Historical Evidence for Continuation of the Charismata: Fifth Century Onward

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Abstract: In a previous article, evidence from the church fathers, spanning from the end of the "apostolic age" through to the fourth century, showed the strong evidence of the continuation of the *charismata* in the Church, with the most visible spiritual gifts being prophecy and healing. This present article will argue, through evidence of theologians of the Church from the fifth century onwards that the gifts of the Spirit, while apparently diminishing in use, remained available to the Body of Christ. The modern Pentecostal movement is not a "new" movement but a revival of what the Church was meant to experience throughout its existence.

Keywords: Cessationism, continuationism, *charismata*, church fathers, Pauline theology

Ante-Nicene Fathers and continuationism. The argument advanced by some cessationists, that the gifts of the Spirit were given only for the establishment of the Church and disappeared at the end of the "apostolic" age does not agree with the evidence from church history. Hendrik Stander argues none of the ante-Nicene fathers nor the historian Eusebius ever presented that argument. For the most part, they exhorted those "among the worthy" to expect divine distribution of the gifts.[1] Nevertheless, as the Church became more institutionalized, "expectation of

[1] Hendrik F. Stander, "Miraculous Charisms in Eusebius' Time", *Paraclete* 21.4 (Fall 1987), 12.

the Spirit's coming and the imparting of spiritual gifts was ritualized (sic) and eventually lost."[2]

The witnesses to the presence of spiritual gifts into the fourth century are several; sometimes the references are clear, other times the language is perhaps slightly esoteric. Nevertheless the evidence is present; fathers such as Irenaeus, Origen, Athanasius, Novatian, Basil, and Gregory Nazianzus all wrote of either the operation of the gifts in the Church or of their own personal encounters. In this paper the focused task will be to examine evidence from the fifth century onward, the goal being a demonstration of the continuation of the *charismata* through the life of the Church, not the cessation of them at the "close" of the apostolic age.

Fifth century witnesses. The evidence for continuation of the *charismata* in the fifth century is less direct statement and more testimony of what someone else experienced or how someone was used in manifesting one of the gifts (usually healing).

John Chrysostom (347-407), bishop of Constantinople (398-407), wrote that during the reign of the Emperor Julian the Apostate, many believers experienced physical healing from disease.[3] However, in his "Homily XXIX" on 1 Corinthians 12:1-2, it appears he thinks the *charismata* have ceased.

> This whole place is very obscure; but the obscurity is produced by our ignorance of the facts referred to and by their cessation, being such as then use to occur but now no longer take place. And why do they not happen now? Why look now, the cause of their obscurity hath produced in us another question:

[2] Nigel Scotland, "Signs and Wonders in the Early Catholic Church 90-451 and Their Implications for the Twenty-First Century", *European Journal of Theology* 10.2 (2001).

[3] Scotland, "Signs and Wonders in the Early Catholic Church", 161.

> namely, why did they then happen, and now do so no more?[4]

Andrew Floris suggests the meaning Chrysostom intended was the spiritual gifts, and especially glossolalia, "were not manifested in every believer at the time of baptism as it was in apostolic times."[5] In another homily on 1 Corinthians, he asserts the Church has only the "symbols" of spiritual gifts, not the actual gifts, since the Church in his day, he believed, was like a "woman who hath fallen from her former prosperous days, and in many respects retains the symbols only of that ancient prosperity…."[6] It is probable John is not directly advocating a true cessationism of spiritual gifts in the Church, but a disappearance owing to the Church not using what the Spirit provides.

Floris points out Chrysostom argued some miracles had ceased in the Church; those manifestations of power which Christ and some of the apostles manifested for the express purpose of validating Christ's deity and His identity as Messiah. Chrysostom's point is not a rigid cessationism but an exhortation against waiting for "signs and wonders to believe."[7]

Augustine of Hippo. Referred to as "the undisputed theologian of the West",[8] Augustine (354-430) served as bishop of Hippo beginning in 395. His early life was a spiritually searching journey through several pagan philosophies until though the prayers of his Christian mother, Monnica,[9] and the influence of the church father Ambrose (c. 339 – c. 397), plus material on

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[4] John Chrysostom, "Homily XXIX on 1 Corinthians", in Philip Schaff, ed., *Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers* (First Series) (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), XII:168. Hereafter references from this series will be designated as *NPNF* (1).

[5] Andrew T. Floris, "Chrysostom and the Charismata", *Paraclete* 5.1 (Winter 1971), 18.

[6] Chrysostom, "Homily XXXVI on 1 Corinthians", *NPNF* (1), XII:219.

[7] Floris, "Chrysostom and the Charismata", 20.

[8] Scotland, "Signs and Wonders in the Early Catholic Church", 161.

[9] Or, "Monica".

the life of St. Anthony and his own examination of the epistles of Paul, Augustine confessed Christ in 386. Upon his baptism the following year by Ambrose, Augustine left his very lucrative position as a teacher of rhetoric to give all he had to the ministry.[10]

In his magisterial work, *Confessions*, he weaves 1 Corinthians 12:4-10 into his narrative as necessary enablements to speak unto spiritual people.[11] In a lesser-known work, "On Care to Be Had for the Dead", Augustine addresses the state of the martyrs, and in the course, refers again to 1 Corinthians 12, presenting the *charismata* as realities in the Church at that time. He follows with a brief account of the *charismata* enabling the giving of guidance to the Roman emperor.

> Such, we may believe, was that John the Monk, whom the elder Theodosius, the emperor, consulted concerning the issue of the civil war; seeing he had also the gift of prophecy.[12]

In "Of Holy Virginity", he refers to Paul's guidance, "But emulate ye the better gifts" (1 Corinthians 12:31), then notes, "we are to understand they are more in number…."[13]

There is a passage in *Retractions* where Augustine very plainly wrote of the continuation of healing in his time.

> It is indeed true, that the sick are not always healed…. But what I said should not be taken as understanding no miracles are believed to happen today in the name of Christ. For at the very time I wrote…a blind man in (the) city (of Milan) was given back his sight, and so many other things of this kind have happened, even in

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[10] Philip Schaff, "St. Augustin's Life and Work', *Schaff's Church History (Revised Edition*) in *NPNF* (1), 3-5.

[11] Augustine, *Confessions* XVIII, *NPNF* (1), I:197.

[12] Augustine, "On Care to be Had for the Dead", *NPNF* (1), III:549.

