

Book Recommendation
CHARISMATICISM Q & A

Author: Jeffrey Khoo. Publisher: Far Eastern Bible College Press. 96 pages

Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord,

Today I am very excited to recommend you a book. It's a great book to read on the Charismatic movement. If you are looking for a quick guide and a thorough explanation on the Charismatic movement, then this book is for you. Instead of telling you stories that some of you may not be interested in, the author plunges right into the subject by treating this subject in a question and answer format. It is a solid and biblically based explanation of the various relevant and perplexing questions that Christians might ask. So, if you have always wanted how to give a credible answer to your Charismatic friend but did not know how, then you should read this book. Or, if you find yourself supporting this movement or even inclined to certain aspects of it, then you should read this book for your own learning. And this will appeal to busy Singaporeans; it's a small book of 96 pages.

Browsing through the content page, this book begins with a very important chapter on "The Charismatics and Bible Interpretation". The author has hit the nail on the head because this is a central issue about the Charismatic movement, that is, how they interpret the Bible. And he goes on to give an introduction on the Charismatics, Pentecostals and the Third Wave. And in subsequent chapters, he deals with topics like the "Holy Spirit and His Work", "Tongues", "Signs and Wonders", "Faith Healing", "Prophecy, Visions and Dreams", "Satan, Demons and Spiritual Warfare", "Charismatic Worship" and "Judging the Charismatics".

Let me cite a few quotations from the book.

In chapter 1, "Charismatics and Bible Interpretation", the author is right on target when he writes, "... a critique of charismatic hermeneutics should be done at the very outset. If we can prove that the charismatic method of interpreting Scripture is fallacious, then we have made our case against their doctrines and practices. A building with a weak foundation will not and cannot stand (cf., Matt 7:24-27). It will be shown that that the charismatic movement is built not on rock but on sand" (p11). Then he gives the principles of Bible interpretation: The analogy of faith, Scripture interprets Scripture, Interpreting Scripture in Context, Scripture does not contradict Scripture, Theology guides Interpretation. And in the same chapter, he goes on to point out a very important point of Bible interpretation in relation to experience. He says, "The fundamental fallacy in the charismatic method of interpreting Scripture is its promotion of experience over against Scripture as the primary basis for faith and practices. Instead of reading their experiences in the light of Scripture, charismatics subject the Scriptures to their experiences. It is not an overstatement to say that charismatics base their faith and practice not on the Bible but on an extra-biblical source, namely, their experience" (p15).

In chapter 5 on "Questions on Signs and Wonders", the question is asked, "Are the sign-gifts meant for every Christian?" Jeffrey Khoo replies after citing II Cor. 12:12, "The phrase 'signs of an apostle' can be translated 'signs belonging to an apostle'. These signs were as indicators. They pointed to the fact that the Apostles were uniquely ordained of God. These signs are specially bestowed upon the Apostles of Jesus Christ to authenticate their ministry of the Word. They were their badges of authority. The Apostles were special messengers of God for they infallibly preached and wrote God's Word (1 The. 2:13, 2 Pe 1:20-21, 2 Tim. 3.16)" (p42, 43)

Now, let me end citing other very interesting questions that the writer answers and I hope that you will read the answers yourself from the book.

1. Can the gift of tongues-speaking include angelic tongues (I Cor. 13.1)?
2. Does not Scripture talk about two types of tongues: (1) known tongues in Acts 2, and (2) unknown tongues in 1 Cor 14?
3. In our prohibition of tongues, are we not going against Paul's injunction, "Forbid not to speak in tongues" (I Cor. 14.39)?
4. Are there apostles today? Are there prophets today?
5. Should dancing be allowed in a worship service? And
6. Are Charismatics saved?

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