

WHY I AM A CESSATIONIST (or, 'Why the Bible is Enough')
Selected Scriptures

Turn to 2 Pet. 1. – We've come to the end of our study of spiritual gifts in 1 Cor. 12-14. – But as I promised, I think it will be helpful today to tie up a few remaining loose ends and answer a few lingering questions & common areas of confusion around spiritual gifts.

FOR STARTERS, before getting into my main outline: 'What about a person's experience? What if you or a friend of yours says, 'I know tongues, or prophecy, or the gift of healing is for today because I've experienced it! How dare you question what I have personally experienced, first hand?!

HOW do we respond to that? – How should we think about experience? *Is experience a valid criteria for truth? – Should experience ever be the basis for any Christian belief?*

2 Pet. 1 gives a clear answer to this question:

If anyone qualified as the original charismatic, it was Peter. – He spoke in tongues, healed people, and prophesied. – And he had the most fantastic experiences of anyone, one of the greatest being what he describes here:

2 Pet. 1:16-18 – Jesus pulled back the veil of His flesh and displayed His glory! – They saw His majesty, they heard God's voice, they were stunned by it all. – Yet look what Peter writes next, look at what Peter thinks about that incredible and very real experience they had:

vv. 19-21 – v. 19a, "more sure" than what? – Than experience. – I.e., Scripture was a brighter light than their experience of Jesus on that day. – Scripture was a firmer foundation for their faith than even the best of experiences.

→Don't miss a crucial principle Peter is giving us here: *All experience must be tested by the more sure word of Scripture.* –

Experience must never be our starting point for any belief. – Scripture must be our starting point. – *We filter experience through Scripture, not Scripture through experience.*

~ Jonathan Edwards, after experiencing revival like none of us has ever seen, and like the modern Church has never experienced. – Edwards' ministry was at the heart of the First Great Awakening that shook N. America & England. – Tens of thousands were won to Christ, and missionaries were sent around the world. – These were some of the most passionate & emotional & experiential Christians that ever lived. –

YET Edwards writes (read slowly): *I would therefore entreat the people of God to be very cautious how they give heed to [seeking experience]. I have seen them fail in very many instances. I know by experience that impressions being made with great power, and upon the minds of true, yea eminent,—saints even in the midst of extraordinary exercises of grace, and sweet communion with God, and attended with texts of Scripture strongly impressed on the mind—are no sure signs of their being revelations from heaven.*

I have known such impressions fail, in some instances, attended with all these circumstances. Those who leave the sure word of prophecy which God has given us as a light shining in a dark place—to follow such impressions and impulses, leave the guidance of the polar star, to follow a Jack with a lantern [swapping the North Star for a jack-o-lantern]. No wonder therefore that sometimes they are led into woeful extravagances.

+ Edwards & the leaders of the Great Awakening were vigilant against Satan's devices to spoil a true work of God and derail a genuine revival with excesses and abuses. – Edwards once rebuked a member who simply said to another church member, 'The Lord has given me this verse for you.' – Because even that was claiming additional revelation *outside of* Scripture, and thus effectively *above* Scripture. – They would not let even the most sincere experiences trump the Word of God, ever.

+ Ex-charismatics have told me, 'I spent my life jumping from one experience to the next. My Christian journey was one long quest for bigger and better experiences. I kept thinking that once I had more faith, I'd have more experiences, which would give me more faith. It was a vicious cycle of increasing frustration.'

Repeat: v. 19.... Ps. 119:105...

Isa. 8:19-20, "When they say to you, 'Consult the mediums and the spiritists who whisper and mutter,' should not a people consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn."

→ Jesus made it very clear how we grow as Christians. – Not by one experience after another, or one crisis or miracle after another. – No: John 17:17...

Scripture is our authority, Scripture is our standard for every emotion & every experience, for any impression we might have, or any voice we hear. – John 17:17...

→ Which of the 5 Solas comes first? – 'Sola Scriptura!', the most important of the 5 battle cries of the Reformation, the most foundational & primary of all, out of which all the others flow.

Give title... (Or, 'Why the Bible is Enough!')

Because of these burning questions: 'What about today? Which of the spiritual gifts of NT apostolic times are still in operation today? Or are we guilty of picking & choosing some & not others? Esp., what about the miraculous gifts of healing, tongues & prophecy – are they for today or not? And if not, why not, *and what then?*'...

