other believers not because it is “traditional,” but because it is demonstrably based on accurate interpretation and application of God’s Word.

I also believe the pentecostals (as well as the Wesleyan holiness movement in general) raise valid questions about personal sanctification and spiritual effectiveness even if their answers are not biblically valid. Our concerns about the Holy Spirit’s presence and ministry must go beyond *charismata* and beyond opposition to error. We must understand and apply all the Word provides. We must *experience* the gracious power of the Spirit reviving our personal and congregational lives lest our teaching sound unreal despite its theological precision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Synod *not* adopt either the majority or minority reports, but that they be made available to the churches and presbyteries to initiate general creative study of Scripture in those areas.

2. That presbyteries and sessions be urged to study and discuss these matters thoroughly and exegetically but not bound to a predetermined tradition we may read back into Scripture. Through this seek to articulate what the Word itself says, applying this in sound teaching and practical pastoral care and seek to reach a consensus as a church from which we may exercise consistent oversight and discipline.

3. If the Synod determines that a further study is needed, that it appoint a committee of entirely new members and give it definitive instructions as to the scope and purpose of its report.

Respectfully submitted,
Patrick H. Morison

The following articles by Dr. Wilber B. Wallis are reprinted from *Salt* (the student theological journal of Covenant Seminary) volume 5, 1974-75, and are herewith reproduced for the benefit of churches and presbyteries in accord with the recommendation adopted by Synod (see page xxx).

*REVIEW AND COMMENTARY ON WARFIELD'S STUDIES
IN PERFECTIONISM*

Warfield's analysis of perfectionism can be better appreciated if we have in mind the history of the development of perfectionism in America as Warfield saw it.

The two concluding articles of *Studies in Perfectionism* conveniently provide this needed historical sketch. These articles, "The 'Higher Life' Movement," and "The Victorious Life" were among the first in the series of articles printed between 1918 and 1921.

"The 'Higher Life' Movement" takes its theme from the title of *The Higher Christian Life*, (1859) by W. E. Boardman. The date of the publication of this volume is a convenient point from which to look back and forward in a sketch of the history of perfectionism.

Warfield first shows that the idea of "Christian perfection" was introduced into Protestant thought by John Wesley. The teaching accompanied the growth of the Methodist churches and was one of the distinguishing doctrines of Methodism in America.

About the middle of the nineteenth century, a parallel, but independent development appeared among American Congregationalists. Warfield says that the appearance of Pelagian ideas was responsible, since both in the American development and elsewhere, there is a correlation between the Pelagian doctrine of the will and perfectionism.

Warfield further argues that in the social flux of the American frontier these perfectionist tendencies found fertile soil. ". . .the constant interchange between the frontier and the country at large spread the contagion rapidly throughout the land. Among the other extraneous influences thus given great vogue was naturally a tendency to proclaim perfection a Christian duty and an attainable ideal, which none who would take the place of a Christian in this wicked world could afford to forego." (*Perfectionism*, II, 465)

In such a milieu Boardman's book appeared, winning immense popularity in England and America. Other teachers followed Boardman's leading, especially Mr. and Mrs. Pearsall Smith. From the influence of the latter grew the Keswick movement in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Warfield says that the real power of Boardman's book lay in its fundamentally Christian tone—" . . .It exalts Christ, and it exalts faith. And no book which exalts Christ and exalts faith will ever fail of an immediate response from Christian hearts." (p. 473)

In this review of Boardman's book (pp. 474ff), Warfield focuses on the key weakness of perfectionist teaching. Boardman in effect divides our one indivisible salvation into two distinct parts, each of which is received by a distinct act of faith. (p. 474) This would lead to the absurdity of dividing Chris

(p. 475). Yet this conception is of basic importance in Boardman's system of doctrine, so that Warfield says, ". . . This separation of justification and sanctification as two distinct 'experiences' resting on two distinct acts of faith is in point of fact Mr. Boardman's primary interest, and constitutes the foundation stone of his system. Grant him the reality of the 'second conversion' by which we obtain sanctification, as distinct in principle from the first conversion by which we obtain justification, and he will not boggle over much else." (p. 476) This sharp separation of justification and sanctification would appear to make two kinds of Christians: those who are merely justified as distinct from those who are both justified and sanctified. Yet Boardman does not really believe this, for he teaches in effect a doctrine of perseverance, since all those who are justified will sooner or later have the second experience of sanctification. Warfield then remarks, "But it falls gravely short of the teaching of Scripture which connects sanctification with justification as its necessary issue and through it the necessary issue of the indivisible faith that lays hold on the indivisible salvation of the indivisible Christ." (p. 482)

