

# Straight Talk

The knives are out again! No sooner does the Spirit of God move in refreshing across the church than the enemy begins marshalling his forces, already well entrenched in Christian circles, to oppose what God is doing. The best weapon in the hands of the Devil is the godly man deceived. The dilemma is, when faced with 'godly' people on both sides, how to determine which is deceived.

Today one side rejoices in the 'breath of freshness', 'laughing', 'drunkenness', 'falling under the power of God', 'deliverance', 'healing and salvation', whilst the opposing side cry out 'voodoo spirit', 'hysteria', 'flesh', 'without biblical basis', 'demonic'. Both sides are describing the same events, both sides are led by born-again, Spirit-indwelt Christians!

Meanwhile, of course, hell has a party. Mischievous spirits are congratulated and special awards for service are handed out in the courts of darkness. Applauding demons scream out excitedly; 'The Christians are fighting each other, wow!' They know this will delay the day of Christ's coming and their final end.

There is a better way for Christian leaders to resolve disagreement. Surely Jesus was wiser than us in commanding that disagreements be settled inside the framework of the Christian church rather than circulated as wild accusations in private papers and public magazines, or given out as press releases? (Matthew 18:15-17).



Although those at the forefront of the Spirit's move may well have aspects to reconsider and adjustments to make, those violently opposed to what is happening, by making grave accusations and personal attacks, show themselves to be grossly immature. Their attitude and childish behaviour grieves the Spirit, mars the Christian testimony and perpetuates the evils of division in Christ's body.

## WHERE DO WE STAND?

\* We believe that what is variously described as 'the Toronto Blessing' (in our view an unhelpful misnomer), or 'times of refreshing' together with what is taking place in meetings conducted by Rodney Howard-Browne and an increasing number of men of similar ilk, is a genuine move of the Spirit of God.

\* We acknowledge that in many meetings there are manifestations that can only be described as 'the flesh' or

'demonic', and that at times the leadership has not shown itself mature enough to know what to do in such circumstances. Nevertheless, any reading of the gospels will show you that Jesus and his disciples faced similar dilemmas. Jesus proved at all times capable, but the disciples often did not.

Big-shot theologians and big-headed prophets who think they have the answer to everything must learn that, if they pray for God to move by the Spirit, they must be prepared for manifestations that will highlight their weaknesses and limitations and demonstrate their need to be cast heavily on Christ.

\* We believe that if in such instances we take this position, the Spirit will increase our faith, train us to rely on Christ and prove that his strength is still perfected in our weakness and his grace still 'sufficient in all things'.

\* We do not want the regular, tidy and orderly manifestation of the flesh that sits every week in pews where no-one is in danger of being disturbed because nothing outside the ordinary ever happens.

\* Our prayer is, 'God, rend the heavens, let the mountains bow down at your presence'. We won't be angry at the shifts in the landscape and the untidy scattering of rocks as you come.

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