

## Articles and Sermons :: Uproar in the church Derek Prince (Holy laughter) part 3

**Uproar in the church Derek Prince (Holy laughter) part 3 - posted by brothagary, on: 2023/1/24 20:48**

cleansing and exhilarating

at times accompanied by miracles

of physical healing or of deliverance

The fruit we should look for

I have been emphasising the principle that a tree is known by its fruit.™ Logically, therefore, in evaluating the current move in the church, we should ask: If this move is from God, what kind of fruit should we look for? In reply, I would suggest five main kinds of fruit that would authenticate the present move.

### 1. The fruit of repentance

All through the New Testament the first thing that God demanded was not faith, but repentance. John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus by calling for repentance (Matthew 3:2). When the religious people came to him for baptism, he demanded that they first produce in their lives the fruits of repentance (Matthew 3:7-8).

The first word that Jesus preached was, Repent™ (Mark 1:15). He told the multitudes, Unless you repent, you will perish™ (Luke 13:3-5). After his resurrection he told his disciples that repentance, first, and then forgiveness of sins should be preached to all nations (Luke 24:17).

On the day of Pentecost the first demand that Peter made of the convicted but unconverted multitude was Repent then be baptised (Acts 2:38).

Speaking to the people of Athens, Paul said, God now commands everyone everywhere to repent™ (Acts 17:30). Throughout his ministry he required, first repentance toward God, then faith toward Christ (Acts 20:21).

True repentance is not an emotion, but a decision of the will a decision to turn away from all sin and unrighteousness and to submit unreservedly to the Lordship of Jesus.

Repentance is the first of the six foundational doctrines listed in Hebrews 6:1-2. Those who have not truly repented can never have a solid foundation for their lives as Christians. Over the years I have counselled hundreds of Christians with various problems in their lives. As a result, I have concluded that at least 50 per cent of the problems in the lives of Christians are due to one simple fact: they have never truly repented.

I believe that a renewed emphasis on repentance is the most urgent need of the contemporary church in the West. To be effective, any move in the church must deal with this issue.

### 2. Respect for Scripture

A second decisive factor in our lives as Christians is our attitude to Scripture. Jesus called the Scripture the word of God™ and he set his personal seal upon it by five simple words: the Scripture cannot be broken™ (John 10:35). No amount of higher criticism™ can set aside the plain meaning of these words. If we believe in Jesus then we believe in the Bible. If we do not believe in the Bible, then we do not believe in Jesus.

In Isaiah 66:2 the Lord says: This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word™ (NIV). God here combines repentance a humble and contrite spirit with faith in his word.

Why should we tremble at God's word? First, because it is the way that God the Father and God the Son come to us

s and make their home with us (John 14:23). Second, because God's word will one day be our judge (John 12:48).

From creation onwards, God has worked through two main agents: his word and his Spirit. First, the Spirit of God moved ; then God's word went forth (Genesis 1:2-3). The result was creation.

Ever since then the Spirit and the word have always worked together in harmony. Anything that the Spirit does harmonises with what the word says. Furthermore, all Scripture is inspired by his Holy Spirit and he never contradicts himself (2 Timothy 3:16).

This means that every kind of spiritual manifestation must be tested by this standard: Is it in harmony with Scripture? If so, we can receive it. If not, we must reject it.

### 3 Exaltation of Jesus

In John 16:13-14 Jesus promised his disciples, "When he, the Spirit of truth has come, he will guide you into all truth. He will glorify me."

Jesus here reveals two important facts about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. First of all, his supreme function is to glorify Jesus. This provides an authoritative test of any spiritual manifestation. Does it focus our attention on Jesus? Does it exalt Jesus?

As soon as human personalities are allowed to take the centre of the stage, the Holy Spirit begins to withdraw. The exaltation of human personalities has many times quenched what was originally a genuine move of the Holy Spirit.

Then we need to notice that Jesus is careful to emphasise that the Holy Spirit is not an "it" but a "He". When people begin to explain spiritual experience in terms of getting "it", it can easily happen that they get the wrong "it".

Jesus is a person and the Holy Spirit is a person. The Holy Spirit, as a person, draws believers together around the person of Jesus. When we make a doctrine or an experience the focus of our gathering, we are spiritually "off centre".

### 4. Love for our fellow Christians

In John 13:35 Jesus told his followers, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." In 1 Timothy 1:5 Paul said, "The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith" (NASB). Any form of religious activity that does not produce this result, he dismissed as "fruitless discussion".

In 1 Corinthians 13:2 Paul applied this test to himself: If I have all the spiritual gifts of power and revelation, but have not love, I am nothing.

Before we apply this test to others, we need to do the same as Paul and apply it to ourselves. We each need to ask: Has my faith made me a loving person?

Then "and only then" can we apply this test to the present move in the church. Is it producing Christians who since rely love one another "regardless of denominational labels"? Will it cause the unbelievers to say of these people what the world said of the early church: "See how these Christians love one another?"

### 5. Loving concern for the unreached

In John 4:35 Jesus told his disciples, "Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are white already for harvest." If those words were true even in the time of Jesus, they are certainly more true today. I have been privileged to travel and minister in many nations and I have formed one firm conclusion: We are living in the harvest hour!

Yet, alas, many Christians, who could be working in the harvest fields of the world, are caught in a snare of materialistic self-centredness. I believe that any genuine move of the Holy Spirit will result in multitudes of new labourers being thrust forth into the world's harvest fields. Otherwise it does not truly reflect the heart of God.

If a significant number of Christians in the current move successfully pass all, or most, of the five tests outlined above, then it is safe to conclude that this is, essentially, a move of God. This does not mean that everyone or everything in it is faultless. God has no faultless people to work with.

It is amazing what he can do with weak and fallible people who are truly surrendered to Him.

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