[13] Augustine, "Of Holy Virginity", *NPNF* (1), III:434.

> this present time, that it is not possible to know all of them or to count up all those we do have knowledge of.[14]

Augustine's greatest work, *The City of God*, tells of his choice to begin recording instances of miracles; he says he had, at that point, information on over seventy confirmed miracles.[15]

Sulpitius (Sulpicius) Severus. A contemporary of both Jerome and Augustine, Severus (363-420) was described by the latter as "a man excelling in learning and wisdom."[16] His hagiography on Martin of Tours was written towards the end of the fourth century, and was received well in most of Christendom, but had problems being recognized in Gaul.[17] His abilities as historian and writer are preserved best in his fusion of Biblical history and ordinary history, "Chronica", even though he chose to omit the Gospel accounts of Christ and the apostles, claiming those subjects were "too great to be treated."[18]

Severus is described as Martins "disciple",[19] which would explain the focused and intense defense of the alleged miracles. Harper contends Severus' treatment of Martin's miracle-working power was more an ode to the man's virtue, which was of such a high level that it is not "an example of conduct of other men". Some of the mystique surrounding Martin seems to be

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[14] Augustine, "Retractions", as cited in Scotland, "Signs and Wonders in the Early Catholic Church", 161.

[15] Augustine, *The City of God*, in *NPNF* (1), II:484-485.

[16] Alexander Roberts, "Life and Writings of Sulpitius Severus", in Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Second Series) (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), XI:1. Hereafter this series will be referred to in footnotes as *NPNF* (2).

[17] James Harper, "John Cassian and Sulpicius Severus", *Church History* 34.4 (December 1965), 375. We include Severus as a fifth century witness owing to the long-standing influence of his work on Martin, which carried into the fifth century.

[18] C. F. A. Borchardt, "Sulpicius Severus' Dependency on Hilary of Poitiers in His *Chronica*", *Acta Patristica et Byzantina* 5.1 (1994), 12.

[19] A. S. Hoch, "St. Martin of Tours: His Transformation into a Chivalric Hero and Franciscan Ideal", *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte* 50.4 (1987), 472.

"magic"; some of the miracles seem to be trivial, some apparently reversed decisions made by Jesus Christ.[20] Martin's first apparent miracle affected was the raising to life of a catechumen who, having died without being baptized, was consigned to "gloomy regions and vulgar crowds" by the Judge,[21] but through Martin's intercession, was removed from judgment and restored to life.[22]

Other miracles Severus attributes to Martin included:

- Restoring to life a slave who had committed suicide by hanging;[23]
- Stopping a heathen funeral procession from proceeding (unable to walk or move);[24]
- Curing all who came to him:

Moreover, the gift of accomplishing cures[25] was so largely possessed by Martin that scarcely any sick person came to him for assistance without at once being restored to health.[26]

- Casting out demons;[27]

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[20] Harper, "John Cassian", 376.

[21] Presumably Severus means Jesus, perhaps based on such as Matthew 25:31-32. It is difficult to determine, however, what Severus' precise meaning might be, since believers will appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10) while the unredeemed lost will find themselves at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:12-15). If we factor in Romans 8:1, then it becomes even more difficult to understand how a catechumen, having become born-again, would at death, even without water baptism, be condemned to something other than the presence of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:1-8).

[22] Sulpitius Severus, "Life of St. Martin (7)", *NPNF* (1), XI:8.

[23] Severus, "Life of St. Martin (8)", *NPNF* (1), XI:8.

[24] Severus, "Life of St. Martin (12)", *NPNF* (1), XI:9-10.

[25] We understand this to be "gifts of healing" (1 Corinthians 12:9).

[26] Severus, "Life of St. Martin (16)", *NPNF* (1), XI:11-12

[27] Severus, "Life of St. Martin (17)", *NPNF* (1), XI:12.

- Cleansing a leper;[28]
- Healing of a fever through a touch by a letter Martin had written.[29]

In his *Dialogues*, Severus wrote of Martin being used to heal a boy bitten by a snake,[30] and in the exorcism of demons.[31]

Hilary (315-367), bishop of Poitiers (in present day France), and a passionate defender of Trinitarian doctrine against Arian influences,[32] rejected Severus' defense and laudation of Martin and the alleged miracles.[33] Some opposition had arisen against Martin before his death, and was increased afterwards; it was not until after 460 that Martin was "rehabilitated" at his former diocese in Tours.[34] But as to all the manifestations of the *charismata* in Martin's life, especially that of divine healing, the truth of the accounts has come into question.

> We may often feel that (Severus) is over-credulous in his acceptance of the miraculous; and we may lament his narrowness in clinging to mere ecclesiastical formulae (sic); but we are always impressed with the genuineness of his convictions, and with his fervent desire to bring what he believed to be truth under the attention of his readers.[35]

Other than Hilary's view of Martin's ministry, it appears what Severus' wrote had usually broad acceptance. The distance between the occurrence of the miracles and today makes it

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[28] Severus, "Life of St. Martin (18)", *NPNF* (1), XI:12.

[29] Severus, "Life of St. Martin (19)", *NPNF* (1), XI:13.

[30] Severus, "Dialogues I", *NPNF* (1), XI:38.

[31] Severus, "Dialogues 6", *NPNF* (1), XI:48.

[32] John McClintock and James Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, repr, 1981), IV:252-253.

[33] Harper, "John Cassian", 377.

[34] Harper, "John Cassian", 378.

[35] Roberts, "Life and Writings", *NPNF* (1), XI:1.

difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain whether Martin was so used in charismatic ministry. That said, that difficulty is is in tension with Severus' ardent defense of the the miraculous in Martin's ministry, a narrative which would have occasioned much wider criticism and denunciation had the *charismata* actually ceased around the close of the apostolic age.

John Cassian. A noted figure in early Christian asceticism,[36] Cassian (360-c. 432/435) was educated well at an early age but eventually chose the monastic life with his friend Gennadius by entering a monastery in Bethlehem.[37] Theologically, Cassian stood firmly against Pelagianism, [38] but also opposed Augustine's view on grace; for Cassian, grace "surely assists the man who has begun to will his salvation, but does not implant that will", since what Augustine taught did not do "justice" to God's desire that all people be saved.[39]

Cassian's references to the *charismata* are found in his record of a second conference with Abbot Nesteros, "On Divine Gifts". In Chapter III, Cassian tells of a time when the Abbot Macarios raised a dead man back to life;[40] in Chapter IV is the account of Abbot Abraham the Simple working a miracle of healing for a

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[36] See Niki Kasumi Clements, *Sites of the Ascetic Self: John Cassian and Christian Ethical Formation* (Notre Dame: IN: University of Notre Dame Press. 2020) for a detailed discussion of Cassian's asceticism and his influence on others in the Church. Cassian felt that true purity of heart came from having "quashed and expelled" the passions of the heart from the soul, and that life was a continual fight of the spirit against the flesh (Owen Chadwick, *John Cassian: A Study in Primitive Monasticism* [Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1950], 107).

