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## I Saw Him In My Pulpit

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# REVIVAL

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## I SAW HIM IN MY PULPIT

by Dr. Howard Ervin, Baptist Minister

**M**Y wife and I have lived in the midst of miracles since July, 1961, when we attended the International Convention of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship in Miami Beach. We are now on Page 6, Chapter 1964, of the Act of the Holy Spirit. Our church life has been revolutionised. We have seen the sick healed and many receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit as we laid hands upon them. Our members have discovered a new dimension in Bible study, prayer and witnessing. We are enjoying the miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit but it was not always so.

### My Call to the Ministry

I had fled from a call to the ministry since childhood. If I said "yes" to this call it would mean giving up my plans, ambitions and desires; it would mean total surrender. I choked on those words in the Lord's Prayer that morning, but finally I said, "God, if there be a God, Thy will be done in my life upon earth as it is done in Heaven." A great peace swept over my soul and I became His that morning. As I looked at the opposite wall in my bedroom, behold Jesus was there! It was not a dream, it was not a subjective vision, it was an objective vision—Jesus Christ entered my bedroom. At first it was a stained glass window with the figure of Christ. I looked at his feet and then slowly raised my eyes until I could see His head. Suddenly, it was no longer a figure in glass but actually Him. His face was averted, slowly He moved and looked directly at me. His eyes pierced deep into my soul. I was ashamed of what He saw. I turned toward the window and the vision faded. I glanced back and He came once more. Again, His head was averted, slowly He returned to face me and I shrivelled under

that searching gaze, for I knew the sin He saw. I shifted my eyes and He was gone. The third time He returned! As our eyes met my soul was bared. I said, "O Jesus, my Saviour, my Saviour."

### I Entered the Ministry

I went from there into the ministry, the calling I had rejected so long. I went because I had no choice; my life was given to Jesus and He had made the choice for me. If there is anything I have to glory in, it is only the fact that Jesus, with a grace beyond my conception considered me worthy to declare the message of reconciliation. What I read in the Book of Acts was not in the church I knew, nor in my own life. My heart became hungry. I plunged into undergraduate studies along with my pastorate, and went through several

seminaries—in fact, academically I am quite ecumenical! I spent many years in graduate work, finally earning a doctorate of theology from Princeton, because I loved the Word and wanted to know more.

In 1951 I began a verse by verse exposition of the Acts of the Apostles. This book has shattered more theologies than any other New Testament writing. I discovered that Acts had some startling statements that did not agree with certain things that I had learned. As I read, I became convinced that Saul the Pharisee was saved on the road to Damascus; three days later, Ananias laid hands upon him, he received his sight and was filled with the Holy Spirit. That meant there were two operations of the Holy Spirit instead of only one as I had been taught. I also noticed that there was an inevitable lapse of time between the conversion of the Samaritans, their baptism in water, and the coming of Peter and John, as recorded in Acts 8, 14.

Some of our old and orthodox commentators, such as Adam Clark, John Calvin and "Meyer's Exegetical Handbook to the New Testament"

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on the  
inside

**Should Prophecy be  
judged—page 3**

**Occupy till I come—  
page 4**



# I SAW HIM IN MY ROOM

Continued from page 1

agree that these were the same manifestations that happened at Pentecost.

## A Business Man Helps

In 1956 it was our privilege to attend a Bible conference in New Jersey. We met a Presbyterian attorney and his wife, Charles and Helen Maurice. We shared three meals a day with them for eight days of the conference and got to know them rather well. Brother Maurice's wife had been healed of Hodgkin's disease. The doctors had given her three years to live, and this was four years after the diagnosis. We were eating, conversing and worshipping with a miracle!

One night I got a call from Harald Bredesen. As a result, I took one of my deacons and went to see him. Dr. Russell Mead of the Chicago Bible College was there. He is also the pastor of the Swedish Pentecostal Church in Chicago. Harald talked with us and prayed with us in tongues. Then Brother Mead talked with us. He is a tall, quiet man, filled with the sweet Spirit of God. I was puzzled, here was this Dutch Reformed minister who scarcely talked in English and this Pentecostal pastor who did not speak in tongues; this confused me! Brother Mead reached over and laid his hands on my deacon and me and prayed for us. We left without receiving the experience. That night when we arrived home I had a prayer meeting with my deacons. As the first man began to pray I put my head in my hands and from deep within came the words, "O Jesus my Saviour, Jesus my God." Something let loose inside—my inner being began to vibrate—the glory of God came down—I was in

Heaven!

## I Saw Jesus

The next morning in my pulpit something extraordinary happened. My wife told me there was a supernatural radiance upon my face and a smile such as the congregation had never seen. Something very precious happened that morning that I want to share with you. As I stood in the pulpit to begin the morning message, I glanced to the side and I saw the shoulder and arm of Jesus. I was overcome with a deep joy. Yet, I was in a dilemma, I wanted to see more, but I didn't want to disrupt the congregation who did not see Him. The Lord would allow me to see just so much, but I knew He was there. They tell me I preached like I had never preached before. I know what it is to have the anointing. I have seen sinners come weeping under the power of the Gospel but that morning there was a plus I had never known.

