

Introduction

When the Lord through John greeted the congregation in Ephesus (Rev 2), he found most things in the congregation to be good. But he also saw that it had forsaken its first love for him, and he urged repentance.

I have often wondered how it happened in concrete terms. You can't know that. And it would surely be the work of the Spirit when the people turned to him, and then perhaps it was enough that the Spirit knew.

Perhaps the Lord would give the same greeting to us today. We also have so much that is good. A lot can get better, but sometimes we complain so much that we don't see all the beauty that is always there.

But the first love may still need to be reawakened in our hearts. When that need arises in a marriage, people like to talk about starting over. Imagine if that could happen in our Christian life too. If friendly and pious but perhaps a little tired and discouraged Christians could be infected by a little crazy new love for the Lord.

Does it work?

Yes, of course it works. Many of us remember the time when the Jesus Movement came to Sweden. I myself remember G 72 when Bertil Gärtner and Levi Pethrus found each other, and we ordinary grassroots sat together in the city's parks and sang Bible choirs without asking which church the others belonged to.

The Jesus movement became a charismatic revival that turned into a faith movement. Our knowledge grew, and we were able to discover things that were in the Scriptures but had been forgotten. There was much that became more efficient. Eventually, it also became somewhat more professional. Then the first love disappeared. It may be a little difficult to say what the second love consists of, but the first has a Christ-like scent that is easy to recognize. This very fact that everyone found each other from community leaders down was such a clear sign that the Lord himself was at work.

Now there is division going on and we all suffer from it. Christian media is overflowing with calls for unity, but it is not that easy. Unity is the fruit of the Spirit and not ours. We cannot create unity. We can only be converted to unity with the help of the Spirit, which is something else entirely.

The love of the Lord's person is so easily replaced by the love of the business, one's own hem, one's own results. We so easily solidify our division with differences in doctrine, and when we do, we can't just pretend the differences don't exist.

When you have to start over in a marriage, you encounter many obstacles.

The spouses have many thoughts about each other that are not always correct and such thoughts hinder them. In the same way, we have often received thoughts about the Lord, which may be there

obstacle to a renewed love. Theology can get in the way. This is probably part of the point of the story of the Tree of Knowledge.

To the theologians and jurists of his time, Jesus said that God hides himself from the wise and prudent. One can gain so much knowledge about God that one loses contact with Him. You don't have to do that. Paul did not. But the risk is there, and it naturally grows if the knowledge is deficient. A theology that is highly profiled and not entirely correct is often the most dangerous thing.

Repent and become like children, Jesus said to the wise and prudent. Taste that expression: a conversion for the converted!

What knowledge might have become an obstacle for us? Here, as so often in God's kingdom, it is our strength that is our weakness. We were taught a lot about the gifts of grace in the 1970s and early 1980s, and the knowledge of the revival so easily passes into the tradition that eventually becomes its own suffocating straitjacket.

The charismatic message

"I want you all to have knowledge of the gifts of grace," writes Paul. Even so, the Bible gives us remarkably little of just such teaching. You come across a list of a number of gifts, but almost nothing is said about how to get into their function, and often we don't even get to know what the individual gift actually stands for. We have our thoughts about what is meant by the gift of knowledge, but we cannot know if Paul thought the same as we do. The gift is mentioned, but nowhere is it stated what it consists of and how it works.

Today, there is still a lot of teaching about the gifts of grace and the supernatural work of the Spirit that does not catch your eye when you read through the New Testament. How did it come to be? We can point to two sources of knowledge that have contributed: experience and revelation.

In recent decades, many people have taught about the function of the gifts by simply sharing what they themselves have experienced. Of course we need such teaching, because if nothing else, it is very encouraging. But it is a risky path we tread when we take advantage of experiences. Experiences must be tested before they can be used, and unfortunately this rarely happens.

I remember a friend who would deliver a person from the oppression of spirits. He found that if he sprinkled holy water on the suffering human, the spirits screamed. He was greatly encouraged by this and took it as proof of the effect of the holy water. I for one do not think that the powers that be screamed in terror, but that they screamed to mislead him. In the name of Jesus and only there we have salvation says the Scriptures, but my friend became so absorbed in his holy water that he was forgetting the name of Jesus.

We always win our experiences in confrontation with him who is the Father of Lies, and he has a masterful ability to give us experiences that derail us. He doesn't always offer resistance. He can give us "results" by making a roof-

tical retreat, knowing full well that we will then make a lesson of what we thought was behind the strange "victory".