[37] Edgar C. S. Gibson, "Prolegomena", *NPNF* (2), XI:184.

[38] Pelagianism, named after the British monk, Pelagius, held to a denial of the doctrine of original sin, that grace is divinely supplied to all to enable a choice of the good, and insisted on the human will being both good and free. A consequence of this teaching is man does not need a Savior but simply a good moral example to follow. See Harold O. J. Brown, *Heresies: Heresy and Orthodoxy in the History of the Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 200-202.

[39] J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2003), 370-371.

[40] John Cassian, "Cassian's Conferences", *NPNF* (2), XI:446.

nursing mother whose breast milk supply had dried up;[41] the following chapter relates how the same abbot healed a man of a crippled leg, the condition which had caused the man to crawl for many years.[42]

Though it is evident Cassian was sympathetic to spiritual gifts and acknowledged their existence in his time, true to his ascetic thinking, he felt humility and "uprightness of life" were far superior to the gifts.[43] Cassian believed obedience to the teaching of the Scripture was "paramount over every virtue", and that monks must respect the decisions of their elders "as though they were the commandments of God himself."[44]

Diminishing Emphasis in the Sixth Century And Beyond. With the decline of the Roman Empire, hastened by the military conquests of the Vandals and of the Visigoths, who conquered Rome in 410, the attention of the fathers turned to certain pressing doctrinal issues which all but passed by teaching on the *charismata.* As the various invaders swept through the old Empire, two challenges (both thought long gone) arose which necessitated direct and firm attention. One challenge was paganism.[45] The other was Arianism.[46] The Church, anxious to

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[41] Cassian, "Conferences", *NPNF* (2), XI:447.

[42] Cassian, "Conferences", *NPNF* (2), XI:447.

[43] Cassian, "Conferences", *NPNF* (2), XI:449.

[44] Chadwick, *John Cassian*, 55.

[45] Paganism is also called "heathenism", denoting any non-Christian religions. Some of these religious expressions include ancestor worship, polytheism and animism. At the birth of Christianity, paganism included the worship of the mythic deities of either the Roman or the Greek pantheon, supposed beings who were essentially not much different in attitude and actions than humans. Philosophers of the day tended to downgrade the worship of the "gods" in favor of rationalism and a form of deism, which recognized a single supreme being who had removed himself from any actual interaction with humanity. See McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia*, VII:527-529.

[46] Arianism, named after its creator. Arius (d. 336), who had been a presbyter but through the influence of Lucien of Antioch, adopted a Christology which was quite different than the generally orthodox positions held throughout the fathers and the Church at large. Simply put, Arius "denied

defend what was considered "orthodox" and "catholic" doctrine, turned its doctrinal attention to other issues, such as the nature of Christ, the working of monasticism, and the operation of the papacy,[47] to name a few. The so-called "ecumenical" councils prior to the sixth century do not appear to concern themselves at all with the *charismata*. One of the major issues facing the Church was the identity of the Son of God; several heresies had arisen in an attempt to somehow "protect" monotheism. This subject was debated at the Council of Nice (325), with a focus on the word *homoousios*, indicating the Son was of one substance with the Father. Irenaeus (130-202), bishop in southern France, had employed the word in his writings, and it was the decision of the assembled bishops to adopt the word so that the Son would be understood as the same nature and substance as the Father but a separate Person – which countered Arianism.[48] The Council at Constantinople (553) produced a series of "anathemas" centered around the identity of the Word of God. For example, the tenth such anathema reads:

> If anyone does not confess that our Lord Jesus Christ who was crucified in flesh is true God and Lord of glory and one of the Holy Trinity, let him be anathema.[49]

It should come as no surprise that with the rise of several heresies advocating for an unbiblical Christology, plus the need

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that the Son is eternally begotten, that he was the first begotten of God, not fully deity, and subordinate in status to the Father. See Brown, *Heresies*, 104-107. Arianism differs with orthodox soteriology (a dispute which led to the framing of the Nicene Creed) in that for Arius, the person of Christ is "bound" to the creatures, while in orthodoxy, the Son is "bound" to the Father. See Robert C. Gregg and Dennis E. Groh, "The Centrality of Soteriology in Early Arianism", *Anglican Theological Review* 59.3 (n.d.), 260-278, here 262.

[47] Justo L. González. *History of Christianity* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999), I:237-238.

[48] Henry R. Percival, "Excursus on the Word *Homousios*", *NPNF* (2), XIV:3.

[49] Edward R. Hardy, ed. *Christology of the Later Fathers* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1954), 381.

to counter the pagan influence infiltrating the remnants of the Empire, that *charismata* issues and testimonies fell into virtual oblivion in favor of the greater doctrinal concerns. James Ash has argued the gift of prophecy tended to be considered the privilege of the bishops as early as 100 A.D., not getting a reconsideration until the Montanists arose, asking, "Where are the prophets?" [50] But after the third century, with the "establishment" growing in the Church, and with the tendency of the prophet to speak against abuses often found in the central organizations, the "Church subordinated the creative but troublesome elements of spontaneity and ecstasy to the monolithic vision of stability, uniformity and human responsibility."[51]

However, in the sixth century, one significant figure in the Church gave witness to miracles, the *charismata*, still active in parts of Christendom.

Gregory the Great. The first monk to be named as pope, Gregory I (c. 540-640), is considered to be one of the "ablest" men ever to occupy the papacy.[52] In his writings are references to the *charismata*, although they are his retelling of events communicated to him.

Gregory tells of a monk, Nonnosus, who desired to plant a garden but the only place close to the monastery suitable for such a project was covered by a large rock, so big even a huge team of oxen would be unable to move it. Nonnosus committed the issue to prayer one night, and on the next morning, the rock was gone.[53]

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[50] James L. Ash, Jr. "The Decline of Ecstatic Prophecy in the Early Church". *Theological Studies* 37.2 (May, 1976). 236.