Warfield says that the most difficult point in Boardman's teaching is to be sure what one receives in the "second conversion." There is a contradiction between the teaching that sanctification is process (p. 484) and the idea that this sanctification is secured instantaneously. Warfield concludes, "In one way or another, Mr. Boardman also certainly teaches that when we accept Christ for sanctification, we not only make our sanctification certain but obtain it at once." (p. 485) This impasse is resolved by Boardman's idea that when we accept Christ for sanctification we receive in Him freedom from all *conscious* sinning and at the same time we receive absolute assurance in Him that He will progressively cleanse our 'heart and life' in His own good time and way from all sin. (p. 485)

Warfield is confident that Boardman's scheme is perfectionism. He says, "It ought to be added, however, that in his latest years Mr. Boardman appears to have exchanged this most ingenious form of perfectionism by which a constant, conscious perfection is maintained in the course of a steady, actual growth towards real perfection, for the exaggerated mysticism which has become a characteristic doctrine of the later advocates of the Higher Christian Life." (p. 489)

Some incisive criticisms of the Boardman scheme are offered by Warfield. It is not a real sanctification. What the Christian receives when he accepts Christ for sanctification is not sanctification but peace. "But this only uncovers to us the ingrained endimionism of the whole Higher Christian Life movement. It is preoccupied with the pursuit of happiness and tends in many ways to subordinate everything to it." (p. 491)

Warfield continues his sketch of the progress of perfectionistic thinking, reviewing the life and teaching of Robert Pearsall and Hannah Whittall Smith. Warfield believed that through them the movement begun by Boardman attained its widest extension and most lasting influence.

Mrs. Smith remained a Quaker all her life. "In her later years, even the fundamental mystical doctrine of the 'divine seed' is quite clearly enuncia-

ted and the characteristic Higher Life teaching developed out of it.” (p. 495) Her doctrine is “quietistic mysticism,” (p. 497) She held very strongly a doctrine of universal salvation. (p. 534)

Robert Pearsall Smith (1827-1899) acquired his perfectionist ideas under Methodist influences, in Methodist Holiness Meetings. He and his wife became enthusiastic adherents of the Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification by faith. Smith appears to have followed Boardman rather closely (p. 503). His principal book, *Holiness Through Faith*, appeared in 1870. He continued to preach and teach, and appeared in London in the spring of 1873, beginning a remarkable series of meetings which ran up to the Oxford Union meeting of August 29 to September 7, 1874. Boardman joined Smith and his wife in the fall of 1873, and together they met select parties of ministers and Christian workers of London, speaking of the Higher Christian Life. It will be recalled that Boardman’s popular book had appeared in 1859 and was very popular in Britain. It was reprinted in many editions in England and one publisher alone sold 60,000 copies of it before 1874 (p. 473). Large popular meetings followed, climaxing with the great Oxford Union Meeting of September, 1874. Another influential perfectionist teacher appeared along with Boardman and Smith. This was Dr. Asa Mahan, the outstanding Oberlin perfectionist. During the next year, 1874-1875, such meetings continued in England, and Smith also preached in Germany with remarkable results. It is noteworthy that the Smith-Boardman meetings coincided with the two year Moody-Sankey campaign in England and Scotland, which began in June, 1873. Warfield says the Higher Life movement was “embroidered” on the Moody-Sankey evangelistic campaign (p. 470).

The Oxford meeting of 1874 was amazingly effective, so that the teaching and interest spread through Britain and over to the Continent. Smith preached at Berlin, Basel, Stuttgart, Heidelberg, and Barmen. Smith returned to England and led a great international convocation at Brighton from May 29 to June 7, 1875. Plans for continuing the campaign were suddenly broken off when it was announced that Mr. Smith’s engagements had been cancelled and that he had returned to America. Apparently, Smith had “lapsed into antinomianism” (p. 508) and had said that those who are in Christ are no longer subject to the law of God, as the rule of their conduct. Smith went into retirement for the rest of his life.