The second source flow has come through revelations. These have come to form a fund of knowledge alongside the biblical word. Often they are in the nature of interpretive and explanatory comments on experiences made. That is precisely why they have seemed so real. They have matched more or less well with a biblical word and with one or more experiences. Fatally, it has sometimes been overlooked that there were words in the Bible that spoke directly against the revelation received. It shouldn't if the revelation is to be genuine.

Experiences and revelations have finally been woven together in a complicated theology that has come to be called creed. This theology is not new. The great teacher's name was Essek William Kenyon (1867-1948). He wrote a long series of books, which became the starting point for modern preachers of the faith such as Hagin, Copeland, Capps and others.

The declaration of faith thus existed many decades before the Jesus movement arose. But when the interest in the gifts of grace took off, this particular theology got more air under its wing
the arna.

In the declaration of faith, one sees precisely the mixture of experience and revelation I have already mentioned. Strikingly, a proper trial is often lacking. Why this can be so will be discussed in chapter 5. Since the faith movement is a typical "teaching movement", where the role of knowledge and confession is strongly emphasized, the consequences can be extra difficult if you do not try what is taught.

The Jesus movement gave birth to unity. However, the faith movement does not. This does not necessarily mean that the former was true and the latter false. There is fake device. We are warned not to go in yoke with the children of the world. There were many conflicts both around Jesus and around Paul. Today we can only state that what began with the reconciliation of God's people has turned into disappointment, conflict and division. Therefore, it is especially important to review the doctrine.

For if the division is of God, it will separate the lukewarm and unwilling from the devoted and surrendered. That is how I personally find it difficult to see today's situation. I think I see many devoted Christians on both sides of the dividing line, just as there also seem to be many "ego trippers" in both camps.

A demarcation

In this context, perhaps I should explain what I mean by the word confession of faith. Hans Johansson recently published an analysis of Kenyon's theology and had it reviewed in the magazine Trons Värld (no. 13, 1989) by Krister Holmström. In the review, it was considered that Kenyon would be as hopelessly out of date as a SAAB two-stroke car from the 40s compared to a modern SAAB 9000. According to Holmström, an examination of Kenyon's teachings would therefore be uninteresting. Modern creed was said to be something quite different.

Then it is strange that Livets Ord had some of Kenyon's most radical books, including Identification, translated into Swedish. All students received these at least until

1986 under the promise not to spread them further. You don't hand out old two-strokes at Life's Ord, do you? Didn't Holmström know that these books were course literature?

In the following, I want to define the proclamation of faith as a type of Christianity based on Kenyon's view of man: that "man is a spirit that has a soul and lives in a body". According to Kenyon, man's true nature would only lie in his spirit, while the rest is not himself. God, on the other hand, says to Adam: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19).

Since the foundation is false, yet inalienable to all preachers of the faith, the building placed on top must be risky even if different preachers put up slightly different houses. Kenyon's theology shows with particular clarity how far one can get both from the Bible and reality with his point of departure.

Holmström rejects Kenyon's idea that we would become like God in our spirit through rebirth. That thought would be an example of how unfashionable Kenyon would be. Yet this very message has been delivered on the Word of Life by Bobbie-Jean Merck.

And I have in my possession a recording with Carl-Gustav Severin (Umeå 21/4 1987), where the preacher shouts out: "I am God".

It is therefore fully justified with an analysis of Kenyon's teaching system. He is not at all unfashionable or uninteresting. Each reader must judge for himself whether the results in this book have no connection to contemporary proclamation of faith or not. As much as possible, I want to build up the analysis from Kenyon's own starting point and show what it leads to.

Most people today see Kenneth Hagin as the originator of the faith movement, and it is true that for our generation he is the dominant name. He himself claims that he received his message directly from the Holy Spirit, and he acknowledges his dependence on Kenyon only in the preface to The Name of Jesus. In the book A different gospel, DR McConnell shows that there are many direct copies of Kenyon's work in other books by Hagin without crediting the source. Therefore, when we turn to Kenyon's theology, we examine the source itself.

Our first goal is to clear away the inaccuracies mixed into today's charismatic teaching. When we have done that, we must go to the texts of the Bible and try to find angles of approach that can give a fuller message about the graces of the Spirit.

Unless otherwise noted, quotations from the New Testament are taken from Bo Giertz's translation.

Chapter 1

Own experience

Life is often different from school in that the test comes first and the theory lessons later, when it turned out that you didn't pass the test. That's how it was for me in the contact with the proclamation of faith.