[51] Ash, Jr. "Decline", 249.

[52] González, *History*, I:244.

[53] Gregory the Great, "Dialogues (1.7), in Odo John Zimmerman, trans.. *Saint Gregory the Great: Dialogues* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University Press, 1959), 29.

Gregory's "Epistle XXX", addressed to Eulogius, Bishop of Alexandria, refers to a letter sent to Gregory by a bishop in Germany, who reported that the signs and wonders similar to those of the apostles had been manifesting through the bishops in that area.[54]

In the seventh century, a strong witness to the continuation of the *charismata* came from a British monk.

The Venerable Bede. Born near Wearmouth, Bede (673-735) entered the monastery of St. Paul at Jarrow, remaining there for the rest of his life. Ordained a deacon at the very young age of 19 and a priest at 30, he spent his time combing through the church fathers, writing and commenting on how the fathers understood and interpreted the Word of God.[55]

Scholars have examined Bede's work carefully; despite his careful scholarship and "peer review" by the monks at Lindisfarne, which would exonerate Bede of "carelessness or undue credulity." Some of the miracles are probably plagiarisms of events found in the Gospels, some are "pious forgeries", others are perhaps imaginative. Yet, when the criticisms have had their narrowing effect

> …there remains an indissoluble core that cannot be explained by any known natural means, and attributable solely to the supernatural power of God displayed in and through His saints.[56]

Bede relates the account of Bishop John of Beverely, who healed a young man who had no ability to speak, whose body was covered with sores, and was crippled. The young man

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[54] Gregory the Great, "Epistle XXX", *NPNF* (2), XII:240.

[55] David Allen, "Signs and Wonders in Bede's *History*", *Paraclete* 24.4 (Fall 1990), 28.

[56] Leo Sherley-Price, "Introduction" in Bede, *A History of the English Church and People* (trans. Leo Sherley-Price; rev. R. E. Latham) (New York, NY and Middlesex, U. K.: Penguin, 1978), 30.

"obtained a clear complexion, readiness of speech, and a beautiful head of hair" instead of being "deformed, destitute and dumb."[57]

Bede's careful record of miracles, such as of healing, exorcism, and even a raising from the dead were not recorded for some spectacular purpose. Paganism was rampant in Bede's day, and his history, including the various miracles, served the same purpose as in the days of the original apostles – "vindicating and authenticating the gospel in its early years" – which then served as a "light" shining in the "dark world of paganism", showing the "True Light", Jesus, had come.[58]

> Bede's great *History of the English Church and People* deserves our attention as a valuable source of evidence for the continuation of signs and wonders in a period which was once spoken of as the Dark Ages.[59]

Symeon the New Theologian. Hailed as the "greatest mystic of the Orthodox Church", Symeon (949-1022) was a man of holiness, wisdom, judgment and perception. His tireless efforts as an abbot sought to "implant in the hearts of his hearers a spirituality wholly pneumatic and charismatic."[60]

Symeon's life, as chronicled by his biographer, Nicetas Stethatos, evidenced several miracles and charismatic gifts. One scholar expressed skepticism over the veracity of those accounts, given that the road to canonization required a life of miracle working; Stethatos provided examples of miracles while Symeon was alive and even some post-mortem.[61] Stethatos'

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[57] Bede, *History* (Book 5, Ch. 2), 272.

[58] Allen, "Signs and Wonders", 29.

[59] Allen, "Signs and Wonders", 30.

[60] Andrew T. Floris, "Primacy of the Spiritual", *Paraclete* 6.3 (Summer 1972), 27.

[61] Hannah Hunt, *A Guide to St. Symeon the New Theologian* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015), 102-103.

hagiography could be viewed as suspect in its accuracy or its veracity, as it would seek to elevate Symeon's consideration for sainthood. It has been argued, based on the man's words in his catechismal writings, that any believer who surrenders completely to God and live in humility, in love and in perpetual contrition" will manifest the charismata of the Spirit.[62]

> Symeon's aspiration was to see the power of God manifest in every professing Christian. God was the same for him as He was at the time of the apostles and the saints of old. The charismata of the Holy Spirit were not a reminiscence of the past for Symeon. They were a present and living reality. What was needed was faith and a dedicated and submissive life. Then the energies of the Holy Spirit would be manifested, the Church would be revitalized and the world influenced.[63]

The Church in the Middle Ages. As the central power of the Church increased through the rising power of the Roman pontiff, the Scriptures, once available to all in Greek and later in Latin, were forbidden to all but clergy by the Synod of Toulouse (1229) and the Synod of Tarragona (1234). Discussions of Scripture, instead of considering the text at face value, tended to be affected by the promotion of the Crusades, emphasis on suffering as Christ suffered, and a strong focus on Christ's sacred humanity.[64] The Church, beginning in the seventh century, also faced the onslaught of Islam, losing significant territory and influence. With the full collapse of the Roman empire, pagan forces destroyed churches and Christian communities; the communities were regained over time through

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[62] Floris, "Primacy", 29.

[63] Floris, "Primacy", 31.

[64] Jordan Aumann, *Christian Spirituality in the Catholic Tradition* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1994), 95.

battles and bloodshed.[65] The Church had become less fluid, more "crystallized"; conversion came in large groups (i.e., whole cities or tribes) instead of individual salvations.[66]

Issues in the Church were often paired with struggles for power by various secular factions over the Church. Pagan influence continued to taint the "faith once delivered to the saints". For example, in Saxony, if one memorized the (Apostle's) Creed and the Lord's Prayer in a foreign language, they could be used as a magical formula thought to effect miracles.[67] As the Church morphed into a more formalized, structured organization, with the 14th century came the rise of mystics, who were people desiring a personal, direct contact with God, as opposed to the Scholasticism-driven emphasis of reason as superior to man's emotions and feelings.[68]

That said, church history demonstrates the *charismata* continued into the twelfth century.

Abbot Joachim of Fiore. Joachim (1135-1202) had gained a reputation as a prophet by 1184, although he is best known for his thinking on the nature of the Trinity. He was critical of the abuses in the Catholic Church of his day; his desire was for the soon return of Christ (he evidently thought it would happen in his lifetime) and for the Church to return to moving and living in the power of the Holy Spirit. Of him it has been said he "speaks to every age concerning the need for a church on the move in the power of the Spirit and radiant with a burning and visible love of God and man."[69]

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[65] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity: The Thousand Years of Uncertainty* (Grand Rapids, MI Zondervan, 1974), II:286.