The Higher Life movement of the 1870s was carried on in the Keswick movement in Britain and in the “*Heiligungsbewegung*” (Holiness Movement) in Germany. Warfield believed that these movements “kept the essential teaching but mitigated some of the most objectionable features” (p. 556)

At the beginning of this paper, there was mentioned the movement from the Congregational side—the “new divinity.” This movement produced Oberlin College under the leadership of C. G. Finney and Asa Mahan. The appearance of Mahan with Boardman and Smith at the Oxford meeting in 1874 was symbolic and significant. Perfectionism from the Wesleyan side and the “new divinity” side were in essential agreement. Warfield’s summary brings these strands together: “Mahan’s life long propaganda of the earlier form of Oberlin Perfectionism was not barren of fruit. The ‘Higher Life Movement’

which swept over the English-speaking world—and across the narrow seas into the continent of Europe—in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, was not without traits which derived from Oberlin. And Mahan lived to stand by the side of Pearsall Smith at the great Oxford Convention of 1874, and to become with him a factor in the inauguration of the great “Keswick Movement,” which has brought down much of the spirit and many of the forms of teaching of Oberlin Perfectionism to our own day. If Oberlin Perfectionism is dead, it has found its grave not in the abyss of non-existence, but in the Higher Life Movement, the Keswick Movement, the Victorious Life Movement, and other kindred forms of perfectionist teaching. They are its abiding monuments.” (p. 213)

Warfield’s extensive research in the backgrounds of perfectionism makes us aware of the principal forces and historical developments which entered into the emergence of perfectionist teaching in nineteenth century America. The review of Boardman and Smith points out the dominant influence of the Wesleyan teaching. Mrs. Smith’s Quakerism contributed a strain of mystical quietism, while the appearance of Mahan with Boardman and Smith in London in 1874 represents the pelagianizing new divinity from New England. This latter movement is examined in detail (pp. 1-214) under the title “Oberlin Perfectionism.” The last section of this article reviews the theology of Charles G. Finney. It is most instructive as an exercise in systematic theology, since it shows forcefully the interrelations of Finney’s Pelagianism throughout his system, and sets in clear light his unsatisfactory governmental doctrine of the atonement. The effects of mysticism on perfectionist doctrine is shown in Warfield’s exposition, “The Mystical Perfectionism of Thomas Cogswell Upham,” (pp. 337-459). A more general article on “Mysticism” is also found in the volume, *Studies in Theology*. Upham (1799-1872) was a brilliant and able teacher of psychology and philosophy at Bowdoin College. Warfield characterizes him thus: “He was a Congregationalist before he became a Methodist Perfectionist—a Congregationalist of the ‘New Divinity’ type, and holding the ‘New Divinity’ firmly, though not in an extreme form. What we have to do within him, accordingly, is a somewhat mild ‘New Divinity’ Congregationalism, overlaid with Wesleyan Perfectionism, endeavoring to read the quietism of Madame Guyon in harmony with itself.” (p. 373)

Warfield sums up the findings of his wide-ranging and thorough investigation of perfectionism: “. . . as wave after wave of the ‘holiness movement’ has broken over us during the past century, each has brought, no doubt, something distinctive of itself. But a common fundamental character has informed them all, and this common fundamental character has been communicated to them by the Wesleyan doctrine. In all of them alike, justification and sanctification are divided from one another as two separate gifts of God. In all of them alike, sanctification is represented as obtained, just like justification, by an act of simple faith, but not by the same act of faith by which justification is obtained, but a new and separate act of faith, exercised for this specific purpose. In all of them alike the sanctification which comes on this act of faith, comes immediately on believing, and all at once, and in all of them

alike this sanctification, thus received is complete sanctification. In all of them alike, however, it is added, that this complete sanctification does not bring freedom from all sin; but only, say, freedom from sinning; or only freedom from conscious sinning; or from the commission of 'known sins.' And in all of them alike this sanctification is not a stable condition into which we enter once for all by faith, but a momentary attainment, which must be maintained moment by moment, and which may readily be lost and often is lost, but may also be repeatedly instantaneously recovered."

