

# SIGNS FOLLOWING

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Assemblies of God Publishing House

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Reprinted by

**Deal Pentecostal Church**

69 Mill Hill, Deal, Kent. CT14 9EW – [www.dealpentecostal.co.uk](http://www.dealpentecostal.co.uk)

# SIGNS FOLLOWING

## Dedication

This booklet is dedicated to Mr. Alfred S. Loizeaux and to many like him who believe that miraculous healings and tongues are "not for today." They have been mistaken in branding thousands of God's children as "deceivers or deceived," and lovingly I address this book to them in order that they may be delivered from their mistake and may admit that "These signs still follow them that believe."

## Preface

My precious Brother in Christ, Mr. Alfred S. Loizeaux, In your excellent book Think on These Things on page 46 in the chapter on "The Foundations of our Faith," you write "Others claiming miraculous powers of healing and gifts of tongues are either deceivers or are themselves deceived."

Forgive me if I say that such a statement is neither charitable nor true. In Romans chapter 14, verses 10 to 13, we are warned against judgment of our brethren in the Lord and we are reminded that we must answer for such criticism before the judgment seat of Christ. Thus I would present to you the truth, that you may recognise your error now and not have to suffer loss hereafter. May you be granted sufficient humility and sincerity publicly to admit the wrong you have done to your brethren.

I personally have had over forty years' experience in the matter of bodily healings in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and nearly forty years in the exercise of the gift of tongues. In all sincerity I base my hope for time and eternity upon God's Word. So do you. I desire to orient my entire life to that book. So do you. We are cleansed in the same precious blood, born again of the same incorruptible seed, preaching the same gospel, meeting at the table of the same Lord, animated by the same glowing hope, the return of the Lord Jesus in the clouds of glory to take us to Himself.

Then let our appeal be to the BOOK. "To the law and to the testimony. If they speak not according to this Word it is because there is no light in them" (Isa.8:20). May we never, Brother Loizeaux, neither you nor I, "make the commandment of God of none effect through our tradition" (Matt.15:6), but may we receive it not as the word of man, but as "it is in truth, the Word of God" (1Thess.2:13). For my part "I esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way" (Psalm 119:128).

### **"Not for Today"**

The Lord Jesus once lived visibly among men, walking and talking with them. When He left us, His affection for His own burned brightly to the very end. Thus He left for their continued guidance a book (John 17:8 and 14). The living Word and the written Word are inseparable.

The world hates us and would fain deprive us of that book. There are two enemies of the book. The one says "It is not God's Word at all. It is simply a collection of the superstitions and mistakes of men." The other is infinitely more subtle for he says "Yes, it is God's Word, but this part and that part are not for today. They were for apostolic days, for the early church, but have been set aside centuries ago." They rob us of the directions of the Book as effectually as do those who reject it altogether.

This chapter therefore is dedicated to the evidence that the Lord Jesus started off the Church as He intended it to go on.

In one of his last talks with His disciples, the risen Christ told them to make disciples of all nations . . . " teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the age" (Matt.28:19-20). Mark it well that in all nations to the end of the age we are to teach those who believe and are baptised **ALL THINGS WHICH CHRIST COMMANDED HIS DISCIPLES AT THE BEGINNING.**

In Mark 16:15-18, shortly afterwards, He said again to them "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In My name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Please note it again . . . "Into all the world . . . to every creature . . . he that believeth . . ." There is no hint that these signs were to last for a certain time and then to be outdated, or that they were for a certain limited group of believers. Rather the whole context shows that they were to be associated with "them that believe" in all the world.

In 1917 I visited Luanza Mission Station in the Belgian Congo, and was royally entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Dan Crawford of Thinking Black fame. One afternoon we were discussing Mark 16:17 together. He stoutly maintained that it is not for today and that indeed it is exceedingly doubtful if the last verses of Mark 16 were in the original at all. The argument was getting warm when a messenger ran up to tell him that an old native woman, a fine Christian and a very successful soul-winner, was dying. He hurried away and we did not see him for a couple of hours. Then he returned full of joy and of amazement. He told us that on reaching what was apparently the old woman's death-bed, he found the Christians standing around, ready to commence mourning as soon as life was extinct.

He felt the tragedy of such a valuable worker being lost to the native church, when suddenly there came to him the verse which we had been discussing. "These signs shall follow them that believe; in My Name . . . they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17-18). Immediately he stepped forward and placed his hands on the apparently dying woman, in the Name of the Lord Jesus. To everyone's amazement she rose up,

there and then, completely healed. She lived on for a considerable time winning souls for her Lord.

From that time on Dan Crawford and his fellow-workers frequently laid hands on the sick in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and God honoured that Name and the promise of His Word by healing them.

But here is the calamity of it. For twenty-five years Dan Crawford had been robbed of that blessed healing ministry and the church in Lubaland had been deprived of those confirmatory signs by the "not for today" error.

Similarly millions of God's children are being deprived of their heritage, despite the fact that there is not a word of Scripture to say that the Church was to start off with miraculous signs, and that after a brief period these signs were to be withdrawn.

Yes, Brother Loizeaux, you will probably quote "Whether there be prophecies they shall fail, whether there be tongues they shall cease, whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away" 1Cor. 13:8-12). But knowledge has not yet vanished, and there will be prophecies right into the tribulation period (Rev.11:3). You will admit that the context shows us plainly when these changes shall take place, viz. when we shall see face to face and shall know even as we are known—that is at the return of our Lord for His own (verse 12).