[66] Latourette, *History,* II:410.

[67] Latourette, *History*, II:413.

[68] Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1967), 242.

[69] David Allen, "Abbot Joachim of Fiore", *Paraclete* 23.3 (Summer 1989), 29-32, here p. 32.

In the thirteenth century one of the great theological minds of that day, Thomas Aquinas, developed and taught a distinctive theology of the gifts of the Spirit.

Thomas Aquinas. For Aquinas (1225-1274), the operation of the Spirit followed much the same thinking as the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:14f, where the interaction of the Spirit with the human existence brought "hope for the human condition to be lifted up by the Spirit to new levels of love, liberty and holiness."[70] Aquinas' theology had influence from Aristotlelian philosophy,[71] moving him away from the logic and reason of Platonism,[72] which had had a significant influence on the Church, and into a more defined "sense perception".[73] Aquinas believed the gifts of the Spirit "render man capable of being more existentially responsive to the exigencies of his new life", that is, the life that by the Spirit is "inclined to God."[74] And while Aquinas did not view himself as a philosopher but as a theologian, it has been said it is difficult, although not impossible, to separate his theology and his philosophy, or at least identify when philosophy is a strong current in his theology.[75] Yet his view of the gifts of the Spirit appears to be as

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[70] Anthony J. Kelly, "The Gifts of the Spirit: Aquinas and the Modern Context", *The Thomist* 38.2 (April, 1974), 193.

[71] Aristotle used an empirical methodology in his philosophy, preferring to observe phenomena, then to reflect on the observations. His practice came to be known as inductive reasoning. See McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia*, I:397.

[72] Plato rejected the use of the senses in the pursuit of knowledge; he felt human perceptions where often in error. He advocated for the use of reasoning and mathematics; it was these methods which he felt were far more reliable than a pursuit of natural science. Plato believed rational means such as questions from a teacher to a student to draw out "innate knowledge" were the way to discovery in the world. See Gary Habermas, "Plato, Platonism" in Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984), 859-860.

[73] González, *The Story of Christianity*, II:185.

[74] Kelly, "The Gifts of the Spirit", 200.

[75] Russell Pannier and Thomas Sullivan, "Getting a Grip on the Philosophies of Thomas Aquinas: A Defense of Systematic Reconstruction", *Faith and Philosophy: Journal of the Society of Christian Philosophers* 18.1 (January 1, 2001), 54-55.

much philosophy as it does theology; he felt the gifts enable man to "respond to the instinct of the Spirit", creating an atmosphere in which man can thus be "habitually submissive to the law of a redeemed existence."[76]

Aquinas held to a slightly different "list" of the gifts of the Spirit than did Paul, although C. Peter Wagner argued the "gift lists" in the New Testament (particularly Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:8-10) are not exhaustive but rather speak of the varied ways in which the Holy Spirit is able to act within and through believers.[77] The gift of knowledge Aquinas saw a negative, bearing "on the meaning of creation judged in the light of God"; the gift of (holy) fear "is a deep poverty of spirit expressing itself in reverent sensitivity to the activity of God in a way quite compatible with a loving relationship.[78] Of all the (possible) gifts mediated by the Spirit, none was of more importance for Aquinas than the gift of wisdom;[79] he saw this gift (and every gift) as a virtue, and he classified as "intellectual virtues" wisdom, understanding and knowledge, right judgment as prudence, and gifts of the "power of appetite" (fortitude, piety and fear). Aquinas taught the gifts "perfect the free will inasmuch as it is a capacity of reason" and virtues "perfect it inasmuch as it is a capacity of the will."[80]

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[76] Kelly, "The Gifts of the Spirit", 201. We would suggest the "philosophy" is in how Aquinas reasons the connection of the Spirit to human existence, since Paul never addresses any "adapting man" but, as Romans 8 points out, the Spirit does more than "adapt", He transforms.

[77] See C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen/Baker, rev. ed. 2017), *infra.* Wagner identifies 28 spiritual gifts specifically, suggesting the list could go into the 30's or higher.

[78] Kelly, "The Gifts of the Spirit". 203. Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 289, noted that of all the divine attributes, love, poured into the believer by the Holy Spirit (cf. Romans 5:5), is the identification of "the divine essence itself."

[79] Kelly, "The Gifts of the Spirit", 203.

[80] Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt, *The Essential Summa Theologiae* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker; epub, ed. 2021), 440, accessed June 29, 2023.

While Aquinas' understanding of the gifts of the Spirit tends to concentrate more on their capacity for virtue in the believer, the fact he makes a case for the continued existence of the gifts in the Church, and actively so, indicates the *charismata* did not cease by divine fiat at the close of the times of the apostles; disuse is qualitatively different than cessation. That which is not used can be used anew; that which ceased is no longer available. All of Aquinas' thinking on this subject ultimately rested on his understanding of the Spirit as the "final Gift of God".[81]

Change in the Church. As political power changed from Imperial Rome to a variety of "city-states" and monarchies, the Church became the "church of the powerful"[82] as it allied itself with the "Holy Roman Empire". Monasteries grew in importance and in power; so did the power and influence of the papacy. With the rise of Charlemagne (800 A.D.), all of Western Christianity found itself under the authority of the Holy Roman Emperor.[83] The whole of the medieval period was not a time of great faith, as the Church, with the assistance of the State, enforced "established religion", leading to a widespread skepticism about the whole of the Christian message by twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[84] It should come as no surprise that a Church backed by the power of the State would not necessarily focus on things which lead to a deeper spiritual connection with God. Instead, the Church focused on "penitentials", a list of things for which an "offender" needed to do penance, and the rise of confession to a priest.[85] People were directed to examine whether they had somehow sinned so they could perform required penitence to receive "forgiveness" from the Church. Those who preached in Medieval England's pulpits had certain requirements impressed upon them as to subject

[81] Kelly, "The Gifts of the Spirit", 231.

[82] González, *The Story of Christianity*, I:238.

[83] González, *The Story of Christianity*, I:266-267.

[84] Latourette, *The Thousand Years of Uncertainty*, 354.

[85] Latourette, *The Thousand Years of Uncertainty,* 356.

matter (i.e., for Lent – fasting and penance), such as an obligatory sermon on the *Pater Noster* twice a year.[86] Emphasis on *charismata* simply fell into disuse. The clergy were not teaching the people about it, and the people, largely illiterate, had limited avenues to learn the Scriptures for themselves.