Such is perfectionism as Warfield saw it. In reply, he constantly reiterated the teaching of Romans 6. "The whole sixth chapter of Romans, for example, was written for no other purpose than to assert and demonstrate that justification and sanctification are indissolubly bound together; that we cannot have one without having the other; that, to use its own figurative language, dying with Christ and living with Christ are integral elements in one indisintegrable salvation. To wrest these two things apart and make separable gifts of grace of them evinces a confusion in the conception of Christ's salvation which is nothing less than portentous. It forces from us the astonished cry, Is Christ divided? And it compels us to point afresh to the primary truth that we do not obtain the benefits of Christ apart from, but only in and with His Person; and that when we have Him we have all." (p. 569)

B. B. WARFIELD: DIDACTIC AND POLEMIC THEOLOGIAN

One of the most remarkable features of B. B. Warfield's total literary production is the quantity of work produced at the very end of his life in the investigation of the roots of perfectionism. The two volumes of collected articles entitled *Studies in Perfectionism*, (N.Y., 1931), contain 1,000 pages of very thorough historical and theological discussions.

A preceding article (*Salt*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Nov., 1974) gave a sketch of the contents of the second volume, since it dealt with the American origins of perfectionistic teaching, and only slightly touched on the exportation of the movement to England and the continent.

The first volume of *Studies* may at first seem to be of less immediate relevance and interest to American readers. It is probably for that reason that only two of its articles have been included in the later volume *Perfectionism*, reprinted in 1958.

Though, (or perhaps, *because*) the first volume deals with phases of perfectionism in Germany, it can be very instructive in understanding the problems which perfectionism raises. Since *Hebrews* assures us that without holiness no one will see the Lord, the very importance of the topic gives relevance to the remarkable history of perfectionism in German theology. On the one hand, there appeared in Albrecht Ritschl and his successors an *exegetical* perfectionism. That is, the Ritschlian rationalistic treatment of the Christian life ran to the extreme of asserting that the apostle Paul taught perfectionism. Of course, Ritschl and the rest did not believe in the objective reality of perfectionism: fastening this teaching on Paul, thus making him appear extreme and fanatical, only served to discredit supernatural Christianity.

Perfectionism had another course of development in Germany. Pearsall Smith made a brief and dramatic tour of Germany in 1875, and addressing large audiences through interpreters, powerfully presented perfectionistic teachings. The impulse of Smith's preaching, as Warfield saw it, was grafted on to what was known as the "Fellowship Movement," which descended from the pietism of an earlier time. The last two articles in Warfield's volume trace this development. Chapter six, "Die Heiligungsbewegung," (The Holiness Movement) is a comprehensive sketch of the perfectionistic development, from its American beginnings in W. H. Boardman, through Pearsall Smith and the Oxford conference of 1875, and the attendant transplantation of the teaching to France and Germany. The polemical strife which perfectionism produced in the Fellowship Movement, with the ultimate separation of the Fellowship Movement and the Gnadau Conference from perfectionism, will be traced in greater detail in this paper.

The last chapter of Warfield's volume, "The German Higher Life Movement in Its Chief Exponent," is not easy reading. It is Warfield's masterly analysis of the progress of the thought of Theodore Jellinghaus. Jellinghaus attended the Oxford Conference, and took up the exciting emphasis of Pearsall Smith. He grafted perfectionism on to his "mediating theology" received from C. F. K. von Hofmann at Erlangen, and wrote the definitive theology of the Fellowship-perfectionist movement: *the Complete, Present Salvation through Christ* (first edition 1880). After this work went through several editions—the last in 1903—Jellinghaus in 1912 dramatically renounced the perfectionist emphasis with the publication of a book entitled *Avowals about my Doctrinal Errors*, and turned toward stable Reformation doctrine.

We turn, then, to a brief commentary on Warfield's study on the rationalistic handling of the theme of the Christian life.

Warfield's first two chapters form a unitary study: "Albrecht Ritschl and His Doctrine of Christian Perfection: Article I. Ritschl the Rationalist," and "Article II. Ritschl the Perfectionist."

Warfield believed that "The perfectionist teaching of Ritschl presents a highly individual example of a Pelagianizing Perfectionism quite independent of all either Mystical or Wesleyan influences." (p. 4). Ritschl denied any native bias to sin in men. Every man comes into the world with a bias to good, and yet every man forms an evil moral character. This he does because of the evil of society which infects every man with a social inheritance of evil. Nevertheless, Ritschl apparently believed and taught that just as a man forms an evil character, he is capable of reversing his activities, and revolutionizing his character. Being motivated by the community in which he lives, he may help to build up a Kingdom of God in which he may be perfect.