The first time I seriously encountered the declaration of faith was at a conference in Jönköping in the summer of 1982. I had gone there without knowing what I was getting myself into. You wanted to stay informed. On the evening of the first day, I called my wife at home and said: "This is a pure madhouse. I will come home tomorrow." Marianne thought that if I had already paid, I might as well stay and see a little more what it was all about. That's why I stayed the time out.

On the morning of the second day, the "prophetic" message came, which turned my whole judgment upside down: "Thus says the Lord: 'I do not want you to be critical of my servants the prophets, whom I have called to help you....'" I felt totally overwhelmed and I remember many others doing the same. Yes, of course it was: I was critical and perhaps even jealous. I quickly shut down all the internal warning signals in my spirit. I opened up wide and let myself be influenced.

When I got home, Marianne thought that my personality had changed in the few days I had been away. I was enthusiastic but tough. Later, when we could talk freely about it all, she said that she liked him who came home worse than she liked him who went there. She perceived me as unapproachable and I immediately began to tell her a little from above how she should build faith in certain areas of her life...

At that time, I had already begun to devote a lot of time to Bible teaching and decided that there would always be a "before" and an "after Jönköping" in my preaching.

That's how it happened, but in a completely different way than I thought at the time.

The Way of Faith

In February 1983, a close friend came up with the idea that we should start a Bible school. He had been to the United States and seen a number of religious congregations, and he also had contact with a man who wanted to give that kind of teaching if we started a school. Did I want to join? As I prayed and listened, I only got one thought that I could see as God's address: "You must not open your own. You must have good contacts with the congregations in the place where you are." I took that as a go-ahead.

This is not the place to give a detailed account of all events at the school. Most of it belongs in the sea of oblivion and should be allowed to rest in undisturbed peace. I still want some relationships

highlight, because I have seen similar things in many other contexts where the proclamation is believed to have been received.

The time of torment

For me, these years were filled with agony. I saw how many students were affected for the worse. Some became hard and fanatical. Others became mere shadows of themselves.

Not all became hard or unwell, but many seemed to grow spiritually in a healthy way. But the "misfires" still worried me, and they increased in number the more faith preaching came to dominate. Those who became depressed I soon caught up with, as I was responsible for the school's pastoral care. I myself also felt a hard-to-determine discomfort without really understanding why.

Behind the scenes, there was a permanent power struggle from the very beginning. Strong forces - even among the students - were constantly in motion for us to proclaim only "faith".

Equally strong forces also wanted to transform the school, which had good contacts with the congregations, into a new congregation with an autocratic leadership. Myself, I always strove for us to wait for the Spirit to agree before we acted. Against this, strong pressure was occasionally exerted that one should be appointed leader, and the rest of us should submit.

There was a lot of prophesying in the school board, in lessons, at recess, in the corridors, yes - everywhere. The messages had a great influence on the atmosphere but were still never tried.

Some prophecies had a clearly threatening character. The two and a half years that I participated in the work with the school, I remember for this reason already as the longest and most anxiety-filled years of my life. It takes time before one dares and has the courage to decide that most of a whole flood of prophetic messages can flow from false sources.

I therefore entered into an increasingly difficult wrestling match with the question of where all the hardness came from. How could the message of love make some seem to soar high in the blue with enthusiasm, while at the same time they lost all sense, moderation and humility and stopped listening? Why did others look sick instead?

It became for me a time of intensive Bible reading and prayer. Eventually the view cleared. Then I started talking to the school board that we need to review our message. So when at any one of them no one really understood what I was talking about.

They were my friends, and most of them I still keep in touch with and count as friends. But when they didn't understand what I was talking about, I left the school.

I still remember how happy I felt that day when I experienced God's sanction to resign. Just when this happened I was leading the school hymn. Several people came forward afterwards and spoke of what a wonderful "anointing" there had been in the song that very morning. Wonder about it!

Many students who had suffered anxiety from the teaching heaved a sigh of relief, when a little later I announced my decision and motivation for it. They now dared to seek pastoral care for the first time.

You live as you learn

My first spontaneous reaction to the declaration of faith was clearly rejection. Through a "prophecy" it was silenced, and instead I became very interested. What happened next forced me step by step to realize that my first impression had been correct.

I then also understood that it was not just a matter of some preachers handling a real message in an unwise way. Instead, there were several fundamental errors in the message, which created the effects that are seen everywhere this proclamation is drawn - mainly division. These errors look small and innocent, and one can easily think that analyzing them becomes a ridiculous chore. But it's not. If you were to get a fake hundred bill in your hand, it might look pretty much like a real one. Most of the time, it's just a series of details that show it's fake.

