

Is Pastor John MacArthur Reading the Same Bible Pentecostals Are?

On the proverbial eve of releasing his new book, *Strange Fire*, Pastor **John MacArthur** hosted a conference at his church by the same name. The Strange Fire Conference was Oct. 16-18, 2013 and was dedicated to attacking **Pentecostal** and **charismatic** Christians.

Before I continue, I would like to state unequivocally that I have a great deal of respect for what Pastor MacArthur has accomplished. He serves in a thriving congregation that has done much for the Kingdom of God. Many lost have come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ under his leadership and **ministry**. There is a lot he is doing that I believe is – as Philippians 4 says – “true, noble, right, and pure”.

With that being said, I believe that his stance on the **gifts of the Spirit**, support of **cessationism**, and his related and unrelenting attacks upon his brothers and sisters who believe and walk in the fullness of the Spirit are – quite simply – wrong.

With real threats like **militant Islam**, creeping socialism, moral breakdown, government meltdown, crime and violence, it would seem that there are other targets of greater importance in the battle against the enemy of our souls than those who reside within the walls of the church. Yet, in his new book *Strange Fire*, MacArthur “opens fire” on fellow Christians. The famed pastor and teacher, who (it appears) has become the resident theologian for Southern Baptists and many evangelists, is continuing his attack on Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians with the publication of his book, as well as last week’s conference.

As the modern arbiter of cessationism, MacArthur is of the belief that the miraculous gifts ceased with the death of the last apostle or at the closing of the Biblical canon (around 100A.D.).

The problem is that this approach has no Biblical support and very little historical validation. His views are simply a regurgitation of the late B. B. Warfield's views. The teachings of Warfield were a reaction to the events surrounding "Azusa Street" and the mighty Pentecostal awakening in the early 20th century!

I have absolutely no doubt that there are extremists, heretics, and hypocrites among us in every belief circle and corner of Christendom. However, **Pentecostal** Christianity is the fastest growing part of God's Kingdom worldwide. It is obvious from what I read, have heard reported by witnesses, and have observed with my own eyes that miracles, signs, wonders, and gifts have not ceased. I have personally witnessed miraculous events, not just within the walls of Abba's House, but in other churches throughout America, and foreign countries as well.

Cessationism (birthed by Calvinism) is killing both the spirit and the mission heart of Evangelicals. I wish this blog gave me adequate space for a full answer, but it does not. However, in my Essential Guide series of books on the Holy Spirit, I deal Biblically, historically, clearly, and spiritually with all of MacArthur's attacks.

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anyone can understand. In addition, for 14 years, Phillips hosted the daily 15-minute radio program CenterPoint across the nation via radio and throughout the world via the Internet. He has now authored more than 20 books, including Awakened by the Spirit, Our Invisible Allies, Everyone's Guide to Demons and Spiritual Warfare, The Foundations on the Holy Spirit series and his latest release from Charisma House, A God-Sized Future.