Ritschl constantly asserted an independent power of the human will: the will has power to determine itself. Warfield remarks: "Though all explanation of the possibility of the exercise of such an independent power of the will fails, "the assertion of its reality is persistent." (p. 7).

Thus Ritschl was confronted with the fact of man's universal sinfulness, contradicting his doctrine of the independent power of the will. He believed that the universality of sin ". . . is due to the reaction of the unformed will

to the temptations of social life. . . Ritschl does not scruple to say that in the environment with which man is thrust he cannot avoid sinning.” (p. 14). Warfield rejoins “. . . the cause of sin must be found in something in the sinner rather than in something in his environment” (p. 15). “It is not altogether easy to comprehend how Ritschl, with his descriptions of the depth of the evil which pervades the kingdom of sin, preserves any individual from the full strength of this bias to evil. It must be that, after all, he thinks of sin lightly.” (p. 18).

Warfield further traces in Ritschl a defective view of the soul. There is not really a substantially existing soul: the soul exists only in the multiplicity of its functions. The possibility of character and immortality are denied (p. 21).

Further, as Warfield notes “. . . it is not the soul of man alone which is dissolved in the acid of Ritschl’s non-substantial metaphysics. The being of God is dissolved in it also.” (p. 23). He knew of no trinity, no pre-existent Christ, and no personal Holy Spirit (p. 23).

In the final analysis, Ritschl eliminated supernaturalism from Christianity: “. . . the proclamation of the Gospel and the impression made on men by the personality of Christ bring about their justification and regeneration. . . by awakening faith in them.” (p. 27). He explains regeneration wholly within the sphere of human action (p. 29). “Jesus Christ does not live in His church. It is only His Gospel—the memory of him—which lives in it and works the conversion of men.” (p. 35). “The whole truth is that Ritschl in contending for ‘the dependence of Christianity on the historical revelation of God in Christ’ is not neglecting merely, but denying, the dependence of vital Christianity on the immediate operations of the Spirit of God in the heart.” (p. 36).

Ritschl was a thorough-going anti-supernaturalist (p. 37). He did not teach the proper deity of Christ (p. 40). “Like Jesus, and under the impulse received from him (through the community), we are to live in faith, humility, patience, thankfulness, and the practice of love in the kingdom of God. Doing so, we shall be divine as He, doing so, was divine. This is to Ritschl the entirety of Christianity: and this is at bottom just a doctrine of ‘imitation’ of the ‘religion of Jesus.’” (p. 46).

Though Ritschl was thus an anti-supernaturalistic rationalist, yet he “. . . clothes his naturalistic system with the terms of supernaturalism, or, to be more precise, of conservative evangelicalism. He himself thought of this procedure as a reminding of the old coin; it is not strange that the evangelical public itself looked upon it as rather counterfeiting it.” (p. 49). The effect, of course, was that the public was deceived. It is not difficult to recognize in the description of Ritschl’s system the outlines of the “modernism” or “Liberalism” which persists and underlies much so-called Christianity today.

Upon this rationalistic anti-supernaturalistic system Ritschl nevertheless advanced a doctrine of perfection. Warfield’s second article “Ritschl the Perfectionist” expounds Ritschl’s teaching. “. . . Ritschl’s whole doctrine of sin, guilt, forgiveness. reconciliation moves, not in the realm of realities, but in that of the subjective consciousness.” (p. 57). We are not really under con-

demnation: justification is simply the assurance that we are wrong in thinking that we are, and that all is well with us.

Warfield shows that Ritschl presented justification as “a profoundly immoral doctrine” (p. 64) because God simply arbitrarily forgives sin, as He must, since there was no expiatory or sin-bearing character in the work of Christ.