During these years, both at school and in other contexts, I met many enthusiastic people of faith. I saw early on that when there were problems with them, it was because they lived what they taught. It did not pay to admonish them even in the face of obvious self-indulgence. Then only selected parts of the new teaching were given as answers. It could end with you yourself being admonished to "stand on the Word".

By this I do not want to say that everyone in this movement automatically becomes suicidal. The interesting thing is that you can become one without clashing with the doctrine. Those who become it are usually the ones who push the learning issue the hardest.

So it was not just the application that was wrong, but mainly the teaching itself. Many are influenced by Kenyon, but there are very few in Sweden who have read a single book by him. Kenyon's successors have often softened his challenging claims without departing from his thinking. For example, Kenyon's thought (see ch. 2) is a bit low, that we become equal with God through rebirth. One prefers to speak of the believer's "spiritual potential". If we don't review the doctrine now, this theology will probably come up later when we get used to it.

Summary

The declaration of faith easily leads to the people who embrace it being shielded from other people. Some it becomes in a state of bloatedness, while others' foreclosure has the appearance of dejection, convulsion and depression. In both cases, the person has been harmed, even if the previous state feels very good - almost crunching the map well - for the person concerned. In any case, it has ceased to be suitable for a community based on mutual listening.

Those who are hurt the most in either direction are those who take the doctrine most seriously. The fault is not only in its application. It is in theology itself. Even people who are completely healthy and balanced from the start can change and even become seriously mentally ill if they take the teachings seriously. Not everyone does. Many enjoy the atmosphere of the meeting without putting much emphasis on the doctrine. They can become invigorated and feel good. But it shouldn't be the case that you have to take the proclamation with a big pinch of salt in order to survive.

Chapter 2

Born again

Kenyon's preaching is based on a word of Paul about the new birth. In 2 Cor 5:17 it says:

"So: if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old is the past. Behold, something new has come."

The radicality of this text is very important to Kenyon. When we came to faith, we were apparently totally transformed. How is it that this transformation is not visible more than it is?

Kenyon compares to what happened in the Fall. Adam was warned that he would die if he ate from the forbidden tree. And of course he died in the end, but we might have expected him to immediately collapse as if the fruit had contained potassium cyanide. But something happened right away, because he started to feel ashamed of his naked hotness. He hadn't done that before. And he hid himself from God. So he died, and yet it looked as if he lived.

Kenyon's explanation for all this has to do with the human spirit. He starts from the word in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, where it speaks of spirit, soul and body. These seem to be the "constituents" of man. And Kenyon now makes an unproven claim that becomes the basis of the entire creed. He says that "man is a spirit that has a soul and lives in a body". This means that it would only be the spirit of man that constitutes man himself. The rest then becomes something she has or lives in, but it is not herself as much as her clothes.

Kenyon's thought is that God is Spirit and man is created to be his image. Then man's true nature must also be spirit. But that's not what it says in the Bible, but these are Kenyon's own thoughts.

Spiritually dead

In the fall, Adam died just as God had said, but he died spiritually, according to Kenyon. And this is perfectly logical if man is no more than spirit in his true nature. The soul and body remained even afterwards, but they are not the real nature of man. They became mortal because the spirit was dead. But this appeared first later.

In the same way, but the other way around, it is now said to be at the time of rebirth. Then the human spirit becomes alive again. Since she is really only spirit, she is now totally re-

posed. Why the body is still mortal when the whole man is restored is not clear from Kenyon's teaching.

In God's class

In long passages, most Christians can probably keep up, even if you might feel a little puzzled by the idea that the soul and body would not belong to our real self. But Kenyon goes further by describing the spirit of man to explain the fall and regeneration.

Then he says that before the fall, Adam was "in God's class" ("the same class as God"). Some of Kenyon's followers therefore say that Adam was the god of creation - admittedly with a small g, but still. In his spirit, Adam was perfect and perfectly righteous - according to Kenyon. He was a superman ("superman"), and he had absolute authority over all creation.

Kenyon speaks in somewhat obscure terms when he has to explain why the devil got power after Adam. The fall of sin is usually called "high treason". Adam had power over creation, but he gave it to the devil. Adam was supposed to be the prince of this world, but now the devil became it instead. The sin was that Adam should rule over the serpent, and yet he took counsel from the serpent. Then it was the serpent that ruled, and this Kenyon describes as a kind of worship. Adam would have listened to God and not to anyone Other.

In his spirit Adam had all the righteousness - all that was needed to care for the creation. Now he made the mistake of not listening to his spirit and instead listened to an advice that entered through his ears. But the ears are not Adam. They are not part of God's image. That way all kinds of fraud can enter.