> The vast majority of medieval people accessed scriptural (sic) knowledge or guidance not by reading but by hearing and memorizing little parts of it. The Bible was very seldom available as a whole but most often in parts – the Pentateuch, the Psalms, the Gospels – and as far as laypeople were concerned, in memorized sound-bites in the liturgy, in chants and hymns, or in sermons, or in legal records of gifts to churches.[87]

Even for that, as shown above, expressions of the gifts of the Spirit did manifest occasionally during the Middle Ages. It was in the late 17th and early 18th centuries that a resurgence of the manifestation of the gifts occurred in France.

The Camisards and the Jansenist Convulsonaries. George Stotts' article on the appearance of the *charismata* in 17th century France argues for two possible "sources": among the Camisards[88] -- one from a 17 year old youth, Isabeau Vincent, who, in his sleep, spoke fluent French although he had learned only the local dialect, the other from a William du Serre, who "was the first to practice spiritual gifts, including glossolalia."

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[86] G. W. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England* (Cambridge: University Press, 1926), 147.

[87] Jinty Nelson and Damien Kempf, "Introduction" in Jinty Nelson and Damien Kempf, eds., *Reading the Bible in the Middle Ages* (London, U.K.: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 1.

[88] The origin of the term is debated. Jean Cavalier, the leader of the faction's guerrilla campaign against Louis XIV, believed the word came from the practice of his troops only taking two shirts with them into battle; one on their bodies, the other in their knapsack. When going through a village, they would conscript clean shirts and leave the dirty ones, since they had no time to do laundry. See W. Gregory Monahan. *Let God Arise: The War and Rebellion of the Camisards* (Oxford, U.K.: University Press. 2014), 88.

Other youth who banded together with Vincent were called "The Little Sleeping Prophets of the Cévennes" and spoke in tongues. Whether through Vincent or du Serre, evidence of the gifts of the Spirit spread rapidly through the regions dominated by the Protestant Huguenots.[89]

An "explosion of prophetic incidents" in the Cévennes in 1701 moved the Catholic authority in that area to seek legal recourse in an attempt to stop the prophetic movement. When that authority was granted, over 300 Protestant prophets and prophetesses were imprisoned, and several were (often brutally) executed.[90] The resurgence was short-lived; by 1711, owing to the casualties of war and the loss of leaders such as Cavalier, the manifestation of tongues and prophecy had all but faded, and the Catholic confessor, Le Tellier, persuaded the king to decree that any further use of tongues or prophecy would be considered heretical.[91]

The Jansenists, led by Cornelius Jansen, a professor at Louvain, whose work severely criticized the dominant Jesuits for their humanism, urging that "experience, not reason, must be the final guide for the spiritual life." Church attendance, even if done consistently, could avail for salvation, as man on his own could not live a "good life", needing the gift of God's grace leading to conversion.[92]

The Convulsionaries were a group within the Jansenists, who manifested speaking in tongues, experienced healings, and spoke prophetically. By 1733, these "charismatics" as a group

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[89] George R. Stotts, "Manifestations of the Spirit in Late 17th Century France", *Paraclete* 9:1 (Winter, 1975), 9.

[90] Monahan, *Let God Arise*, 53-54.

[91] Stotts, "Manifestations of the Spirit", 10.

[92] H. W. Walsh, "The Religious Background of New France", *Canadian Journal of Theology* 10.1 (January, 1964), 48.

had faded from view, scored as an embarrassment to the larger Jansenist movement.[93]

Zinzendorf and the Moravians. Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) was raised in a devoutly Pietist home where he never felt separated from God. He said this prevented him from speaking of a definite conversion experience.[94] Moravian refugees from across Europe found refuge in von Zinzendorf's holdings in Saxony. A community developed which they called "Herrnhut" and found worship opportunities in a nearby Lutheran parish. By 1727, several groups within Herrnhut began to meet for prayer, for times of testimony and for exhortation. On August 13 of that year, Zinzendorf experienced something which bore "a striking resemblance to the Pentecostal power and results in the days of the apostles."[95] In the midst of a congregational observance of communion, everyone there experienced "a veritable baptism of the Spirit", a transformation which showed itself in spiritual fruit which included the beginning of the "Hundred Year Prayer Meeting", where continuous praying for a full century, twenty-four hours a day, occupied the "spiritually awakened" Moravians.[96] The time before August 13 and the time following were both marked by fervent prayer which "led the way to and prepared for the baptism in the Spirit."[97] Along with the commitment to prayer was a firm position on the Bible as "the only standard and rule of both doctrine and practice", which was part of the original

[93] Stotts, "Manifestations of the Spirit", 11.

[94] González, *History*, II:208.

[95] John Greenfield, *Power from on High; or The Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Great Moravian Revival, 1727-1927* (London: World Wide Revival Prayer Movement, n.d.), 15.

[96] Edith Blumhofer, "An 18th Century Pentecost", *Paraclete* 21.4 (Fall, 1987), 3.

[97] Greenfield, *Power from On High*, 25.

movement from the mid-1500's and reemphasized after the "Moravian Pentecost".[98]

The record of Moravian missional activity after 1727 is remarkable, and perhaps finds some parallels with the experience of the early church. Jesus instructed the disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they received "power from on high" (Luke 24:49). The purpose of that power was to enable them to be witnesses in "Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). By 1760, more than 200 Moravians had gone into missionary service, reporting over 4000 conversions.[99] They had experienced the power, and their response was like that of the apostles – engage in missional ministry.

The 19th Century. From the time of the Moravians until the middle of the 1800's, little emphasis was placed on *charismata* in the Church. Two figures, however, of the nineteenth century gave ample witness to the continuation of the gifts of the Spirit.

Charles G. Finney. Although he was a choir leader at a local Presbyterian church, Finney (1792-1875), wrote that he was, at age 29, an unbeliever and indulgent in the ways of the world.[100] Upon his entry into law school, he said he was "as ignorant of religion as a heathen" having "very little regard to the Sabbath" along with "no definite knowledge of religious truth."[101] In 1821, after much reading of the Scripture, owing to a light amount of work in the law office where he was employed, he began to sense a question being asked of him in his mind: "Will you accept it now, today?", meaning the Gospel message.[102] Leaving the office, he walked into the woods to find some solitude. Through

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[98] Ian M. Randall, "A Missional Spirituality: Moravian Brethren and eighteenth-century English evangelicalism", *Transformation* 23.4 (October, 2006), 206.

