

# Concern For the Body of Christ

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I'm convinced if Jude were alive today his blood would be boiling, and his mind reeling in disbelief at what is being passed off as the gospel. This beloved brother appealed to the church of his day to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." The 'faith of our father's is being assaulted, by both the seeker sensitive crowd on one side and the extreme prophetic on the other. One group fails to preach the whole gospel while the other side teaches the gospel "plus".

One popular evangelist is exhorting his followers to believe in 'the angel' as though the angel was more important than the one who is to have preeminence in all things –Christ Himself. Another so called prophet claims to have regular trips into the throne room and yet to watch his almost cavalier attitude when referring to it, one would have to question his claims. In one encounter he says he could smell vanilla and that was proof positive that he was in the 'throne room'. This is a far cry from John's experience who when he saw HIM fell at His feet as if dead.

So much of what I'm hearing and seeing turns my stomach. I too long for the true manifest presence of God but I'm not about to join the circus under the leadership of some clown who pretends to be smoking a cigarette while claiming to be 'high' on Jesus.

I refuse to believe that the church is so spiritually bankrupt that we have to resort to such flippant and worldly tactics in order to attract a crowd. Speaking of crowds. I'm seeing worship leaders getting the people into such a frenzy that many appear to be in some type of hypnotic state, oblivious to what is happening around them. To the 'enlightened' this is the ultimate spiritual high. Or is it?

If there is one common denominator in all of this, it is the lack of any real spiritual fathers.

Speaking of which, let me quote from a couple. The following is taken from none other than Smith Wigglesworth.

*"Liberty is beautiful when we never use it to satisfy ourselves, but use it in the Lord. What I mean is this: it would be wrong for me to take opportunity just because the Spirit of the Lord is upon me. But it would be perfectly justifiable if I clearly allow the Spirit of the Lord to have His liberty with me. However we are not to behave inappropriately in our liberty, for the flesh is more extravagant than the Spirit.*

*The Spirit's extravagances are always for edification, strengthening character, and bringing us all more into conformity with the life of Christ...I believe that we have to come into the liberty of the Spirit that is so pure, it will never bring a frown of distraction over another person's mind...I have seen people under the mighty power of the Holy Spirit who have waved their hands wildly and moved on the floor and have gone on in such a state that no one could say the body was not under the power. However there was more natural power than spiritual power there, and the natural condition of the person, along with the spiritual condition, caused the manifestation...*

*If there are any here who have those manifestations, I want to help you. I don't want to hurt you. It is good that you should have the Spirit upon you; people need to be filled with the Spirit. But you never have a right to say you couldn't help doing this, that, or the other manifestation... When the Spirit is there, the flesh must find some way out, and so through past experience, we allow all these things at the beginning... And so there are various manifestations, including kicking and waving, that take place at the incoming of the Holy Spirit, when the flesh and Spirit are in conflict. One must decrease and die and the other increase and multiply...*

*Consequently, when you come to understand this, you are in the place of sound judgment and know that now the Holy Spirit has come to take you on with God."...What would you think if, at this point, I had to stop because of a great kicking sensation, and I had to lie down on the floor for three hours before I could go on with what the Spirit of the Lord was saying because my body and spirit were in disagreement?... All the people in the audience are waiting to see Smith Wigglesworth kick through a half hour before he goes on. I wonder if you think that was the will of God?*

*I don't believe it is the will of God, and I never believe you have license to do it. I will never believe that God would baptize you with the Holy Spirit and then make you like a machine so that you couldn't begin at any time and stop at any time." (Smith Wigglesworth On The Holy Spirit. Page 85-87)*

For those with ears to hear, these are the sayings of a true apostolic father. One who is not afraid to go contrary to the status quo, but rather willing to bring about much needed correction. These days if anyone questions things like manifestations they are told, "God offends the mind to reveal the heart." Which by interpretation means don't question things or in other words swallow everything you're told. Little wonder Jesus warned us that the Last Days would be rife with spiritual deception of every kind. As Christians we are to have the mind of Christ. Why then would God offend the mind? Not only that, but we are told in God's Word, "He that is spiritual judges all things." If you use your brain these days you're deemed unspiritual.

Let's listen to another 'father' share his heart with us. A.W. Tozer:

*"Why did Peter, then, add a practical dimension of caution that the child of God should "gird up the loins of his mind," and be sober minded in the daily expression of his Christian worship and witness?*

*It is my interpretation that the Apostle was cautioning the believers that their human emotions were not to be allowed to get out of control. I think he was pleading for the kind of spirituality that comes with the filling of the Holy Spirit and is marked by our walking in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and certainly is not degraded by dethronement of the sentinel we call reason!*

*The spirit of the prophet is always subject to the prophet. When the Spirit of God moves in a man's heart he will make that man generous but He will never make a fool out of him. He will make the man happy but he will never make him silly... The Holy Spirit will make him warm hearted and responsive but He will never cause him to do things of which he will be ashamed later.*

*Peter was not promoting or predicting a cold and lifeless and formal spirituality in the Christian church when he advised believers to gird up the loins of their minds and be sober.*

*He was saying to the early Christians as he hopes to say to us now: "Brethren, if ever there was an hour when we needed to be serious about our Christian faith, this is the hour! We need to be sober men – and spiritual men!" (The Tozer Pulpit. Vol 5. )*

What saddens me the most about these 'young zealots' is that they are being *congratulated* by so-called fathers in the faith, but not *corrected*. This then empowers them to continue, believing they have 'apostolic' approval for their actions. Listen to the wisdom of Solomon. "It is good for a man that he should bear the *yoke* in his youth." Some of these young zealots are in desperate need of a 'yoke'. They confuse their zeal for the anointing, such as kicking a person in the stomach and then declaring him healed. (He wasn't) As my father loved to say, "The one thing we learn from history is that we don't learn from history." Therefore we are doomed to carry on repeating the errors of the past. May God help us.

*God grant us some spiritual fathers who will be wise enough to discern, loving enough to correct, strong enough to stand their ground, broken and humble enough to pray for help, forgiving enough to restore, mature and Godly enough to lead.*

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