As we shall see later, Kenyon speaks very disparagingly of what he calls mind science. According to him, man is created to retrieve all essential information from his spirit (= revelatory knowledge). Everything that goes from the inside out is good, but what goes from the outside in is suspicious or dangerous. Here we meet part of the explanation for believing that teaching easily creates self-determination (= from the inside out) and takes away from people their ability to listen to other people (= from the outside in).

God's nature lost

Equality with God was lost when Adam listened to the devil's counsel instead of acting from his righteous and perfect spirit. In his righteousness he needed no counsel. Nevertheless, he allowed himself to be led by the one over whom he was to rule. Then Adam came to submit to the devil and lost all the fine things he previously had in his spirit. Instead, he received the nature of Satan in his spirit. He became a sinner. When he acted on mind knowledge instead of revelation knowledge, he committed high treason.

The consequence, according to Kenyon, was that Adam now had nothing but sense knowledge to go by. Revelation knowledge leads to faith and sense knowledge to fear. Faith leads to righteousness and fear to sin, says Kenyon. Adam now started one

miserable hike. He had received the nature of Satan in his spirit, and he did not walk in faith, but in that doubt and fear which the knowledge of the mind always produces, and which is the enemy of faith.

Adam born again

Kenyon's thought is now that Jesus' salvation has restored the entire original state. We are now perfectly righteous in our spirit - which is our real self. We are therefore again "in God's class". Disciples of Kenyon sometimes say outright that we are gods - albeit with a small g. Therefore we have now regained the unlimited authority over creation - and not least over the demons. If we put these in place, everything will be fine again, it is said.

Therefore, it is now important not to repeat Adam's mistake. We must walk in faith and not in fear. We must live by revelation and not by sense impressions. Everything must go from the inside out. The opposite creates fear and robs us of our righteousness. Over

our righteous spirit the devil has no influence, but he is constantly trying to gain an entrance through that which belongs to the world and which is not our real self: the body and the soul.

Therefore, it is important not to listen - other than to legitimate preachers of the faith.

It is important to never allow any sense impressions to give rise to thoughts that could call the "revelation" into question.

In practice, it therefore becomes the case that if you do not listen to a preacher of the faith, you are critical. If you listen to other voices, you let the devil in. In both cases, you have yourself to blame when things go crazy - because it is taken for granted that it does.

Is this true?

When we now begin to examine this which is the basis of the proclamation of faith, we find a strange mixture of insight and imagination. However, the final product is mostly colored by the latter, and the consequences are therefore disastrous even though there is much that is true.

Let's start with the view of man. Is she just spirit? Is only the spirit her true self? We listen to two quotes from Paul:

"Now may God himself, who is the God of peace, sanctify you to your whole being and preserve you well preserved and blameless in spirit, soul and body at the return of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

"And the spirits of the prophets submit to the prophets" (1 Corinthians 14:32).

It becomes a bit confusing to read the first quote without coming to the conclusion that our whole being must also include body and soul.

The second quote clearly shows that Kenyon is wrong in his very premise. The prophet has the task of keeping his own spirit in order. Then it cannot be the spirit of the prophet who is the "real" prophet. In that case, that verse becomes pure nonsense. In addition, is

the spirit of the prophet apparently no more perfect than the prophet must rule it. Had Kenyon written this verse, it would have said that the prophets are always identical with the spirit of the

prophets. Even the first of the two quotes punctures Kenyon's thesis that the born-again man would be perfectly righteous in his spirit. Because if she was - then why would Paul wish that Christian people were sanctified in their spirit? Would he not rather have written that the already righteous spirit would sanctify soul and body?

If you think this is too meager as evidence, read carefully through 1 Corinthians 15:42-50. It says that the first Adam was from the earth, while the second Adam (Christ) became a life-giving spirit. The text has many angles, but the one I'm looking for here speaks that the most important part of the first Adam was not his spirit but his physical form.

Two steps

Let's leave Kenyon for a moment and look at some basic features of the Bible's teaching on the new birth.

The Hebrew expression that we translate as "to die" not only means to cease to exist, but can just as well be translated as "to separate (from someone)". Adam came through the fall to be separated from God who is Life and who is the only one who "has life in himself" (John 5:26).

When Adam was separated from God, it wasn't just his spirit that lost touch. He could no longer see God or touch Him. All creation lost direct contact in the same way. Thus began the time when "the whole creation together groans and travails as in a child in distress" (Romans 8:22). That time will not end until Jesus returns and we get to see him as he is (1 John 3:1-2), because when we see him with our physical eyes, his life in us is perfected, not sooner.