You're welcome to disagree with me on a secondary matter such as this. It is not a part of our church Declaration of Faith explicitly. – But in a fuzzy age of theology driven by feelings, I wanted you to know exactly where I stand on this and why.

Basically all Christians fall into two camps on this debate, including you whether you realise it or not: You are either a Cessationist or a Continuationist. – I.e., either the apostolic, miraculous gifts of healing, tongues & prophecy are continuing today, or they have ceased.

Even if you are non-practicing, at the very least you are either open or closed to God giving further revelation today outside of His Word. –

Here is why I believe we should be closed to any further revelation outside of Scripture. – Here is why I have no category for a person who says, without referring to Scripture, 'God said to me', or 'I think the Lord is telling me', or 'Jesus showed me', etc.

Even though it has now become uncool and un-trendy to be a cessationist, the historic Christian Church was Cessationist for the first 1900 years of church history. – Here is why I believe they were right and there is no need to move from that position.

***FOUR REASONS I believe the miraculous gifts have ceased and that Scripture is sufficient – the only revelation we (the Church) need from God:**

NB, not a stand-alone message – cf. previous sermons, details on healing, tongues & prophecy...

→OR just read Joel James' booklet, *Questions & Answers On Sign Gifts*. – It's a free download at gracefellowship.co.za

+ I was just talking to an ex-charismatic this week who said Joel's booklet instantly opened his eyes. – He wept while reading it. – 'Why didn't anyone show me this in the Bible before?! Why, why?!'

Here's a shortcut: Often, you can skip these four steps, if you're wondering how to explain today's so-called miracles: Measure today's claims by two things: *the biblical description & the historical record*.

As I've sought to show you in past weeks, I don't think any of today's so-called healings, tongues or prophecy match the biblical characteristics & purpose for these gifts. – Nor does it match the plain facts of history and how God has worked, even at the highest points in church history, over the past 19 centuries.

HOWEVER, that does not answer the question of whether we *should expect* these miraculous gifts or not? –

Perhaps they have been absent in church history, and are abused today, because we *lack faith*? – Perhaps if we trusted God enough, these mighty gifts could be renewed among us? – *Should* we open or closed to this possibility?

Some will say, 'But you're putting God in a box!' – NOT if He Himself, in His own Word, has limited how He says He will work and how we should expect Him to work. – That's not US limiting God; that's God limiting God for His own wise & good purposes b/c He knows what is best for us, His Church.

~ One wise old pastor says, "Yes, God can do anything He wants to do *but we expect Him to do the things He says He will do* [in His Word]." (repeat)

Some will say, 'But you're quenching the Holy Spirit!' – NOT if the Spirit Himself has said this is how we should expect Him to work. – In fact, to expect Him to work in ways contrary to His Word would be a true quenching of His Spirit.

***FOUR STEPS proving that the miraculous gifts have ceased and that Scripture is sufficient – it's the only revelation we need from God:**

Turn to Eph. 2:20 (Paul speaking about the Church) & read...

1. CORNERSTONE: Christ

Paul says the same in 1 Cor. 3. – Peter preached the same in Acts 4. – Point: Acts 4:12...

→I.e., Christianity begins not with what we can DO for God; Christianity begins with what God has DONE for us in Jesus of Nazareth, an actual, historical figure.

THIS is why Hebrews opens up in the grand way that it does. – Turn there: Heb. 1:1-2a...

I.e., What is the culmination, climax & completion of all of God's speaking & revealing to man? – Not what, but WHO: Christ, His Son. – No more is God talking to the fathers, like He did long ago, in many portions & many ways. –

Now God speaks to us, His Church. – And He does so in ONE person and ONE way, through Christ. – By sending His Son, God has spoken finally & fully. –

NB, v. 2a, “in these last days” – Only two main time periods of God's speaking. – NOT God speaking & giving fresh revelation & personal visions in every age. – No, two main time periods here: “long ago” and “these last days”. – But what “last days”??...

Answer: From the time of Jesus' coming to earth in 1st c. to this very hour – in Scripture this whole period is called the “last days”. – ‘A.D.’ = ‘L.D.’, last days.

The OT spoke often of “that day” or the final days when Messiah would come to earth bringing God's salvation (Nu 24:14; Jer. 33:14-16; Micah 5:1-2; Zech. 9:9,16).