In 1960 I attended an upper room prayer meeting on the ninth floor of the Benjamin Franklin Hotel in Philadelphia. There were between 20 and 80 people in this interdenominational group, ministers and layfolk from all walks of life. David du Plessis spoke of the moving of the Holy Spirit in Europe. A Methodist minister's wife then read a portion of Scripture and said, "Let's join hands in a fellowship circle." We did and they began to sing "Oh it is Jesus, it is Jesus in my soul." Before we had finished singing someone across the circle began speaking in a language I did not know; others began to sing in tongues. We were literally melted into one, the love of God became so tan-

gible that it seemed you could reach out and touch it. When I got home I said to my wife, "My dear, now I know how the martyrs could go to the stake with joy and singing. I know what took them there. I have felt that power of God."

## My Convention Experience

Some months later Brother Maurice called and asked me to come to the FGBMFI Convention. I said that I could not because of our church anniversary. God spoke to my heart and said, "Not Washington but Miami Beach." I told the Lord it would take a miracle because I was broke. There was a miracle and I went. David du Plessis and Dennis Bennett prayed with us in Miami Beach. I told them I had gone as far as I could, my burden was for my wife and the couple with us. Under the anointing of the Spirit, David walked across the room and stood beside my chair. Suddenly, I felt his hand on my head and like a series of lightning bolts, something shot down my spine. When I went to bed I did not realise what had happened. The next morning in the shower I began to weep. As I stepped out of the shower words were rolling in my mind. I thought: "I have heard messages in tongues and this is just my subconscious reacting." But God rebuked me. Then I envisioned a ticker-tape with words on it. Very clearly God said to me, "Say these words." But they did not come out the way I saw them.

We left the International Convention and stopped in a motel on the way home. When I went in to take a shower two more words came to me. I was getting to the point that I did not know whether to take a shower or not!

Shortly after our return home I was sitting in the parsonage, I raised my hands to praise the Lord and the power of God swept over me. I knew it was God, no one had to tell me. The next night about midnight I said, "Lord, I have no problem about tongues, healings or anything else. You have settled every theological question I ever had. There is only one question left, 'Just how soon can I break through?'" I did not realise I had already broken through. It had happened in Miami Beach. God said two things to me: "Son, it is so difficult for you to learn." I said, "That's right, Lord." Then He said, "I have told you what to say, now why don't you say it?" I said, "Lord, if this is Your will, so be it." I turned my mind over to Jesus and found I was adoring Him in a way I had never adored and worshipped Him before. I began to repeat the words I had seen on the ticker-tape and suddenly I was stammering; the next moment He took my tongue and I praised God in a language I had never learnt. This is the Baptism in the Spirit. I hope you have had it too!

# REVIVAL

Editor: Selwyn Hughes

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

**A** NEW INTERPRETATION of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit is being expounded in the land. For years the Pentecostal Movement has taught that the Gifts of the Spirit as outlined in I Cor. 12 are given to Christians as a personal possession and are then operated by the Holy Spirit as He directs.

The new interpretation claims that these gifts are not given to the Christian but are rather conveyed through him by the Holy Spirit to the one or ones in need. For example, when a sick person is healed by God's power it is the sick person, not the believer who has ministered to him, who receives the gifts of healing. The milkman, it is said, delivers the milk, and similarly all the Christian does is to deliver the gift as the Holy Spirit directs.

## Is the new interpretation true?

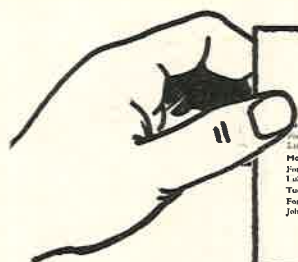
Whilst there are many things which can be said for this kind of teaching there is one important thing which must be said against it.

One of the main principles of Biblical interpretation is that the first step determines the last. If you proceed to interpret a scripture then you must logically maintain the same principle of interpretation throughout. If we apply this test to the above teaching as related to the Gifts of the Spirit then what have we got? When sinners are healed, as they often are in evangelistic services then we have unsaved people receiving the Gifts of the Spirit! Peter, on the Day of Pentecost made it quite clear that before they could receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost they must REPENT, and be converted. Then again, according to this teaching, when Peter manifested the Word of Wisdom in Acts 5 it was not so much he that received it but rather Ananias and Sapphira. What need did they have of it for they *knew* what they had done; it was Peter who needed it for he had no way of knowing except the Holy Spirit showed him. Whilst there are many arguments against this way of interpreting Scripture the most powerful argument that proves these gifts are given to believers (and are in their possession as gifts and not just manifestations) is that found in I Cor. 14, 28. This refers to the interpretation of tongues in a service and Paul makes clear that if there is no one with the gift of interpretation present, then the speaker in tongues should remain silent. Paul recognised that only certain people possessed the gift of interpretation of tongues and he was making clear here that if there was no one with this gift present then there ought not to be a manifestation of the gift of tongues.

The Editor of "Revival" sees no reason to change the old for the new, despite our longing to see truth in a new light.

Some things need no change.

This is one of them!



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Theme of the Week:

SEVEN THINGS FOR WHICH CHRIST PRAYED

Monday For the Baptism in the Spirit Luke 3: 3, 21, 22

Tuesday For the Right Disciples Luke 9: 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

Wednesday For the Unity of His Church John 17: 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

Thursday For the Perfect Will of God Matt 26: 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

Friday For those who loved Him Luke 21: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

Saturday For those who loved Him Luke 21: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100

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