Let me, very courteously but very insistently, challenge you, brother, to produce a single Scripture to show that the early church was to be endued with miraculous spiritual gifts but that later these gifts were to be withdrawn. You cannot find such a Scripture, while I have shown you from Matt. 28 and Mark 16 that our Lord started off the Church as He intended it to go on. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven ; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of

heaven " (Matt.5:19). Yours is a solemn responsibility, brother. We one day came by accident upon some stamped addressed envelopes scattered on the ground in a remote part of the Congo forest. We gathered them carefully and enquiry proved that a native postal runner, finding his mail-bags heavy, had deliberately extracted some of the letters and thrown them away, so lightening his load. Of course he received severe punishment. Do you think that we can go unscathed if we set aside the plain statements of God's Word—if we lighten our load by discarding portions of revealed truth?

Of course these things can fall into disuse even though plainly written in the Word. Israel must have heard it read thousands of times from Leviticus 23 that they were to keep the feast of tabernacles. Yet from the days when Joshua brought them into the promised land they had not done so. What joy when they acted on what they " found written" (Neh.8:13-18). There is always joy in keeping His Word.

Our only picture of the Church in its everyday life is in the Acts of the Apostles. That is the normal church life and the epistles and messages of the Spirit to the seven churches of Asia only confirm it. Had there been some other sort of church life, shorn of miraculous gifts, we should have been told about it. Right up to Paul's letters to Timothy just before his death, we read "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2Tim.2:6). The Acts of the Apostles should still be continuing. Thank God there are churches where they are still continuing.

There was much that Christ could not teach His disciples while He was on earth. This was imparted to them later by the Holy Spirit through Paul and others (Eph.3:5). Such teaching, however, contains neither word nor hint of a withdrawal of supernatural gifts.

How pathetic it was that the Pharisees before whom a withered arm had just been restored (Matt.12:13), and a blind and dumb

demon expelled (Matt.12:22), should still follow the Lord Jesus asking for a sign (Matt.12:38). The fact is unbelief was blinding their minds to the signs wrought in profusion before them. Is it not the same in these days? "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matt.13:58).

I can only account for Brother Loizeaux's statements against healings and tongues in a similar way, for thousands of humanly incurable people are being healed in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and even the highest authorities in the medical profession admit it. My friend, Brother Smith Wigglesworth, was one day in conversation with a prominent doctor in Bradford, about divine healing. The doctor said "Wigglesworth, I do not believe in miraculous intervention in incurable sickness today. If you can bring me a well-authenticated case of such healing in answer to prayer I will give you five pounds for your mission."

Shortly afterwards a young man was brought to Brother Wigglesworth for prayer, his lungs seriously affected by tuberculosis. He had a letter stating that he was a consumptive and should go into a sanatorium for treatment without delay. They did not, however, give him expectation of more than a very short time to live. He went to the saints in Bowland Street Mission for prayer instead, and was anointed in the Name of the Lord.

At once the coughing, spitting of blood and other symptoms ceased. Mr. Wigglesworth sent him round to the surgery of the above doctor with the necessary fee in hand to ask for a thorough examination with a view to first-class insurance. The doctor gave him a very careful examination and wrote him a letter to state that he was absolutely fit and a proper subject for first-class insurance. A few minutes later Mr. Wigglesworth entered the surgery and producing the two letters asked the doctor what he was going to do about them. The one letter proved the man practically dying, the other showed him sound and well.

"Well" said the doctor, "in the face of such evidence I can no longer deny that God still heals the incurably sick in answer to prayer, so here is your five pounds."

"But what about the fee for insurance examination?" asked Wigglesworth. Whereupon the doctor handed back that too. That man was not only a brilliant doctor but a gentleman.

The young man who was healed of consumption was McGilvray and he afterwards did years of faithful service for God in China.

In my own experience it is not the medical man who denies God's healing of the incurably sick through the laying on of hands in the Name of the Lord Jesus and through the prayer of faith. He sees too much of it. The opposition comes rather from the unbelieving believer.

In 1921 I lay in bed in the house of my uncle John G. Gartshore of Toronto, Canada. I had several engagements to preach next day but was so sick with influenza that I could not lift my head. My uncle was a well-known Christian worker and a Director of the China Inland Mission, Y.M.C.A., etc. My aunt was obviously very anxious about my condition and asked if they might call in a Doctor Smith. (He was a fine Christian man, and if my memory serves me rightly he was also on the C.L.M. Board). I said I had no objection to a doctor seeing me but that I wanted to be anointed by elders of the church in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and incidentally to confess my carelessness in venturing out in the snow without a coat.

Where were they to find the elders? I said "You are both grey-haired in the service of God. Surely you can obey the injunction of James 5:14 "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him."

These two gentlemen said they had never done such a thing



before but since it was there in the Word they were prepared to obey, and they placed a few drops of salad oil on my head in the Name of the Lord Jesus, asking God to make me well. The doctor had declared that I should be confined to bed for at least a week, but next morning I was out of bed early and feeling as brisk as ever in my life, fulfilled all my preaching engagements and God honoured the witness by saving souls. Next day the doctor called again, examined me thoroughly and was delighted. He and my uncle kept remarking "Well we have to admit that IT WORKS." They would have said better "HE works," for it was just another case of God being true to His Word.

### **Whosoever Believeth**

I am saved. I have everlasting life, I shall not come into condemnation, and I know it. How do I know ? I know these blessed truths on the authority of God's Word (John 5:24). "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." If words mean anything then "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31), means that salvation comes by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. It's very simple, isn't it?