The “last days” would be the days of fulfilment & climax. – It would be the end times in which prophecies come true and all of God's great salvation plan for Israel & the world is completed.

NB, v.2a, not “is speaking to us”, but has spoken to us in His Son. – Once-and-for-all in Christ, God spoke.

There is something very *final & climactic* in what God has revealed in His Son.

+ Christ's coming was not just the next stop on the train ride of God's revelation. – E.G.:

‘Oh, God spoke to Abraham this way, Moses that way, Elijah this way, Jesus that way, and then He just keeps on speaking – to this prophet, then that one, this preacher, that Christian, etc. Cool stuff, God just keeps revealing & speaking to each new generation until Jesus returns. Anybody with enough faith gets their own personalised revelations from God.’

HOW could there be any higher or better revelation than what God has done for us in Christ? – Name another vision or message from God that could top this one?! – Just read the rest of Hebrew's opening movement in this grand symphony about Christ (sounding off seven resounding stanzas of crescendo!):

1:1-4...

Jesus is God's last & best message, His greatest sermon ever. –

As the Apostle John put it in Jn. 1:14, speaking about that eternal Word who was with God before the beginning: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace & truth.”

Repeat: Heb. 1:2a...

Nothing & no one could ever improve on this. – NONE but God's Son could fulfil all prophecy, sum up God's plan for the ages, and bring history to its intended goal & finale. – NONE but God's Son could declare in His last words on the cross, “It is finished”.

And NONE but God's Son can satisfy the deepest human need.

+ This is what the historic church believed for about the first 1960 years! – It has been staunchly held by Protestants for the first 400+ years after the Reformation also, until about 1960! – E.G.:

~ Matthew Henry: *The times of the gospel are the last times, the gospel revelation is the LAST we are to expect from God. Now we must expect no new revelation, but only more of the Spirit of Christ to help us better to understand what is already received.*

...It is the FINAL, the finishing revelation, given forth in the last days of divine revelation, to which nothing is to be added. ...so that now the minds of men are no longer kept in suspense by the expectation of new discoveries, but they rejoice in a complete revelation of the will of God.

Scripture is sufficient!

~ John Owen, in his commentary on Hebrews, after 84 pgs on just Heb. 1:1-2!, he concludes: *In opposition to this gradual revelation of the mind of God under the OT, the apostle intimates that now by Jesus, the Messiah, the Lord hath at once begun AND finished the whole revelation of His will. ...no new revelation is to be expected to the end of the world.*

~ John Wesley says that Heb. 1:1-2 proves that: *the one entire and perfect revelation which God has made to us by Jesus Christ, and that therefore no other revelation is to be expected.*

BTW: You'll be hearing more quotes than usual today to show that cessationism has been the historic position of the Church for centuries. – The new kids on the block are the continuationists, not the cessationists. Historically, the burden of proof is on them, not us.

SO THEN: HOW do we come to know about this Son, the Christ? – How do we hear God's best & final sermon? – Is it through some private revelation tailored just for you? – Does the story of Jesus have to be retold for every individual? – No!...

2. FOUNDATION Stones: Apostles & Prophets

From the start of Jesus' public ministry, He chose Twelve men to represent Him & tell the story. – He knew He would have to suffer & die in Jerusalem and then rise & ascend to His Father. – He knew He would then pour out His Spirit to birth this Church that He promised to build. –

BUT IF Christ's person & work was to be the Cornerstone message of the Church, HOW would the message be conveyed?

Recall Jesus' words to Peter in Matt. 16? – After Simon had correctly confessed Jesus to be the Christ, Jesus renamed him, "Petros, Rock". –

Matt. 16:18, "I also say to you that you are *Petros*, and upon this *petra*, this large, bed-rock, I will build My Church." – Upon what rock? – Upon this apostolic confession of Jesus' true identity (with Peter as spokesman for the Twelve).

Cf. also John 14 & 16: Jesus promised his disciples that, after His departure, the Holy Spirit would give them "all truth" (Jn 14:26; 16:12-13) and that they would 'call to mind all that He had taught them'.