[99] Randall, "A Missional Spirituality", 210.

[100] Robert Chandler Dalton, "Charles G. Finney and the Enduement of Power", *Paraclete* 8.3 (Summer, 1974), 10.

[101] Charles G. Finney, *Charles G. Finney: An Autobiography* (Albany, OR: Books for the Ages, 2001), 22.

[102] Finney, *Autobiography*, 28.

much agony of his heart and a sense that he was too (spiritually) dead for God, he became acutely aware of his sin, cried out to God, and promised that if he were ever converted, he would preach the Gospel.[103] He returned to his office, engaged in some necessary work, soon noticing the fireplace fire, which he had kindled, was nearly burned out. He was about to sit next to the fire when he claims he "received a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost."[104]

Finney's evangelistic ministry showed evidence of the gifts of the Spirit. On one occasion, when informed of a woman being near death, he interceded in prayer for her most of the night; in the morning, she was healed. Finney then gave her husband a prophetic word the woman would not die either of that sickness or in her sins.[105] Not long after, when she was fully recovered, the woman confessed Christ. On another occasion, a woman, also experiencing a grave illness, was healed when Finney came to her house. With her husband listening, she prophesied of a coming revival in that region. Finney attributed the prophetic word to the power of prayer.[106]

Finney's meetings were also characterized by what is known today as "slain in the Spirit". However, what transpired in Finney's services was markedly different from how "slain in the Spirit" is practiced today. Finney never built up a sense of expectation, never encouraged it, usually experienced by those under heavy conviction for their sin, the people under this conviction usually became believers in Christ, and Finney never "waved his hand" over the people or pushed on their forehead to "make" them "fall out" in the Spirit. Those who were overcome

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[103] Finney, *Autobiography*, 29-30.

[104] Dalton, "Finney", 13.

[105] Daniel R. Jennings, *The Supernatural Occurrences of Charles G. Finney* (n.c,, Sean Multimedia, 2009), 23-24.

[106] Jennings, *Supernatural Occurrences*, 27. In a footnote (28, fn. 54), Jennings refers to Acts 3:21, where Peter makes the point prophets had been in the world since the beginning; people should not be surprised or amazed when men and/or women in this present time experiencing that which "resembled the New Testament use" of prophecy.

by the Spirit in those meetings did so because of their deep and overwhelming "understanding of the way God viewed their sinfulness."[107]

> Manifestly there is no such effervescence of the sensibility that produces tears, or any of the usual manifestations of an exalted imagination, or deeply moved feelings. There is not that gush of feeling which distracts the thoughts; but the mind sees truth, unveiled, and in such relations as really to take away all bodily strength, while the mind looks in upon the unveiled glories of the Godhead. The veil seems to be removed from the mind, and truth is seen much as we suppose it to be when the spirit is disembodied. No wonder this should overpower the body.[108]

Finney also relates the testimony of a woman who, upon conversion, had gained the ability to read, since she had been illiterate. He initially doubted her story until he inquired of several of her neighbors, all of which confirmed she had been completely unable to read until her salvation.[109]

The cornerstone of all Christian experience and work, in Finney's mind, was the baptism in the Spirit; no one could expect any success in their life or their work without first having "secured this enduement of power from on high."[110]

Edward Irving. A young woman named Mary Campbell, in 1830, spoke in tongues and experienced a healing from the effects of tuberculosis. In 1831, a Mrs. Cardale experienced Pentecostal manifestations in her London home, where she spoke in tongues and gave a prophecy. That same year, on a

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[107] Jennings, *Supernatural Occurrences*, 29-30.

[108] Charles G. Finney, *Revival Fire* (n.c., n.d.) (accessed from www.annas-archive.com, July 2, 2023), 28.

[109] Finney, *Autobiography*, 78-79.

[110] Jennings, *Supernatural Occurrences*, 110.

Sunday, another woman, Miss Hall, in the Regent Square Church, London, spoke in tongues, which led the church leadership to beg the pastor, Rev. Edward Irving (1792-1834), to bring these manifestations to an end. He apparently refused; he believed they were a manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.[111] Irving wrote a letter to a friend in July, 1831, where he simply said, "Two of my flock have received the gift of tongues and prophecy." This was opposed to what he had preached two years previously, along the official cessationist theology of the Church of Scotland.[112] The Presbytery overseeing Irving and the church he pastored eventually brought him to ecclesiastical trial, where he was found guilty and removed from his pastorate. His response was to form another church, the pre-millennial Catholic Apostolic Church.[113]

Irving's experience with "charismata", despite his adherence to the official cessationist position of the Church of Scotland, had begun a few years previously. Apparently influenced by the poet and author Samuel Taylor Coleridge [114] and philosopher Thomas Carlyle, Irving determined it was proper for him to act in the capacity of both a prophet and a priest.

> His study of the biblical accounts of the early church persuaded him that since the fivefold offices of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers had been abandoned, the Holy Spirit, as a result, had left the church to its own devices….

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[111] Gordon Strachan, *The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1973), 13.

[112] Larry Christenson, "Pentecostalism's Forgotten Forerunner", in Synan, ed. Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Formation, 19.

[113] Sheridan Gilley, "Newman and Prophecy, Evangelical and Catholic", The Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society 3.5 (1985), 161.

[114] Irving's association with Coleridge and others influenced him in such a way that he was "prone to mystic tendencies." See Timothy Powell, "Edward Irving and the Catholic Apostolic Church", *Paraclete* 12.2 (Spring 1978), 24.

> At this time, prayer groups were established to seek a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and many were led by Irving's assistant, Alexander Scott, to seek "the charismata" as described in the New Testament as part of early Christian spirituality.[115]

When he was deposed by the Church of Scotland, about 800 parishioners from the Regent Square Church followed him to form the Catholic Apostolic Church. Whereas the Church of Scotland had frowned upon charismatic manifestations in the worship service, they were allowed and encouraged in the new fellowship. But for all that Irving experienced, he wound up being reduced in his role in the Catholic Apostolic Church, mostly because he himself had never manifested any of the (verbal) gifts of the Spirit.[116]

Edward Irving died about two years after he was removed from the Church of Scotland, and the Catholic Apostolic Church eventually changed from its charismatic roots into a more Orthodox and Roman Catholic form of praxis and belief.[117] However, any focused attempt to understand the origins of the modern Pentecostal movement must consider the Catholic Apostolic Church, "precisely because of the absence of any historical connection between the two movements".[118] Strachan observed:

> The beliefs and experiences of the various branches of the contemporary Pentecostal Churches are so similar to those of Irving and his followers that one might suspect that they had been handed down word of mouth or rediscovered like some Deuteronomy of the Spirit. The fact that there was absolutely no collusion between the two movements and that the

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[115] D. D. Bundy, "Irving, Edward", in Burgess and McGee, eds., *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 470-471.

