

Where's the Beef?

Because I publish books on health, I've had the opportunity to talk with some of our authors about this subject. We've discussed the fact that charismatics in general seem as unhealthy as the general public.

I have no statistics to support this observation. But the number of overweight Christians I've seen in prayer lines and the number I've known who have died of cancer or heart attacks have caused me to wonder why we who believe that divine health is part of the atonement don't enjoy better health.

Of course many Christians have been healed—and many do enjoy good health. But to me the question illustrates a point the leaders of the renewal must consider: If we want to reach this generation, we must not only preach; we must also produce results. Otherwise, we are no different from people in the world.

Here are some other questions I think we need to ask:

****If we believe in revival, why isn't our society being revived? Instead, we define what are simply exciting services as revival and then are disappointed when the apparent "revival" dies down.**

****If we believe in stable marriages, why isn't divorce more rare? Today more and more charismatic leaders are getting divorced. In light of this trend, how are we going to help those in the pew who are struggling to keep their marriages strong?**

****If we believe in deliverance from addictions, why are so many Christians as bound as they were before they started attending a charismatic church?**

****If we believe the power of the Holy Spirit transforms lives, why isn't the difference more visible? We should be like homeschooling advocates who boast that kids taught at home perform better on standardized tests than their public school counterparts—the scores prove the validity of their claim.**

****If we believe the Word of God mandates forgiveness, why are so many Christians offended?**

****If we believe in the fivefold ministry, why aren't there apostles and prophets who are calling the church to holiness and wayward leaders to repentance?**

****If we believe in the gifts of the Spirit, why aren't these gifts more manifest in the church—rather than being evident primarily in those with traveling ministries?**

One of the things the charismatic movement has always had going for it is that it provides hope to people looking for help. It offers life instead of dead religion.

But where are the results? Of course there are many. We report them month after month, and we are careful to document the facts in the articles we run. But it is also true that people often leave our churches disillusioned and hopeless.

It reminds me of the hamburger ad aired regularly several

years ago that asked, “Where’s the beef?”

In the 1980s, American business was forced to take a hard look at itself when nations such as Japan began producing better products at a lower cost. Competing with this Far Eastern nation caused a lot of things to change for the better as far as business is concerned.

The church is competing, too—with numerous false doctrines and “isms” that promise hope and happiness. Are we able to show the world that we believe what we say we believe—and have the results to back it up?

One of the many things I admire about Fred Price is that he sees results when he preaches from the Word about faith. When his wife, Betty, had cancer more than 10 years ago he stood in faith for her healing, and she continues to be healed today.

In Old Testament times, Moses often went before God on behalf of the children of Israel—and saw them delivered from Pharaoh and many other afflictions. Gideon proved God to be true when he led the Israelites into battle against the Midianites at God’s command and gained what appeared to be an impossible victory.

In New Testament times, the early church turned the world as they knew it upside down by their boldness and faith. Yet in the natural they had no power against the dominant Romans, who had established one of the most tyrannical empires in the history of mankind.

Jesus said we’d do greater works than He did. It’s time for us to prove there was some meat to His words.

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