There are other things that come by believing too. "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also . . . because I go unto the Father . . ." (John 14:12). Did the Lord Jesus give sight to the blind? Did He raise the dead, cleanse the leper: did He heal all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people ? "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also." Never mind the "greater works" for the time being. Stick to the phrase "the works that I do shall he do also." Who will do those same works as the Lord Jesus? "He that believeth on Me."

Brother Loizeaux, face the simple statement of Scripture. "He that believeth." Quibble with that truth at your peril. Do you say that it is not for today? Then how do you know that "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" is for today? By attacking the one you attack the other. You rightly rejoice, my brother, that "all that believe are justified from all things . . ." (Acts 13:39), but it is just the same believing as in "these signs shall follow them that believe. In My Name they shall . . . speak with new tongues . . . they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17-18). Nullify the one and you nullify the other.

About 1898 some careless workmen opened a drain in the basement of our home and left the cover off. Volumes of odourless but dangerous sewer gas rose into the house. The doctors said that it was a miracle that we were not all killed. My mother was so terribly affected that it cost her about 14 years of irritation, suffering and weakness. Nothing was spared to bring her healing. Indeed my father, who was a ship's captain and only came home every six months, told me on his arrival he had to pay the doctors and chemists more than he had earned by his voyage round the world. I remember that the famous scientist, Sir Almroth Wright was paid £120 for a single bacteriological operation. All was of no avail. My mother who had been an unusually beautiful woman, lost all her hair and at times spent months in bed or on the sofa. About this time I was converted (1905). Mother was a whole-hearted believer, so that whenever I could get away from my engineering for a few days we would spend much time in reading God's Word and praying together.

Our family doctor was a grand old gentleman as well as an excellent general practitioner. He told mother " I'm sorry we can do absolutely nothing more for you, and do not want to run up bills needlessly, but I will just drop in occasionally to see you on a friendly visit."

One day mother and I read Mark 16 together and when we came

to "These signs shall follow them that believe, in My Name they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover," I said "Mother, we both believe. Let us do it." I simply placed my hands on her head saying "In the Name of the Lord Jesus," that was all.

Next time Dr. Stone came, mother told him what had happened and from then on both the doctor and mother were amazed at the change. Her hair grew once more profusely, her skin cleared, the pains ceased. The doctor once remarked to me "This is extraordinary. What the best medical men in the country have failed to accomplish in all these years, God has accomplished in a few weeks." Now, Brother Loizeaux, would you call us deceivers or deceived? Would you snatch from that precious Name the glory which is its due? God healed mother.

I one day sat in the home of a Methodist Bishop. I was enjoying my Bible and he was reading a church paper. When he put it down I picked it up to see what had so absorbed him, and I was horrified to read its "higher critical" character.

It denied all the fundamental glorious verities of our faith. I said "Bishop, if I fed my soul on that poisonous stuff I should become an infidel. It is nothing but systematic unbelief." He said "Isn't it well to hear both sides of an argument?" I replied "This is not an argument. It is a diabolical attack on my Father and on His Word. It is Satanic unbelief, masquerading as Christianity. Get back to God's Word. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. I'd be ashamed to have that Methodist magazine in my home."

Similarly if I allowed the sophistries of Plymouth Brethren unbelief to relegate all the physical blessing to other ages, I could expect and get nothing from God. But "if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed . . . nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt.17:20). Let us believe it Brother Loizeaux and we shall find it true.

## The Name

Scripture names are not arbitrarily chosen. They carry with them a deep significance. Witness the change of Abram's name to Abraham, "father of many nations" (Gen.17:4 and 5), or of Simon to Peter "the Stone" (Matt.16:18). See how particular God was that His Son's earthly name should be Jesus "Saviour" (Matt.2:31).

No name carries a deeper meaning than that of "Jehovah." It means the ever-existing One. The Eternal "I AM" (Ex.3:14), and definitely points to the Lord Jesus which is and which was and which is to come (Rev.1:4). "The same yesterday, and today and forever" (Heb.13:8).

Anything associated with the Name of Jehovah is bound to be valid at the present moment for it is always and eternally valid. Thus we are perfectly justified in applying to a gospel meeting today the verse in Jer.23:6 "This is His Name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Do you tell me that the context shows that it was for Judah and Israel in a coming day? Quite correct, yet because the name Jehovah is for all time, Jehovah Tsidkenu is equally for me today. "The righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe" (Rom.3:22).

Standing boldly for all London to see, the China inland Mission had placed upon its Newington Green Headquarters the name "Jehovah-Jireh." The Lord Who sees and provides. And through all the years despite the political ups and downs of world unrest, that splendid Mission continues its witness through simple trust in God. Useless to remind me that it was a name given to God in connection with Abraham's sacrifice of his son 1900 years B.C. for it is a Jehovah name and is equally applicable to the China Inland Mission in 1900 A.D. He continues to see and provide.

Among these Jehovah titles stands "Jehovah Ropheka"—the Lord that healeth thee (Ex.15:26). Do you tell me that that Name only held good for Israel in the wilderness or for some apostolic

days at the opening of this church period? Would you infer that it does not hold good today? Friend you are wrong for it is a Jehovah title and thus we can take it at its face value for all time and in every place.

Just after my conversion I was taking a Sunday School class and the topic chosen was the cleansing of the leper (Mark1:40-45). Of course I expounded it as I had always heard it expounded. Leprosy a type of sin and Christ delivering from the taint and contagion of it. Right there in the middle of my talk, however, a great conviction took hold on me. I halted and said to myself "Willie Burton, you're a hypocrite. You talk about deliverance from sin but the leprosy was real leprosy. The blindness was real blindness, and you know that the gospels speak even more of literal healings from bodily ills than of the healing of the soul."

