

George O. Wood Sets John MacArthur's Pentecostal Record Straight

Recently, Dr. John MacArthur and Grace to You Ministries hosted the Strange Fire conference at Grace Community Church in Simi Valley, California.

Dr. MacArthur believes that the miraculous **gifts of the Spirit** ceased with the close of the apostolic era and that the **Pentecostal** and **charismatic** movements are therefore theologically aberrant at a foundational level.

By contrast, Pentecostal and charismatic Christians believe that “the promise [i.e., the gift of the Holy Spirit] is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39, NIV). With this promise comes the evidential sign of speaking in other tongues and the power to be witnesses of Jesus Christ “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8; 2:4; cf. Luke 24:49). Consequently, following the apostle Paul’s teaching, we “eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit” (1 Cor. 14:1).

While there have been isolated aberrations of behavior and **doctrine** over the past century among those who self-identify as Pentecostal or charismatic, the movement as a whole has proved a vital force in world evangelization—a fulfillment of the promise Jesus made to His disciples in Acts 1:8. On behalf of the 66 million adherents and 360,000+ churches in the World Assemblies of God Fellowship, I thank God that the faith and life of the Acts 2 church are still being believed and experienced today.

The Assemblies of God celebrates 100 years in 2014 and remains committed to the full authority of God’s Word. As a founding member of the **National Association of Evangelicals**, the

Assemblies of God has sought to cooperate in the Great Commission with Christians of like-minded faith, even when they are not Pentecostal and charismatic, and we remain committed to that collaboration.

We trust the time will come when Dr. John MacArthur and those who share his perspective will acknowledge the great contribution that Pentecostals and charismatics are making in the evangelization of individuals without Christ. We pray God's blessings on their efforts to share His gospel with a lost and dying world. Pentecostals and charismatics are their **co-laborers** in this effort, so we ask that they would similarly pray for God's blessing on us as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission that God has given us all.

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