~ Commenting on Jn. 16:13, Luther writes: *Now that the apostles have preached the Word and have given their writings, and nothing more than what they have written remains to be revealed, no new and special revelation or miracle is necessary...*

One does not need any new signs or miracles, since it was confirmed in the beginning. ...miracles are no longer necessary. Now NO further words of revelation are to be expected.

BY WHAT METHOD would the Holy Spirit reveal this truth to the apostles? – Turn to 2 Pet. 1:21...

Scripture is the result of the Holy Spirit carrying the authors along as they wrote.

Recall: 1 Cor. 12:28...

After Christ, all hinges upon the apostles & prophets. – They are the bedrock, the roots & foundation.

Or back to Eph. 2:20... AND Eph. 3:5... NOT, “is being”, but “has been” – b/c they served a unique, foundational & transitional role.

Step 2 here is oh-so critical. – NB, this was WHY apostles had to be? – What was the ONE criteria? – Acts 1, eyewitnesses, “a witness with us of Jesus’ resurrection”. – That’s why Christ had to specially appear to Paul on the Damascus Road (cf. 1 Cor. 9:1; Gal. 1:12).

WHAT was the job of these apostles & prophets? – NOT to add *anything* to Christ’s saving work at Calvary. – NOT to find another cornerstone that was more novel or relevant, more impressive or fancy. – NOT to find some fresh new message or revelation from God. –

NO, their job was ONLY to explain & apply THE Cornerstone – to proclaim who Christ was and what He had done already in saving us (e.g., like Peter in Acts 4:11-12 above; and throughout Acts with Peter’s & Paul’s sermons). – The apostles’ job was to interpret for people this great *turning point* & climax in history.

They were to explain how God’s mystery was now revealed in Christ, how God’s kingdom plan was unfolding, how Christ wanted His Church to be built (cf. Eph. 3:5, etc.). – Indeed, the apostles’ role was very foundational.

NB: Foundational NOT just for one church in Jerusalem or elsewhere. – NOT some tiny, man-made foundation that had to be re-laid for every new church that got planted. –

No, this was a HUGE, colossal foundation that would support the entire Christian Church until Jesus returns! – NB, a “once-for-all”, universal, historical foundation for the worldwide Church that Christ was building – for every person who would ever believe in Christ anywhere, anytime, until Christ Himself returns.

Turn to Jude 3 – Read...

THREE important observations:

(a) For WHAT were they to fight & defend? – “THE faith” = NOT just ‘a faith’, or ‘my faith’ or ‘your faith’, but THE faith. – I.e., what we believe – the whole body of Christian truth, the entire package of what God has now revealed for us in Christ, i.e., the complete doctrinal foundation. –

Paul speaks this way often: Gal. 1:23, “preaching THE faith”. – 1 Tim. 4:1, “In latter times some will fall away from THE faith”. – Eph. 4:13, “until we all attain to the unity of THE faith”. – Php. 1:27, “striving together for THE faith of the gospel”.

I.e., “the faith” = The sum total of all that Christians believe. – Found where? – Now found in Scripture alone.

(b) once for all = Fixed for all time, the now unalterable & universal standard, entrusted to us at one time conclusively, with lasting results. – Nothing else is needed. – This Word is final, authoritative & sufficient. – Nothing should be added, nothing subtracted.

+ CONTRA.: Mormonism & Islam that say the NT has errors, so we need additional, later revelations from God/angels. – Even though these later prophecies proved to be false. – The Book of Mormon & the Quran contradict Scripture at many points.

CONTRA. also the Roman Catholic view that official church tradition also has absolute divine authority, in addition to Scripture. – E.g., doctrine of Immaculate Conception only added in past 100 yrs. or so.

CONTRA. the Seventh Day Adventists – teachings on Sabbath-keeping and the investigative judgment that came not from Scripture, but from visions of Ellen G. White & others.

→NB the pattern: *‘Whenever you add anything to Scripture, you always get less’*. – Any other prophecy, revelation, tongue, message, impression, voice, etc. – However sincere & unintended, it always ends up undermining Scripture in the end. – *‘Whenever you add anything to Scripture, you always get less.’*

Reread: Jude 3.

→Another implication: this once-for-all Faith does not need to be re-inacted in each new church plant or pioneer mission, or personal experience, etc. – It only needs to be translated & taught & lived before the unreached until they are reached & a church is planted that can keep teaching this “once-for-all” Faith.