[116] Bundy, "Irving, Edward", 471.

[117] Bundy, "Irving, Edward", 471.

[118] Christenson, "Pentecostalism's Forgotten Forerunner", 23.

> last of the Catholic Apostolic apostles died a few months after the modern Pentecostal movement started, only emphasizes the power and validity of the comparison. For all their striking similarities these two movements were ignorant of each other's existence.[119]

Irving apparently was a careful exegete who chose New Testament truth over the traditions and doctrines of people. Thus, the Scottish National Church, Regent Square has the distinction of being, albeit for a short time, "the first 'Pentecostal' church in modern times."[120] Opposition to his efforts, despite the carefulness of his theology, first from the Church of Scotland and then from "prophets" within the Catholic Apostolic Church, but this must not overshadow his efforts to demonstrate continuationism in the Church, which establishes him "as a forerunner to the Pentecostal movement of today."[121]

Spiritual gifts and the modern church. A. N. Ukoma argues against cessationism on two points: the apostle Paul's use of the present continuous tense in his writings and a careful survey of Paul's letters indicates he "did not contemplate any form of any or all of the gifts."[122] Ukoma's conclusion based on the witness of history is on point: the gifts of the Spirit did not cease in the Church, and were never meant to cease in the

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[119] Strachan, The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving, 19.

[120] David Allen, "The Significance of Edward Irving (1792-1834)", *Paraclete* 22.4 (Fall 1988), 19. In a footnote, Allen refers to speaking in tongues as occurring "in isolated instances" in the whole of the history of the Church; prior to Irving's experience, however, *glossolalia* in a significant way was found only in the second century Montanists.

[121] Powell, "Edward Irving", 27. See also Donald Dayton, "The Rise of the Evangelical Healing Movement in Nineteenth Century America", *Pneuma* 4.1 (Spring 1982), 1-18, for a survey of the effect an emphasis on and practice of divine healing influenced American evangelicalism.

[122] Amarachi Nnachi Ukoma, "Cessation of Pneumatic Elements in the Contemporary Church: A Critique on Pauline Instructions for Orderliness", *American Journal of Biblical Theology* 16.51 (December 20, 2015), 1, 14.

Church, but their fading influence over time had to do with theological concerns outweighing the issue of *charismata* in the Body of Christ. Nigel Scotland, in his survey of spiritual gift use in the Church through 451 A.D., asserts that where signs and wonders manifest "there is a greater likelihood that the church will be expanding and redeeming the culture as was the case in the first four hundred years of Christianity."[123] Pentecostal theologian Douglas Oss argued the continuing "charismatic nature of the church empowered by the Spirit" rests on Peter's proclamation on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) that what the apostles experienced on that day, and which was available to all (Acts 2:38), serves as "the primary foundation for the empowering aspects of its pneumatology."[124] The reason many in the Church do not believe in the continuation of the miraculous is "they have not seen them." Cessationism is not the product of Biblical teaching but of experience. The case for cessationism, it is argued cannot be made from the Scriptures.[125] Paul never explicitly stated the *charismata* were for the apostolic age alone. Cessationism is a theological construct, often birthed by 19th century theologian Benjamin B. Warfield's polemic against the charismata.[126] Some efforts have been made to exegete portions of 1 Corinthians 12, 13 and 14 to "prove" cessation, but the major flaw in such arguments is their eisegetical reading of the text.[127] They assume, based on

[123]Scotland, "Signs and Wonders", 167.

[124] Douglas Oss, "A Pentecostal/Charismatic View", in Wayne A. Grudem, ed., *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 265.

[125] Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Power of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan [epub], n.d.). 76-77.

[126] Benjamin B. Warfield, *Counterfeit Miracles* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1918).

[127] In fairness, Pentecostals/continuationists are at times as guilty of eisegesis or "preaching their experience" as cessationists. For continuationism to be seriously regarded, it is necessary to have a "fresh and radical (in its original sense) view of Scripture (Jon Ruthven, *On The Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles* [Sheffield, U.K.: Sheffield Academic, 2007], 206).

theological presuppositions, the *charismata* were intended to be temporary, and interpret accordingly.

However, as has been shown in this paper, and in the previous one on the early days of the Church, the witness of history demonstrates a continuation of the gifts of the Spirit, strongly on prophecy and healing, on through to the time of the modern Pentecostal movement. A lack of evidence of the *charismata* in any time period of the Church (i.e., the later Middle Ages) is not an indicator of cessation but one of disuse by believers. Evidence from later periods shows the gifts did not cease; they simply did not occupy a significant place in theological emphasis.

What the witness of history from the church fathers and from later voices demonstrates is spiritual gifts were never sovereignly removed from the Church by God. Jon Ruthven, a Pentecostal scholar whose book-length critique of Warfield ardently defends continuationism, provides a timely assessment.

> Romans 11:29 states a principle that could hardly be more anti-cessationist: that from God's side, his radical and unconditional grace offers to sustain the…process throughout the present age: "God's gifts (*charismata*) and his call are irrevocable – not repented of, or withdrawn." The context shows that the human failure to receive God's call, or charismata, does not at all require that they are sovereignly withdrawn in church history, but rather they cannot become manifested in those that reject them. Accordingly, it may be this very unhappy state of the church that Paul foresaw: an intellectualized quasi-deism among those having "a form of religion

while denying its power (*dunamis*)" (2 Timothy 3:5).[128]

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[128] Ruthven, *On The Cessation of the Charismata"*, 204. I agree with the assessment that the cessation of the gifts will happen at the return of Jesus Christ (Kelebogile T. Resane, "Cessationism and Continuationism: Pentecostal Trinitarianism Balances the Tension", *Verbum et Ecclesia* 43.1 [https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v.43i1.2669) accessed April 30, 2023], 6.

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