Therefore, in Scripture, the resurrection of the dead and their eye contact with Jesus is perceived as a second step in rebirth. About that day Jesus says:

"When the world is born again, and the Son of Man sits on the throne of his glory..." (Matthew 19:28)

The rebirth that we have now experienced is a new birth of the spirit. It is called about the Christian:

"But whoever abides in the Lord becomes one spirit with him" (1 Corinthians 6:17).

In the same letter, Paul nevertheless underlines that this our reunion with the Lord is too incomplete and insufficient for his influence on us to lead to full right skill, wisdom or power, not even in our spirit. It says in 1 Corinthians 13:12:

"Now we see a dim image in a mirror. Then we shall see face to face."

The spirit is reunited with God, but the body and soul are not. For this reason, our knowledge is a piecemeal piece like all the other gifts of grace. What will be perfected when we see Christ face to face is not yet completed in our lives. On

the cross is completed and we have a God contact in our spirit. And it is a wonderful beginning, but it is still only the beginning.

Jesus as born again

In some places in the New Testament, Jesus' resurrection is spoken of as a rebirth. In Col 1:18 it says:

"He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead.."

This birth corresponds in our lives to the resurrection of the dead. When Kenyon speaks of Jesus being born again, he is not referring to Jesus' physical resurrection from the dead, but rather that Jesus who "had the nature of Satan" regained "the nature of God."

Kenyon therefore often returns to the idea that Jesus was born again to full royal dignity, and he means that when we are born again we receive the same authority that he has in heaven. But that is not the case yet. We must wait until the resurrection of the dead to see what authority will then be ours. Here and now he can exercise his authority through us, but that is another matter.

Through death to life

The perishable cannot inherit incorruption, writes Paul (1 Cor 15:50). This means that what is to be born again must have died before it can have new life. So it is with the spirit of the believer. God dwells in holiness on high, Isaiah writes (Isa 57:15) but also with the one who is broken and has a humble spirit. Only at the resurrection of the dead is the prerequisite for the rebirth of body and soul. Therefore we die to the body even though we have been made alive to the spirit. For the body is as much a part of our being as the spirit.

Different teachings about sanctification

Because we are reunited with God in two steps, John writes that we are God's children already now. Yet it is not revealed what we will become. It only becomes apparent when Jesus reveals himself so that we see him as he is (1 John 3:1-2).

This means that Kenyon is wrong when he believes that we are already there and sharply criticizes the church for its way of proclaiming sanctification. According to Kenyon, it is only the spirit that is man, and the task of the church is to proclaim that the believer is already fully righteous in his spirit. According to him, sanctification consists in "realizing who you are in Christ" and using the authority over the demons that will break their power.

On the other hand, the Church has always said that the saved person feels good when everyone sees his helplessness against sin if he only sees Christ's goodness and right skill at the same time. The fact that we face a lot of self-condemnation today is not because we have too much knowledge of sin - as Kenyon actually claims - but because we do not know God's grace in Christ.

While waiting for the day when we see Christ and his righteousness therefore takes full shape in us, we get to live in the security that it means to be counted as righteous. We are among the crowd that will be transformed when the time is right. That transformation does not depend on how well we have succeeded in sanctification or witnessing here and now. But out of love for Jesus, we still want to get as close to him as possible already in this time to get as strong a foretaste as possible.

All this means that the saved person here and now is "at the same time righteous and sinner" to use an expression of Luther. However, this is flatly denied by Kenyon. The consequence is that where classical Christianity can see both joy and sorrow as parts of God's upbringing, Kenyon asserts with sharpness that God never has anything to do with our sufferings and they create nothing positive in our lives. They are only "Satan's attacks" which must always be rejected "in faith".

Faith becomes an achievement

Kenyon reduces man from being an indivisible sum of spirit, soul and body to becoming only a spirit that has a soul and lives in a body. Thus he can also claim that justification is a closed chapter even though anyone with a modicum of self-awareness should know better. Kenyon says that the believing man is already perfectly righteous "in his spirit".

Sanctification then becomes mostly a matter of growing in the conviction that one has become righteous and begin to learn to live "from the inside out". But the faith one then develops is the Christian's faith in himself rather than in Christ. That is why you sometimes hear the expression "Have faith in your own faith", which means: "You must believe in your own faith."

This does not mean that one would never hear sermons of a corrective kind within the faith movement. You can do that anyway. Relatively often it is then about the disciplining of Christians under the general ideals of the movement. I remember as a typical example a sermon I heard a few years ago. A famous preacher of the faith spoke at length about how God "dealt with" him (common expression) because he preferred to wear jeans rather than pleated trousers.