Then I continued in a different vein, and I verily believe that the Holy Spirit carried me beyond my own limitations. "Boys, this leper was incurable from man's viewpoint, but not from Christ's, and it does not matter how impossible a sickness may be to doctors. They are only men and know full well their own limitations. Christ can still cure every sickness even as He can forgive and deliver from every sin, for He is Jehovah, the unchanging One."

Not many days later the Sunday School Superintendent and "Pastor" called me aside and relieved me of my class, for teaching "faith healing." I knew practically nothing of either faith healing nor of the very different "divine healing" at that time, but simply gave those lads the Word of God. For this I was shown the door. Nevertheless, as surely as our Jehovah God is still "The Lord . . . my Shepherd, I shall not want" (Psalm 23), so definitely He is the Lord my Healer and I may still find deliverance from bodily sickness in His Name.

## **A Personal Experience.**

1John 1:1.

We have just recently returned from South Africa and from interviewing three of the five doctors and one hospital sister who were present at a double operation performed on me in May and June, 1944 I would like you to follow closely the circumstances.

In February, 1944, terrible pains gripped the left side of my abdomen. At first I thought it was a swollen spleen from malaria but when it became unbearable I went to Manono tin mines where the Doctor took X-ray photographs of my colon with barium. All the negatives showed plainly the horizontal and descending sections of the colon seriously constricted by disease, so that the food was almost unable to pass and had clogged into a great mass in the ascending colon. I had been anointed by the native elders of our Congo church as soon as the first onset took place but no improvement followed.

I was advised to go with all speed to the best man possible. I could not have found a better. A brilliant surgeon of international reputation and a lecturer at Johannesburg medical school. Further X-ray photographs in Johannesburg hospital showed how rapidly the growths in my colon were developing. Thus in May a hole was opened in my right side (an alcecostomy operation) allowing my waste products to discharge there, and a month later the whole abdomen was laid open for a thorough examination.

On my return to consciousness they told me that the obstructing growth had been removed. This was untrue, however, and was only said to comfort me, as they admitted to me later that they could not possibly remove it and had just sewn me up, leaving me to die. The surgeon and hospital authorities called my wife and informed her that the whole horizontal and descending colon were choked with cancer. They said that I could only live six months at most. A month later a running abscess appeared in my left side, right over the place where the growths had been located.

My brave little wife took me from the hospital as soon as I could be conveniently moved. The hospital register says "Mr. Burton was discharged from the hospital at his own request in a dying condition."

We were given loving hospitality in the home of my wife's sister and her husband, both earnest believers, and many came to pray for me. Also I was again anointed with oil in the Name of the Lord. In the Congo thousands of native believers were crying to God continually to spare my life.

The weeks that followed were a time of extreme weakness but instead of sinking I became stronger; until in January, 1945, six months from the operation, we returned to our missionary work in the Congo. I had gladly submitted my future to my Lord's will, as instructed in James 4:15, ready and happy to go to Him if He wished, but yet with a feeling that my missionary work was not yet done, I asked God to allow me for my wife's sake and for the work's sake to continue a little longer.

For over a year after my return to the Congo I continued to wear a cup and rubber bag over my side to receive the waste products from my body. The running abscess in my side gradually dried right up and by May, 1946, my natural functions of elimination were so far restored that I visited a hospital in Luanshya, Northern Rhodesia, where further X-ray examination revealed no evidence at all of cancer. My side was sewn up and I returned once more to normal life—a whole man and more active than most men of my age.

The accompanying X-ray photographs surely give all the scientific evidence that could be asked for as proof of this healing, and I don't think that you my brother would, before such proof, say that either I or those who anointed me were either deceivers or deceived. When recently (1948) I visited the doctors who opened up my body and saw the condition of the colon, they looked at me as though I were one raised from the dead, but all of them

were men big enough to give God the glory and to admit that He had performed the miracle.

### **A Sign-Attested Ministry.**

When John the Baptist sent to Christ to ask if He were really the expected Messiah, our Lord said " Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt.11:4 and 5). In other words Christ's miracles attested to His divine errand. His works bore witness of Him (John 5:36). Thus Peter could speak of Him "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know" (Acts 2:22). The early church appealed to God to grant them boldness in preaching "By stretching forth Thine hand to heal ; and that signs and wonders may be done by the Name of Thy holy child Jesus" (Acts 4:30). Were they wrong? At least God did as they asked.

Similarly Paul writes to the Romans "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" (Rom.15:19). And to the Corinthians "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders and mighty deeds" (2 Cor.12:12). Where, my brother, is there any suggestion that God sent out His first messengers with signs, and that to His later messengers He denies such super-natural credentials? Has not the unbelieving world a right to such evidences that God has sent us? That is surely the inference of Hebrews 2:3-4.

In 1913 I went for a holiday with a friend, to the little Staffordshire village of G. I did not know at the time of a lonely woman who was giving much of her time to prayer for revival in



the place. It was apparently dead. In the two rival Methodist chapels on opposite sides of the street, they had not seen a soul saved for eleven years and those who "took communion" together at the Lord's table would not speak to each other in the street.

I was a perfect stranger there. One morning I went into the butcher's shop to get some meat for my hostess, and there happened to be a deaf customer in the shop, trying to hear and be heard. As I look back on the incident now it seems that I acted with shocking rashness, but I can only believe that the Holy Spirit directed me, for almost before I knew what I was doing, I put my hands on those deaf ears in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and prayed for the woman's hearing to be restored. There and then she found that she could hear, and of course the news went round the whole village for the healed woman and butcher, together with the customers, spread the report far and near.