Warfield then expounds Ritschl’s conception of the Christian life, and in so doing exposes Ritschl’s perfectionism. “We perceive that Ritschl’s conception of the Christian life amounts briefly to just this: free ethical life inspired by a sense of wellpleasiness to God. Justification is viewed as the assumption of a new attitude of trust towards God and entrance, in this trust, into participation in God’s aims to found an ethical Kingdom; and this Kingdom of God is viewed as the society of those animated by this motive and sharing in this endeavor. Justification thus prepares for the ethical effort, the Kingdom of God is its sphere. This free ethical life under this inspiration constitutes now Christian perfection, in Ritschl’s nomenclature; that is to say, it is all that is necessary to have in order to be a Christian—it makes us perfectly Christian though it may not make us perfect Christians.” (p. 68).

Warfield shows that Ritschl regarded his doctrine of Christian perfection as embodying the essence of his religious teaching. (p. 70). “Ritschl did not make little of his doctrine of Christian perfection, or thrust it into a corner.” (p. 72).

In a very effective section, Warfield compares Ritschl’s conception of the Christian life with that expressed by Melancthon in the Augsburg Confession. “According to the Confession the Christian life receives its form from three fundamental reactions. These are sincere fear of God, assurance of His reconciliation through Christ, and confidence that He will answer the prayers of His people.” (p. 75). Ritschl, however, transposed these Evangelical themes into the rationalistic key: there is no God to dread, since He is love and only love. He needs no placating sacrifice, and He does not answer prayer (p. 76).

Warfield approaches the detailed discussion of Ritschl as perfectionist by ascertaining his doctrine of salvation. “. . . justification, reconciliation, regeneration, have as their aim, and issue into, a purely subjective change, that and that only. We need not, because of them, find ourselves in any objectively different situation from that occupied before; we in point of fact, do not. There has come about a change only in our ‘tone of feeling.’” (p. 79). Ritschl conceives eternal life to mean an attitude toward the actual course of this world. This attitude is a ‘tone of feeling.’ “. . . it is now, this general point of view or ‘tone of feeling’ (*Gesinnung*) which constitutes, on the religious side, what Ritschl calls Christian Perfection. He who is of this way of thinking and feeling is a Christian, and is all that he need be, from the religious point of view, in order to be all that a Christian is.” (pp. 84-5). Ritschl’s idea of perfection emerges in the description of the Christian’s ethical task, which is making God’s self-end his own, and God’s self-end is the Kingdom of God. “He that is faithful in his vocation has performed his whole duty in the Kingdom of God, and, being thus whole in himself, is perfect” (p. 86). Warfield com-

ments: "we perceive that the chief concern which Ritschl shows in developing his doctrine of vocation is to utilize it so to limit the range of duty as to make it possible for the Christian man to be ethically as well as religiously perfect" (p. 87). Ritschl ". . .repels the evangelical doctrine that even in the state of grace we must always be mindful of the imperfection of our moral conduct, so that we may never be tempted to depend for our salvation on our own works, which never meet the demands of the law, but only on Christ received by faith alone." (p. 87) "The ultimate conclusion to which he would drive us is that the Christian man's works are not subject to the judgment of the law" (p. 87). Warfield believed that one of Ritschl's leading motives was to find a remedy for the Protestant perplexity regarding the assurance of salvation (p. 88). Warfield is surely right in assuring us that ". . .to find salvation in progress is as sound evidence of salvation as to find it completed—provided salvation be a supernatural work" (p. 88) Perfectionism spoils this assurance, because ". . .in proportion as it is made the Christian's duty not so much to work out his salvation continuously, but to enjoy it at once in its completeness, the believer, conscious of sin, loses his confidence that he is a believer at all. If this attainment of complete salvation is made coincident with justification, all sense of continued sinfulness is a clear disproof of present salvation." (p. 89) On pp. 90-1 Warfield gives an eloquent exposition of the Reformation doctrine of the Christian life. If our sense of sin makes us dissatisfied with ourselves and more satisfied with Christ, we may find assurance in Him. Ritschl taught, however, that the satisfaction of the Christian has its ground in himself. Ritschl apparently actually undertook to prove that the Reformers in teaching dissatisfaction with ourselves were at odds with the Scriptures. "The exegetical justification of this contention he seeks to supply in a passage in the closing pages of the second volume of his main work which has become famous and which has exerted a greater influence than any other portion of his discussion of the perfection of the Christian. In this passage Ritschl declares that the relation in which the Reformers place the believer's supposed consciousness of continued imperfection to justification was wholly unknown to Paul." (p. 91). This sense of dissatisfaction was repugnant, and impossible to Ritschl, so that he was compelled to develop a conception of the Christian life which involved perfection (p. 94). That perfection, however, had the fatal error attaching to all perfectionism—the antinomian substitution of a standard other than the law of God. "In the absolute freedom of his will he chooses his own end; and that end determines his rules of living for him. These are the elements of Ritschl's ethics." (p. 97).