(c) handed down/delivered = word for handing down authorised tradition in Israel (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Thess. 3:6). – NB again, completed action, done, over, finished! –

And NB: passive verb. – “The faith” doesn’t hand itself down; it gets “handed down” – By WHOM? – By God Himself! – We did not discover this Word; He revealed it. – Man did not search for the Bible; the Bible came searching for us.

→Therefore: *Any new doctrine is a false doctrine.* (repeat) – We must reject any new teaching, any new revelation that claims to add anything to this once-for-all deposit.

THUS, Jude (& many of the final NT epistles) is not about giving or receiving further revelation from God. – It’s all about us studying & reading & teaching & defending & preserving & guarding what God has *already handed down* to us.

~ Lloyd-Jones on Jude 3: “There is to be NO fresh revelation. There is no need of any. It was given and finally given to the apostles.”

SUMMARY of Steps 1 & 2 so far – another key text – Turn to Heb. 2:1-4.

v. 3b, our Cornerstone...

vv. 3c-4, our Foundation stones...

HOW (else?) did God *verify & validate* these foundation-layers (esp. in age, like today, full of false prophets & false apostles claiming to speak for Christ) – With all the con-men out there, how could you know who God’s men were?

3. SIGNS OF AN APOSTLE

Heb. 2:4 – NOT miraculous gifts for personal growth or guidance, NOT for church growth or revival. – ONLY given for “confirming...testifying”, to authenticate & validate & certify a true apostle from all the false, phony ones running around.

2 Cor. 12:12 – Same point. – It’s always been this way in God’s Word. – Miracles are never random or arbitrary or just for personal or private benefit. – It’s never just about one individual, or one church. –

NO, the miracles are always for a reason, always linked with God’s grand redemption plan, His big-picture salvation story. – Specifically, miracles are always to authorise, to validate God’s messengers bringing new revelation. – E.G.:

That’s why Moses was given miraculous gifts – to certify him as God’s messenger to a sceptical, suspicious people.

That’s why Elijah & Elisha were given miraculous gifts. – In 1 Kings 17, after Elijah raises the widow’s son from the dead, she declares: “Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth” (1 Kings 17:24; 2 Kgs 5:15).

Same with Jesus’ own miracles: John 10:25, “Jesus answered them, ‘I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father’s name, these bear witness of Me’” (cf. John 20:30-31). – Peter’s famous Pentecost sermon in Acts 2, “Jesus...a man attested to you by God” HOW?... “by miracles and wonders and sights which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know.” –

Jesus was bringing new revelation, and He WAS the new revelation, God’s Cornerstone.

Even when miraculous gifts were given to non-apostles, like at Corinth, it still validated the apostolic era. – It still proved that this was a new dawn, a grand opening of the NT Church, and a time when God was giving new revelation to His apostles which would soon be preserved & forever recorded in the canon of Scripture.

Plus, these apostolic gifts gave further revelation in a temporary time when churches like Corinth had NO NT! – Both prophecy, and tongues when interpreted, were giving new, infallible revelation from God.

+ Imagine being at Corinth at that time: They had no Four Gospels, no Acts or Romans. – How would you make sense of the Christian life? – Of church life? – Of evangelism & prayer, etc....

4. LAST APOSTLE

NB, Paul reiterating steps 1 & 2: 1 Cor. 15:8...

How many official apostles, with the gift of apostleship, after Paul? – NONE. – Christ is no longer appointing any more Apostles to be the foundation-layers of His Church.

Therefore, we know that at least SOME (one at least) were not intended to continue. – They have ceased, because they had a foundational role. – We no longer live in the age of slab & foundation (e.g., steel structure). – We're now in the age of walls & roofing...

Repeat 4 steps...

THEREFORE: If no more apostles, why expect the “signs of an apostle”? If no more mouthpieces of new revelation from God, then why have miracles to validate them? – No new revelation = no new signs needed to verify that revelation.

~ Thomas Watson: *In Christ's time and in the time of the apostles, there were then extraordinary gifts in the church which are now ceased.*

~ John Owen: *...that dispensation of the Spirit [through miraculous gifts] is long since ceased and where it is now pretended unto by any, it may justly be suspected as an enthusiastic delusion.*

~ Matthew Henry: *...the gift of tongues was one new product of the spirit of prophecy.... These and other gifts of prophecy, being a sign, have long since ceased and been laid aside, and we have no encouragement to expect the revival of them; but, on the contrary, are directed to call the Scriptures the “more sure word of prophecy” (2 Pet. 1), more sure than voices from heaven; and to them we are directed to “take heed”, to search them, and to hold them fast.*

~ George Whitfield, “The charismata, the miraculous gifts conferred on the primitive church...have long since ceased.”