Later in the day the same woman sent to ask if we would visit another woman some miles away in the country. She was dying of cancer and the doctor had said he could do no more. They must send to him when the time came for the death certificate. We found her and placed our hands on her head in the Name of the Lord Jesus. A few days later when the doctor examined her he was dumbfounded and remarked, "In all my 70 years I have not seen such a thing before. The cancer is drying right up." That same afternoon the vicar's wife called on the poor woman to try to persuade her to resign herself to death, since we were false teachers and it was impossible for cancer to be healed. Miracles, she said, were not for today. The silly woman was a couple of hours too late for the doctor had admitted that they were for today.

The Methodist churches however were eager to hear more about it, and we preached in both chapels on alternate nights. First, quarrels were made up, long-standing debts paid, forgiveness

asked for unkind scandal, and then, Praise God, souls came forward to the "communion rail" seeking salvation in both chapels. All this was the direct outcome of the incident in the butcher's shop, and Christ was glorified in a ministry confirmed by signs following.

Later, when I came to Central Africa, it was with the fixed idea that we were to fulfil the command of the Lord Jesus to His first disciples when "He sent them to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:2). In some 1,500 villages of Lubaland and Songiland we have placed our hands upon the sick in the Name of the Lord Jesus. That is just as if He Himself had so acted for it was in His Name—and of course He responded by healing them. I doubt if any one of those 1,500 villages has been without such supernatural healings, and even the splendid staff of Belgian Colonial doctors admit God's miraculous intervention in our testimony.

Brother Loizeaux, by placing an unwarranted barrier between the sign-attested ministry of the early church, and the lifeless powerless formalism of many churches today, you are robbing my Lord of glory, the gospel preacher of a powerful confirmation to his message, and the people of a demonstration of God's power. This is a divinely provided key to open the hearts and homes, villages and towns to our gospel testimony. In Acts 4:14 we read "Beholding the man which was healed . . . they could say nothing against it." One such miraculous demonstration of God's power does more to disarm agnostics than a whole library of Christian apologetics.

In 1928 I was attending the meetings of an evangelist, George Jeffreys, in Leeds Town Hall. There were crowds of around three thousand listening to his ministry, and after preaching the gospel of God's saving grace, the evangelist explained bodily healing to the people and prayed with the sick.

One afternoon a big powerful man struggled in on crutches. An

accident had left him so horribly mangled that his distorted ankles had turned and his feet faced backward instead of to the front.

We went to where he sat hunched together on a chair, and asked if we could try to make him a little more comfortable, but the poor fellow said, "No! Leave me. I'm never comfortable."

After the evening meeting they prayed with him anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord, and later as he was leaving the meeting, my friend Mr. Smith Wigglesworth was walking with his two daughters just ahead of the cripple, and had reached the vestibule when he shouted "Look out"! A moment later the man behind was jumping, shouting and swinging his useless crutches in the air. He had suddenly found that his feet and legs had become perfectly whole. He was so wild with delight that he nearly struck one of the daughters with a crutch.

That thing was not done in a corner. Three thousand people had seen him distorted with pain and twisted in body. They now saw him straight and strong. If you wish it, brother, I can get you the written testimonies of several eye-witnesses. Could any man say in the face of such an incident that God does not heal through His servants today? That night, so greatly was God's power upon the meeting, that over three hundred decisions for Christ were recorded.

I have challenged you to produce a single verse to show that God has abrogated His promise of Mark 16:17-18 to confirm the gospel by the healing of the sick. Paul writes to Timothy " The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, THE SAME commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also " (2Tim.2:2). Thus we hand on to others not the watered-down dregs of the gospel, but the same, the very same all-powerful gospel which Christ delivered to His disciples in the beginning, accompanied by signs following. Such supernatural confirmation is of the very essence of our gospel propaganda.

## **The Gift of Tongues.**

Brother, I would not like to infer that you are deliberately dishonest or deceitful, though you have been unkind enough to think that of us who experience God's healing power and who praise Him in the new languages of the Spirit. I would, however, point out that it is dreadfully possible, even unwittingly, to indulge in spiritual dishonesty ". . . walking in craftiness . . . handling the Word of God deceitfully" (2Cor.4:2).

You take your instructions for the Lord's Table from 1Cor.11 and for silencing the women from 1Cor.14. In fact the whole of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is very rightly your basis for church order. Yet when one quotes 1Cor.14:5 "I would that ye all spake with tongues," or verse 18 "I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all," or verse 39 "Forbid not to speak with tongues," one is told "Tongues are not for today." Isn't that inconsistent?

The fact is, the first Corinthian epistle is as much for you and me as for those at Corinth. It is addressed to "all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord" (1Cor.1:2). Yes, Sir! First Corinthians, chapter 14, on tongues, is just as much for the assemblies where you and I worship as for that at Corinth, and if we do not have gifts like that, then it shows how far we have fallen from the divine, the scriptural standard.

Many opponents of tongues do not even stop to ask what these spiritual manifestations really are. They are NOT for preaching, since "he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him: howbeit in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries" (1Cor.14:2). Peter didn't preach in tongues on the day of Pentecost, since those who heard were "devout Jews out of every nation" (Acts 2:8). Peter addressed them in their own common language.

Ask yourself the question "Were the tongues called forth by the presence of the crowd, or was the crowd attracted together by the

noise of the tongues?" You will find that the tongues started first, and that while the worshippers were extolling God's wonderful works in tongues, the crowd came together and recognised the languages that were being spoken.