However, according to Kenyon, the basis for sanctification is that the Christian must be aware that his spirit is already perfectly righteous. Should he sin, it is only because he did not let this spirit of his dominate his life. Since this is possible, he can live completely righteously if he only allows the spirit to dominate.

It is the spirit in man that has fellowship with God today. And it is important that we learn to take advantage of that opportunity, so that God's righteousness can inspire us and make us his image. Yet even our spirit is not perfect, and no matter how dominant the spirit, the result cannot be perfect on this side of the grave.

This, in turn, means that people who put their faith in Kenyon can easily end up either deluded or confused. The former will be the case if one succeeds in wiping out the knowledge of the mind that says one does not live as righteously as it is said one can and should. The second variant is seen in those who cannot deny the testimony of their senses.

Since Kenyon says that every failure should really be solved with more faith, these later should even more "feed their spirit" with words that they are already perfect in their spirit. They will then get rid of their self-condemnation and become bold. But since this is not a true path, it can be expected that it will not lead to the goal. When it is discovered that it does not, faith in practice becomes an achievement - something to cope with, something to live up to.

Summary

For Kenyon, it is a cornerstone that the Christian must see "who she herself is in Christ". This is obviously not the same as her seeing who Christ is in her, because the new identity is not expressed as grace to a needy person. It only talks about what power man got by being born again. Man himself is still at the center.

The consequence is in practice that the words faith, righteousness and regeneration have been given a new content. They have become centered around man and not around Christ. With these new word meanings, you then build up a doctrine that looks faithful to the Bible. But after the words have acquired new meanings, the conclusions drawn from the texts also often become both new and misleading.

God gives us the advice: "Be still and remember that I am God." In Kenyon's version, there has been a fatal and almost imperceptible shift: "Be still and consider who you yourself are (- in Christ)."

Chapter 3

"Faith is now"

Both Kenyon and Hagin describe in their books how they prayed for the sick and then asked the sick person if he was well now. The sick person must then have replied that he expected to get well after the intercession. The intercessor has then said that the intercession was largely wasted. This has been expressed with the words: "This is not faith. It's just hope". In Swedish it means loosely translated: "You don't believe. You just hope."

Kenyon emphasizes without proof that faith is the only condition for health and blessing. Those who hope certainly have an expectation, but it is of the wrong kind. It is often emphasized that it is not a matter of expectations being too low. It is of the wrong kind. Before the supplicant does not say: "You have too weak faith". He says, "You just hope."

Paul says that three things must remain: faith, hope and love. At Kenyon, however, hope has become an expectation that leads nowhere. "Faith produces results", it is usually said. Hope, on the other hand, is seen as a dead end.

How does Kenyon think?

Kenyon starts from the rebirth. Man who is a spirit has been made full comely in his spirit. According to him, she can associate with God as an equal ("on terms of absolute equality", *The Hidden Man*, page 51). In her spirit now not only absolute righteousness reigns, but she possesses there the whole nature of God.

We must now remind ourselves that Kenyon sees man as a spirit that has a soul and lives in a body. So it is her true self that has become sinless, healed and blessed with wealth, success, power and wisdom.

The soul and body belong to this world in a different way than the spirit, says Kenyon. They are still under Satan's rule. They are therefore rebellious against God. Rebellion of the soul is what we commonly call sin in thought and action. According to Kenyon, the body's rebellion consists similarly in illness.

Many accuse religious preachers of pointing out the sick as a sinner, which is usually rejected by the preachers themselves. Nor does one normally say that the sick person is sick because he has sinned. Instead, illness and sin are equated and both are called spiritual infirmity. Kenyon believes that sin in the soul is overcome if the righteous spirit is allowed to dominate the soul. In the same way, sickness is defeated by allowing the healed spirit to dominate the rebellious body.

How then does Kenyon believe that one should do for the spirit to dominate over the soul and the body? It must be a complicated process right? No, in principle it is very simple. It is not a remarkable performance that is needed, just a piece of knowledge and consistency if Kenyon is to be believed.

Man must know that he has already been made righteous and healed in his spirit. If she then also realizes that the spirit is her real self, then she can begin to confess that she has already been made righteous and healed. The confession itself is "words with power" and it compels the soul and body to obedience. Now if Kenyon is right, then we just have to understand that Jesus has already completed his work in us and confess it.

Instead of fighting against sin while praying for help, one confesses that one is already righteous. Instead of asking for healing "if it is God's will", one confesses that he has already made one healthy. And most importantly: you confess your healing while the disease is at its worst.