~ Jonathan Edwards: *Therefore I do not expect a restoration of these miraculous gifts in the approaching glorious times of the church, nor do I desire it. It appears to me, that it would add nothing to the glory of those times, but rather diminish from it.*

For my part, I had rather enjoy the sweet influences of the Spirit, showing Christ's spiritual divine beauty, infinite grace, and dying love, drawing forth the holy exercises of faith, divine love, sweet [rest], and humble joy in God, [for] one quarter of an hour, than to have prophetic visions and revelations the whole year. ...I have seen so much of the power of God in a more excellent way, as to convince me that God can easily do it without [the miraculous gifts].

~ Spurgeon: *Those works of the Holy Spirit which are at this time vouchsafed [promised] to the Church of God are every way as valuable as those earlier miraculous gifts which have departed from us. The work of the Holy Spirit, by which men are quickened from their death in sin, is not inferior to the power which made men speak with tongues.*

SOME CONCLUDING POINTS:

~ Gilley: *It is instructive to note when Paul wrote his last epistle to pastor/friend Timothy about leading the church of God, he did not encourage Timothy to focus on new revelations, impressions, feelings or hunches. Rather, he **continually turned him to the Word of God and the doctrines contained therein** (2 Timothy 2:2-14, 15; 3:15-17; 4:2-4).*

a. 2 Tim. 3:16-17...

~ Calvin, “Any many who is not satisfied with the Scripture seeks to know more than he ought.” – “Let this be a sure axiom – that there is no word of God to which place should be given in the Church save that which is contained [in OT & NT Scriptures].”

→If we want to meet God and encounter Him, it is through this Book!

b. Rev. 22:18-19 – NB, last chp of a book written by last surviving apostle. – With a severity of warning not given in any other NT book.

~ Which is why M. Henry writes: *This sanction is like a flaming sword, to guard the canon of the Scripture from profane hands. Such a fence as this God set about the Law (Deut. 4:2), and the whole OT (Mal. 4:4), and now in the most solemn manner about the whole Bible. – It assures us it is a Book of the most sacred nature, divine authority, and of the last importance, and therefore the peculiar care of the great God.*

Remember: There were already by that time in the 1st c. many false prophets & false teachers circulating false revelations, often forged in the name of one of the 12 Apostles. – Rev. 2:20, there was also a false prophetess, Jezebel, who was true to her name.

John is here forbidding any further use of the gift of prophecy. – John implies here that there is no further need for any divine revelation. – No more inspired messages. –

No more words from God. – God had said all that He meant to say to His people. – Ours is now to hear it, obey it, and guard it from any additions or subtractions.

~ Westminster Confession: *The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good & necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.*

~ Famed church historian, Iain Murray, concludes:

...the historical facts are clear: great revivals have occurred without the presence of any [miraculous], while excitement and interest in them may abound where there is NO revival.

In fact, says Murray, instead of today's so-called miracles bringing great revivals, it has actually prevented revival and harmed the Church. – Today's Charismaticism has, on the whole, led people *away from* the great truths & core doctrines that the Holy Spirit has always honoured (and made central) in times of great awakening.

→ Earlier generations of believers, for the first 1900 years of church history, understood what was at stake in being cessationists. – They knew that if they opened the door to new revelations from God, it would open a Pandora's box that would be much harder to close once opened.

→ But how times have changed today, how loose & relaxed the Church has become about these things. – From a day when the Puritans would banish a person from the village for claiming to receive new revelations, we now give that person their own megachurch, TV channel & writing contract so they can influence the world.

→ It's amazing how the wide variety of groups & views that have flowed out of Pentecostalism in the past 100 yrs – they all have one fatal flaw in common. – They may have hugely divergent views on a number of other things, but this is the one great error they all have in common: openness to new revelation, openness for God to say more than He has already said in His Word. *That is an open door that God wants shut*, lest Satan use it to get his foot in the door and slip in all kinds of error and confusion.