Warfield forthrightly attacked Ritschl's construction as immoral (p. 100). "We perceive that Ritschl holds strongly that every transgression of moral law is sin and that there can be no perfection where the whole moral law is not kept. His mode of escape is to deny the validity of all 'statutory law.' There is no such thing as a universal moral law imposing duty in all its items on all men alike. Each man secretes for himself his own moral law, and in order to be perfect must fulfill only it in all its requirements" (p. 101). Ritschl's perfection, like all perfectionism, is a delusion.

In this paper, it will be impossible to trace in detail the development of

Ritschl's influence, as expounded by Warfield in the section entitled "Miserable-sinner Christianity in the Hands of the Rationalists." Warfield traces the development of Ritschl's ideas over a period of some thirty-five years, from the publication of Ritschl's work on justification in 1874, through the discussion provoked by the work of Wernle in 1897. This in turn led to a development in liberal exegesis which came to final expression in the work of Windisch in 1908.

Warfield prefaces this weighty 200 page review with a rewarding exposition of the Reformation doctrine of the Christian life (pp. 113-132). He then shows Ritschl's reaction to this teaching, with the subsequent effect on liberal exegesis.

Warfield's estimate of the effect of the rationalistic assault on Reformation doctrine was that it helped the perfectionist parties at work in the church. It was ". . . in effect an attempt to supply to the contentions of these perfectionist parties a scientific exegetical basis. . ." (p. 298). Of course, the rationalist held the Methodist in contempt: "Bousset, in the very act of declaring that, among modern religious tempers, that embodied in Methodistic Christianity comes nearest to the Christianity of Paul, remarks that nevertheless to modern men it is abhorrent. . ." (p. 298). The purpose of the Rationalists was to assault the Reformation teaching, and they saw in the perfectionist movements similar revolts against the Reformation doctrine of the Christian life and the process of salvation (p. 299). The Rationalist, though despising the perfectionist, claimed him as an independent witness to the correctness of the Rationalist interpretation of the New Testament.

Parallel to and contemporaneous with the Rationalistic development which has just been traced, was another movement in Germany, known as the Fellowship Movement. It had sprung from Pietistic sources. Laymen within the national church carried on a varied work of hospitals, orphan asylums, and Bible schools. Warfield felt that the movement represented the formation of a "great German Free Church." (p. 308). It was a revolt from the idea of a state church. It was partly parallel to the Keswiche Movement, (p. 312) having received the ministry of Robert Pearsall Smith. It was a holiness movement, and the Gnadau Conference was the center of its public life.

Warfield gives some of the eyewitness accounts of the excitement attending Smith's ministry in Germany which moulded the Pietistic tendencies into a movement. Warfield regarded the movement as a prolongation of the American Holiness movement, and the immediate effect of the "very extravagant English upheaval." (p. 323). The movement had extravagant and fanatical perfectionist tendencies, and these were accentuated by "a staggering blow from the importation in the spring of 1905 of the Welsh Revival with more than the Welsh excesses." (p. 326). That was followed by the impact of the Pentecost Movement, stemming from the Los Angeles Revival of 1907.

We need to recognize at this point that the Holiness movement in America had undergone a development. It is now generally recognized that the Pentecostal movement appeared in Holiness circles. Donald W. Dayton says: "Many interpreters fail to distinguish between the holiness movement and Pentecostalism. There are many similarities and historical connections. In the late

nineteenth century, holiness writers began to speak of 'entire sanctification' as a 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' on the model of Pentecost. It was in this milieu and thought pattern that Pentecostalism was born in America." (The *New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, p. 475a). See also the article "Pentecostal Churches" by R. S. Clouse in the same volume.