Tongues, unless accompanied by interpretation, are for speaking to God and to oneself (1Cor.14:28). Normally such tongues are not recognised. "No man understandeth him" (1 Cor.14:2). Occasionally, however, as on the day of Pentecost, there are those present who can recognise the language employed in this worship to God.

May I clench the above points by some personal experience. Here are some cases where tongues have been recognised.

In 1913, when I was shepherding a little assembly of God's children in Lytham, Lancs., we held weekly open-air meetings on the promenade which runs along the sea front. One evening during the service a little old woman, very uneducated and extremely shy and retiring, suddenly broke out in peculiar staccato utterance in an unknown tongue. Normally one would expect the crowd to laugh and mock, but instead they seemed awed. When she had finished, to my surprise I was given the interpretation, which I spoke out for all to hear. This obviously moved the crowd. One man who had been a flourishing tailor in the town, but had lost everything through drink, shouted out in agony of soul (he was perfectly sober at the time), and coming into the ring of listeners he fell on his knees and cried to God for salvation. There was a Japanese man in the crowd, and he went straight back to his landlady and asked "Who are those people who preach near the lifeboat house?" She replied that we were a group of religious fanatics who tried to convert everybody to our belief.

The Japanese engineer declared "They may be what you state, but a woman among them spoke of Christ and His dying for us on a tree, in the best Japanese, while a man gave the exact equivalent

in English."

Neither Mrs. Whitehead, who spoke, nor I, who interpreted had had any contact with Japan, nor knew a word of Japanese. Moreover apparently the Japanese spoken was not that of a foreigner, but perfect, and the interpretation correct. I remember that while she was speaking I thought "Can that be a real language?" and I was not expecting to get the interpretation. It came to me absolutely spontaneously. Now here was a case of both tongues and interpretation recognised, and the result—a precious soul eternally saved.

A highly respected Methodist minister related the following to me. Languages had been his hobby and he was fluent in at least seven. Reading in the paper that extraordinary scenes of revival fervour were being experienced at Bowland Street Chapel, Bradford, and that some were professing to have the spiritual gifts of tongues and prophecy, he decided to investigate.

With much prayer that he might be clearly guided, he took train to Bradford and entered the meeting at the moment when the whole congregation was audibly praising God together.

He kneeled with the rest of us, and a few moments later was amazed to hear around him people speaking in rapturous praise and adoration to the Lord, in every one of those seven languages with which he was familiar.

He was dumbfounded. The people had been too occupied in their worship even to notice his entry or his kneeling among them. Certainly nobody present knew which languages he could speak. Then too, they were rejoicing in the death, resurrection and promised return of the Lord Jesus, extolling the efficacy of His cleansing blood and of His risen power. There were many things which he realised as Scriptural in that meeting, though he had never before seen them in practice.

Without saying a word he set out again for his home, and on the way found himself in a railway carriage alone, so took out his pipe

and tobacco, and lit up in order to think over all he had seen and heard in Bowland Street meeting. A great longing took hold of him to be filled with the Holy Ghost, to be God-possessed and God-controlled. Then it occurred to him that that tobacco pipe was somehow not consistent with such a desire, so he threw his pipe and tobacco pouch out of the railway carriage window and, falling on his knees, he cried to God to endue him too with power from on high. When his train arrived at the station where he was to alight, he found that he too was extolling the Lord Jesus in a new language which he had never learned.

From that time onward he often came into Bradford for times of fellowship, bringing with him members of his congregation, and I have heard him tell of the above experience on several occasions. Here at Mwanza in the Belgian Congo, when we find that the spiritual tone of the churches seems to be cold, we gather for three or four days, or even a week of prayer, ministry of the Word and waiting on God.

On one such occasion the crowd of believers was too big for a united meeting so my wife took the women into the building, another missionary going with the young folk to the shade of our orchard, while I went with the men to pray under the shade of some great forest trees. After a time of quiet prayer in which one after another led, the Holy Spirit swept over the meeting like a wind across a field of wheat, the whole crowd started praying, while I kept a quiet eye on them to be assured that there was no undue excitement or extravagance.

I was struck with the earnestness of a young man, Ziba, whose eyes were closed and his lips moving rapidly. I tip-toed round to where he sat, and listened. He must have been quite unaware of my presence. He was a simple village lad and had certainly never had any opportunity to learn a European language, since we speak and preach to them entirely in their own tongue.

To my surprise he was speaking in tongues and I could

understand every word of it. It was absolutely perfect and in my own language. He was speaking of Christ's return to earth to reign, and of the glories of His millennial kingdom. There was neither unscriptural sentiment nor ungrammatical expression and not a trace of foreign accent! What moved me deeply was that this miracle was obviously for my own personal benefit alone. When Ziba resumed worship in his own language, I moved quietly away, awed, and he does not know to this day what happened during that worship meeting beneath the forest trees.

Now, brother, whether the foregoing circumstances fit in with your particular brand of doctrine or not, at least you could hardly say that I am either deceiver or deceived.

Many a time a day I praise God in tongues as well as in my own language, in my private and personal communion with God, though others rarely hear me. The same can be said of thousands of other believers who love the Lord and His Word just as much as you do.

Moreover let it be said that we are not alone in the enjoyment of such gifts. Some forty years ago an old Salvation Army Officer entered our meeting in Preston, Lancashire, and I was a little nervous as to the effect upon him when tongues were in evidence during a time of worship. I need not have worried, however, for after the meeting he assured me, "In the early days of the Army we frequently had such manifestations during our half-nights of prayer. We did not understand them but called them glory fits."

Similarly a paid organist from a Catholic church in Johannesburg attended our meetings in that city, and was surprised to hear praying in the Spirit. He said that he had "sometimes heard the nuns speaking in that way during their long vigils and times of prayer, though they do not seem able to understand or to explain it."

