

How Pathetic Is Today's Cessationism?

Pastor P. Yesupadam is one of my closest friends in the world and the truest Christian I know. But he was not always a follower of Jesus. To the contrary, although his father gave him the name Yesupadam, meaning "the foot of Jesus," he grew up hating that name and hating the caste system of India. That's because he was born into an untouchable family, suffering terrible deprivation and almost dying of starvation as a boy.

Then, at the age of 11, he was recruited by a radical Maoist communist (called a Naxalite). This gave him a sense of purpose for the first time. Now, he would fight against the caste system, taking from the rich—violently, if need be—and giving to the poor.

By the time he was in his early 20s, he was considered a lost cause by most who knew him. In short, he was an atheist, an alcoholic and a terrorist.

But his Christian wife and some other believers were praying for him (his marriage was arranged, of course, as per Indian custom), and it was then that God intervened in his life.

As he sat on his chair one afternoon, he saw something in the sky that got his attention, but it was somewhat distant. Then as the vision drew close to him. He realized he was seeing Jesus. Yesupadam saw the pierced and bloody hands, which were now stretched out. And he heard the Lord say, "Son, I have done all this for you. Now, what will You do for me?"

At that moment, Yesupadam was radically and dramatically born again, going out on the street and clapping his hands and shouting, "Have you heard? Jesus died and rose from the dead!"

Since then, he has done more good in more tangible ways than any man I know on the planet, planting 10,000 churches in previously unreached tribal regions in India, raising and educating thousands of orphans and needy children, caring for the elderly and the handicapped, building hospitals and more. And he has replicated his work in other continents as well.

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I should also mention that he has been stoned for preaching the gospel; that many, if not most of his workers have been physically attacked for the gospel at least once; and that at least five of his pastors have been killed for their faith. In fact, in virtually every case, these martyrs were men whom I sent out as well in one of my annual trips to India, commissioning them with Yesupadam to preach the gospel by life or by death.

For the cessationist, though, Yesupadam's conversion story is bogus, even if, somehow, he is truly saved today. That's because these cessationists do not believe that the Lord has appeared to anyone since New Testament times. (You may be shocked to hear this, but yes, that is their position.)

Sadly, it is not only Yesupadam's conversion story that is bogus to the cessationist. Millions of other dramatic testimonies must also be questioned, including the countless Muslims to whom Jesus has appeared in dreams and visions, pointing them to the Scriptures.

To give one case in point, one of the grads from our previous ministry school, who has been serving in Iraq for more than a decade, shared this with me firsthand. He met a Muslim woman to whom Jesus had appeared years earlier, telling her to get a Bible. But she had no access to a Bible and didn't know where to get one.

Years went by, and then she met our missionary. She described

to him what Jesus looked like, and he showed her an Arabic Bible, pointing to the description of the risen Christ in Revelation 1. To her absolute shock, that is exactly how she had described the Lord to our grad. Now, when she saw who He was in the Bible, her whole life was rocked.

Once again, the cessationist must protest. "God only speaks through the Bible! The days of dreams and visions have ceased."

Of course, the Bible itself speaks against that viewpoint categorically, telling us that the Spirit will speak through prophecy, dreams and visions during the entire period of the last days, meaning from the death and resurrection of Jesus until His return (Acts 2:14-21, 39). And Jesus Himself told us that His sheep hear His voice and follow Him (John 10:27; these verbs are present tense and active in the Greek), while Paul wrote of the fellowship we enjoy with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14).

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The truth be told, in the time it has taken me to write this article, the Lord has been speaking to His people, leading His people, healing His people, delivering His people and making Himself known to the lost in innumerable ways. It is a real cause for rejoicing.

For the cessationist, though, this is not a reason to rejoice. Instead, it is a sign of deception, a proof that Satan, not the Spirit, is at work—unless they simply write everything off as make-believe or the product of emotionalism.

Today's hardline cessationist will not even allow for the Holy Spirit to bring a word of comfort to a mourner, unless it is a direct quotation from the Bible. Some even say that we don't experience God in worship or feel the Spirit, since God is

omnipresent and anything we feel comes from our emotions.

From a biblical viewpoint, cessationism is completely indefensible. I'm as sure of that as I am of the nose on my face—and it is a conspicuous nose. Experientially, as the Spirit continues to move powerfully all over the earth, the cessationist viewpoint is becoming harder and harder to defend. Simply pointing to charismatic extremes and errors will not stem the tide of the real, glorious moving of the Spirit. By God's grace, this tide will flood the lives of our cessationist friends too!

That's why I was not surprised when a caller to my show expressed his shock at the doctrine of cessationism. He was an African Christian newly located to the States. He had no idea that any Christians denied the continuation of the miraculous gifts for today!

That's also why I plan to write a book to be released in 2026 on the end of cessationism. The doctrine cannot be argued biblically, and soon enough, God willing, it will be a forgotten theological relic of the past.

Thank God for the outpouring of the Spirit!

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Dr. Michael Brown () is the host of the nationally syndicated *The Line of Fire* radio show. He is the author of over 40 books, including *"Can You be Gay and Christian?"*; *"Our Hands are Stained with Blood"*; and *"Seizing the Moment: How to Fuel the Fires of Revival."* You can connect with him on Facebook, X or YouTube.