Under the impulse of the Pentecostal idea, one of the leaders of the Gnadau Conference, Pastor Paul, began to speak in tongues (p. 327). The excesses of Pentecostal manifestations provoked a reaction. Pastor Paul's perfectionism, linked to Pentecostal motifs, was condemned by Gnadau in 1911: "We must cease to offer salvation to our people in three distinct stages, (1) forgiveness of sins, (2) sanctification, (3) the Baptism of the Spirit." (p. 329).

Warfield analyzes Pastor Paul's doctrine, and finds that it did not differ from ordinary Wesleyan teaching, particularly in the sharp separation between sanctification and justification, and in teaching an immediate sanctification on faith, by which the sinful nature is eradicated (p. 332).

These developments caused the leading theologian of the movement, Theodore Jellinghaus, to break with the excesses and produce a book entitled *Avowals about My Doctrinal Errors* (1912). Many people apparently followed Jellinghaus' cry "Back to the Reformation."

The last article of *Perfectionism—I*, is a detailed study of the teaching of Jellinghaus. It parallels the one just reviewed, but brings under scrutiny the influential book of Jellinghaus, which was written out of the inspiration received at the Smith-Oxford Conference of 1874.

Jellinghaus was a Lutheran, but his doctrine had become "mediating" under the influence of C. F. K. von Hofmann, who had taken away from him the central doctrine of the penal satisfaction of Christ (p. 349). His mystical doctrine of redemption combined with Smith's teaching of sanctification by faith alone. (p. 350).

The net result of Warfield's detailed review of Jellinghaus is to show the instability of attempting to separate justification from sanctification, instead of linking them together: one salvation received by faith from the one Savior; justification by faith, and through justification, sanctification.

The 1,000 pages of Warfield's *Studies in Perfectionism* are rewarding reading, and a must for understanding the modern charismatic movement. Along with it should be read *Counterfeit Miracles*. I should say that both of these works lie in the area of a Theology of the Holy Spirit, and give massive support to the Reformation viewpoint. Both of these works lie near the end of Warfield's life: *Counterfeit Miracles* appeared in 1918; and the articles now found in *Studies in Perfectionism* appeared at the very end: some in fact were published after his death. These massive productions of the last decade of the great theologian's life bear out in a broad way the schematic suggestion of our first study. The major emphasis of Warfield's thought may be traced by decades: 1880-90 emphasized Biblical foundations; 1890-1900 brought the clash with McGiffert over Christian origins; 1900-1910 was Christological; 1910-1920 logically was concerned with the application of redemption and the theology of the Holy Spirit. No doubt Warfield held the whole grand

system from the beginning. It was only as the advance of rationalistic liberalism successively attacked first the Scriptures and then Christ and the salvation accomplished by Him, that Warfield responded with his masterly analyses. The *Studies in Perfectionism* must stand as a model of immensely thorough and learned defense of the Biblical doctrine of the Christian life. The very thoroughness of Warfield's analysis speaks of the importance of the subject and his deep concern for a sound doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

There is now available a bibliography of Warfield's published works by John E. Meeter and Roger Nicole: *A Bibliography of Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield 1851-1921*, issued by the Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. Much more material is now available and better perspective of Warfield's breadth of learning is now possible. One can hope that in due time an adequate biography will be written.

—Wilber B. Wallis

RECOMMENDATIONS

It was moved that Synod receive the reports and make them available for study to the presbyteries and sessions and to continue the committee to revise the report for the 154th General Synod.

ACTION

An amendment was passed that the report be placed early in next year's docket. A further amendment that Synod instruct the presbyteries to report their findings back to the committee by January, 1976. The main motion as amended carried.

BILLS AND OVERTURES

Mr. Harold C. Harris reported again.

OVERTURE I—Position on “Charismatic Renewal”

This is to notify you that the Florida Presbytery in action taken at its March 7-8th meeting held at Calvary Presbyterian Church in Tampa, Florida voted to send to the 153rd General Synod, RPCES the following overture:

WHEREAS the Bible is the only infallible source and rule of the church's doctrine and deportment (everything contrary to the scriptures being rejected by Bible-believing Christians);

AND WHEREAS we believe that the doctrinal distinctives as historically held by those who confess the Reformed Faith are essential for fellowship, cooperation and cohesion between local churches and denominations, constituting the minimum of doctrinal unity vital for fellowship and service;

AND WHEREAS the movement known as the “charismatic renewal” is based on a totally unscriptural interpretation of the ministry and “filling” of