I could multiply such evidence almost indefinitely. I heard tongues in Geraldine, New Zealand, in 1899, and during the



Welsh Revival, though it was only after I myself received this precious gift that I realised what they were.

In 1921 the Pastor of a meeting in Toronto, Canada, confided in me "Brother Burton, there is something I do not understand in our assembly. When the meeting is warmed up to a real fervency of spirit a woman bursts out into an ejaculation. It never varies, and it seems to me like nonsense. She says in a kind of intonation Kalombooo Vidye. Vidyeeeeee Kalombo." I don't like to stop her. What would you do about it?" I said, "Oh, do let me hear it, brother. That is an expression used by our natives in highest respect to their big chiefs." On my return to Lubaland I was much struck by the monotonous regularity with which the village counsellors keep up an excited "Kalombo Vidye," in reverence to their chiefs during sessions of the court, and can well understand both what an ejaculation of loving worship it was on the woman's part and also how it might have puzzled her pastor.

Now there is no necessity to befog the issue before us. Have I given you scripture for each point as to what tongues are or are not? Is there a place in God's Word for the use of tongues in the Church? Then why, my brother, do you arbitrarily denounce as "deceivers or deceived" those of us who enjoy this precious gift? There is another far greater gift. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and exercise many other gifts and graces yet have not love, I am nothing" (1Cor.13:1-3). I pray that your love may abound yet more and more. Then perhaps you will not be quite so ready to condemn your brothers and sisters in Christ.

## **The Other Signs.**

Brother Loizeaux, you did not mention the other signs but singled out two. In Mark 16 verses 17 and 18, Christ also speaks of immunity from snake-bite and poison, and the casting out of devils. Thus, while we are dealing with this subject, I would like to give some testimony regarding these, for all the five signs stand or fall together.

### **Snakes.**

I live in a country of snakes. We have found a snake under the table where we were eating. Snakes sometimes lie across our path. A big slate-coloured snake, which can squirt its venom several feet, often gets into our chicken pens. A great poisonous mamba entered the bedroom where my wife was lying ill. Snakes large and small get into the house, lie motionless in our fruit-trees, hide in the dead leaves beneath our trees. I have killed two great fat Gaboon adders the same day in a kiln from which I was unpacking bricks. Thus in 33 years I have naturally had some experience of God's protection.

In the early mornings, when we are tramping and camping, my wife and I often cannot kneel to pray because of mosquitoes, so we go ahead and talk to the Lord along the path while our native carriers are packing up the tent and camp kit.

One morning I was some yards ahead of Mrs. Burton, and thoroughly enjoying the presence of the Lord, when she shouted, "Come and look here!" I turned back to find that without even knowing it, I had trodden on an adder as it lay across the path in its characteristic way, and had broken its spine through the middle. It still writhed and hissed, but God had fulfilled His promise in Psalm 91:13 "Thou shalt tread upon . . . the adder," and of Luke 10:19 "I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy ; and nothing shall by any means hurt you."

On another occasion as I was doing a repair job in the workshop a snake fell from the roof and coiled on to my arm. I shook it off and killed it with a hammer.

The wife of my head school-teacher recently returned from the forest with a bundle of firewood on her head. She had walked over a mile with it. As she set it down a deadly poisonous snake glided out. Similarly on several occasions, at our bonfire services, snakes have come out of the bundles that were being thrown on to the flames.

One afternoon, as we were returning, rejoicing in the Lord, from a particularly good village meeting, and were following a narrow little footpath, the ejaculation from one of my native companions caused me to look round, and there was a hooded cobra, erect beside the path, its spoon-shaped head extended as it swayed, ready to strike. I had walked right past it. I could give many more such experiences. There are deaths from snake-bite every year in the villages around us, yet we believers walk the forests constantly under the protection of God with absolute immunity.

### **Poison.**

Now as to poison:—The native witch-doctor and sorcerer fraternity are our relentless enemies. We expose their frauds, deliver their victims, and rob them by our gospel of both income and prestige. These men are expert poisoners. They think nothing of putting their opposers out of the way by a decoction of kimpengele or mwavi bark, or by any one of a dozen less-known deadly roots and fruits that grow everywhere in these forests.

We have evidence that they have tried repeatedly to poison us. One day my chum and I were enjoying a delicious plate of palm-nuts that had been brought to us as a present. We had about finished them when a young man ran up excitedly and whispered, "White man, on no account must you eat those palm-nuts, they are poisoned." We had already eaten them, however. So we knelt and committed ourselves to God, claiming the promise of Mark

16:17-18 "These signs shall follow them that believe; if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them." We felt absolutely no ill effects from the palm-nuts and for years I hesitated to speak of the incident, lest there had been some mistake, and the nuts had not been poisoned. Then I became very friendly with an ex-medicineman and spirit-consultant. He opened his heart to me with unusual freedom, and when I remarked, "You know that your poisons could not harm us," he laughed as he replied, "Yes, we (witch-doctors) have all found that out. I was the one who sent you the poisoned palm-nuts from Kanguba, but our poisons which kill other people have no effect on you Christians."

### **Finally As To The Casting Out Of Devils.**

You only have to read Pastor Hsi, one of China's Christians, to realise that this is not out of date, and that in 1949 the demon world is just as much under the power of the Name of the Lord Jesus as when He was on earth.

Here are one or two of the many cases in my own experience. Our evangelist Ngaiusa had been preaching in a village of time-expired workmen. These were more intelligent, more used to white man's ways than the average native, so that after years of service for the State they were given a place near the Government Post in which to spend their last days.

The wife of one of these men was deeply moved by the gospel and she wished to make a public confession of her faith in Christ, but her husband forbade her becoming a Christian. Then suddenly she went mad. At least that is what the world calls it. The whole village was soon upset by her paroxysms of rage. Generally at night she would rush up and down the village screaming, using filthy insults at everyone, breaking food store-pots and even setting fire to huts. She had superhuman strength at such times, throwing down, mauling and tearing to ribbons the clothes of any who attempted to stop her.

The husband blamed Ngaiusa for it all. When she was not in

these intense rages she would sit moping, silent, neither eating herself nor preparing food for her family. She was put down at the evangelist's door and he was told, "Henceforth whatever damage she does, you and not I must pay the costs."

Poor Ngaiusa! He was greatly disturbed and came to ask us what to do. The whole of the local, church went to prayer and fasting. I pointed out that we must act in faith on the promise of Mark 16:17, relying on the power of the Name of Jesus. This was done. The demons were expelled, and the whole neighbourhood saw the woman delivered, saved, clothed and in her right mind.

A few months ago I halted my auto in a village where a poor man sat in a chair with his neck fastened in a forked pole by an iron bar behind, and his hands and feet made fast to the same pole by a stout wire. I went and spoke to him, though his relatives warned me not to approach him as he was dangerous. I told him of the power of the crucified and risen Christ, and then commanded the demons, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, to leave him.

Several days later, returning by the same road, we overtook a happy, smiling man, walking along singing to the accompaniment of a little native musical instrument. It was the same man, and he was completely delivered.

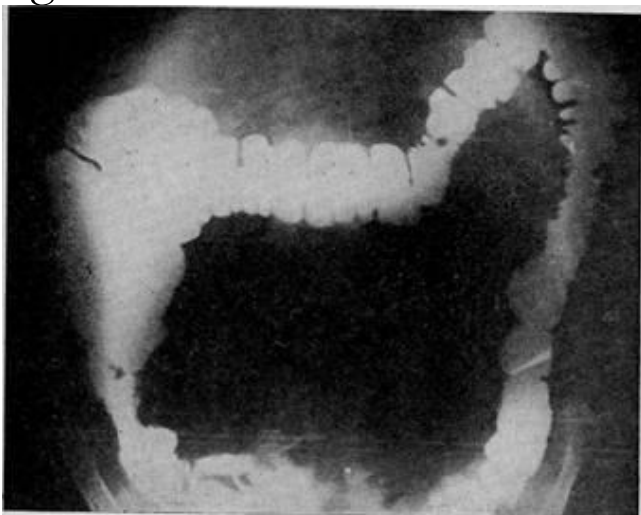
Now brother, these things are happening in 1949 and not only in the first days of the dispensation. I could multiply such testimony a hundredfold. But I believe that you have ample evidence that we are neither deceivers nor deceived.

One of the features of the last days is that men shall have a form of godliness while denying its power (2Tim.3:1 and 5). Nevertheless in these very last days of God's dispensation of grace we are entitled to believe in, and to enjoy, precisely what they enjoyed on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16), for Peter declared "THIS (this speaking in tongues which we are experiencing) is THAT, which was spoken by the prophet Joel, In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit . . .

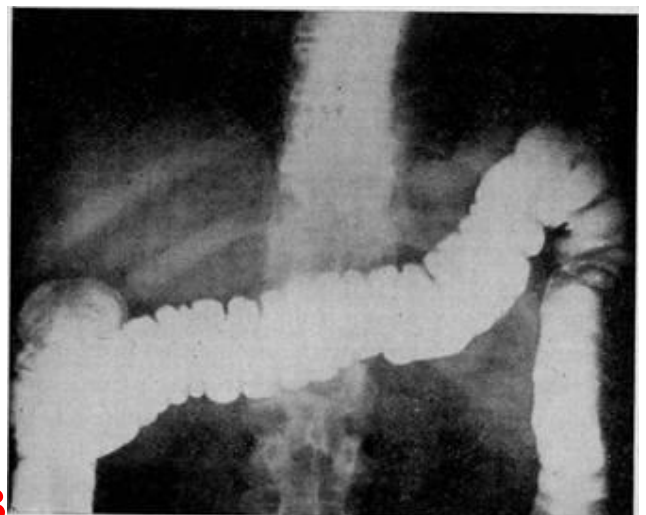
prophecy... visions... dreams." Do you say "These things are not for today?" I reply that they are to continue right up to the last days. If Pentecost was already classed as "the last" then we must be in the last of the last days, and how pre-eminently we have a right to enjoy these things. Play the game, brother! Can you have anything later than the "last"? Admit that you cannot. Then, since tongues are for the last days they are still absolutely scripturally for today. They will only be terminated by the darkening of the sun and moon (verse 20) which will occur after the tribulation, and as a prelude to Christ's return to earth (Matt.24:29-30).

Does not 1Cor.1:7 suggest to you that all the gifts were expected by Paul to be in evidence until the return of the Lord Jesus in the clouds of glory, to take to Himself His own? It says "...so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In any case, dear brother, you have both scriptural evidence and pages from my own experience as to the reality of present-day signs following. I can only ask God to give you grace to take an honest right-about face, to admit your mistake (we all make such mistakes), and to realise that we who stand for divine healing and tongues are neither deceivers nor deceived.



**A**



**B**

**A** The Diseased Colon. X-ray Photograph taken about March, 1944, showing the cancer eating away the colon until it is practically blocked.

**B** 1947. Showing perfectly healthy colon—healed by God





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