Faith and hope

The sick man who received intercession and replied that he expects to be well, has not understood Kenyon's message. He sees the body as (part of) his self, and he expects God to intervene. But Kenyon believes that he should see the spirit as his only real self and confess that God has already intervened.

To highlight the difference, faith preachers often use Kenyon's own expression: "Faith is now. Hope is tomorrow", which means: "Faith applies now. The hope is for tomorrow." Faith is no more significant, says Kenyon, than confessing that you already own everything "in your spirit", and confessing that you have already received it - will not receive it.

When you make it clear in this way, that you know about your "rights in Christ", the devil has to retreat with his sins and diseases.

Is it true?

All this is logical and it is easy to understand and execute. No one needs to get performance singing from such a proclamation. But there is, of course, an important condition. Kenyon must be right in what he says. If we think for a moment that he might be wrong - then what happens to the sick?

We imagine a group of sick people who have all understood the message to the letter and act accordingly. But if Kenyon were to be wrong, not everyone might be healthy. Some may be, but others are not. Some may even die. Someone can get up out of their wheelchair while others remain seated.

Then the great confusion breaks out, because all the believers had already been healed. Those who are still sick ("have symptoms," says Kenyon) compare themselves to those who got well ("got rid of the symptoms"). They have "failed to bring out their healing". They were right and apparently still wrong. And God did not help them. There was something incomprehensible wrong with their faith.

Well, we know this picture. In recent years we have met many for whom faith was a disappointment and an achievement. Could this be because Kenyon was simply wrong? When you notice how Paul speaks well of hope while Kenyon almost speaks disparagingly of it, you become a little suspicious. Is there a dog buried here?

Saved in hope

We therefore look in the Bible for more information about hope. We will then find that hope is about the certainty I have about getting a share in the kingdom that God has promised and which will be established when Jesus returns. It is a "kingdom of peace" - that is, a kingdom of shalom, God's unbroken state.

There my body of humiliation, which can become sick, will be exchanged for a glorious body of passion through the power by which he can subject himself to all things (Phil 3:20-21). Here and now flesh and blood (= body and soul) cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 15:50). This is not a denial of healing, but it does say that health and eternal life cannot become a permanent reality in our bodies or souls in this day and age.

In his stripes we are healed, it is true (1 Peter 2:24). But it also says that Jesus has overcome the power of death (2 Tim 1:10) and yet we die. It is also conceivable that when Peter writes that we have been healed of his wounds, he is thinking of those who have actually been healed. It is not certain that he means that everyone already possesses full health "in their spirit".

In any case, it is wrong to say like Kenyon, that we already have everything in our spirit, so that with our confession we can also have everything in soul and body. Paul expresses this with the words:

"It is in hope that we are saved. A hope that you see realized is no longer a hope. Who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it, faithfully and patiently" (Rom. 8:24-25).

The model is therefore the one we meet in the image of the children of Israel walking out of Egypt on their way to the Promised Land (1 Corinthians 10:1-13). We have gone out of the world, and we have done it for the sake of the promise. We believe the promise and walk in faithfulness to the God of promise. But we are not there yet. However we live in faith, we are not there yet. In hope we look forward to what is promised to be ours. We rejoice and gratitude breeds faithfulness. But we are not there - not even in our spirit. We are patiently waiting.

During the desert walk, many miracles happened. These all had the character that God kept the people alive in a situation where they would otherwise have died. Manna rained from heaven and water flowed from the rock. The shoes did not tear out. But the desert was just as full. No miracles happened as a matter of course. It was God who determined every miracle to happen. When Moses struck the rock instead of speaking to it as God had said, water flowed out of it. But God told Moses that he had broken faith (Numbers 20:2-12), because he did not do as God had said.

A false dimension of time

Kenyon is at times very accusatory in his books against a church that has postponed the fulfillment of God's promises only to eternity after the return of Jesus. He believes that this is close to fraud. With all the evangelist's ability to express himself gossipy, he says of God's promise: "It's for now" (young = "It applies now"). If it is not fully valid until we are dead, then he means that it would be Satan who made God's promise valid because he is the one who kills us.

Or as it is also usually called: "What do we need with God's promise when we get to heaven? After all, this is where the devil is." But if heaven is the promise, then the whole problem has been turned inside out. There are promises even for this time, but the great promise has to do with the coming kingdom.

Now, fortunately, it is not the devil who determines the measure of our days but God (cf. Ps 139:16). And the promise is not primarily against the devil, it is a thought that makes him bigger than he is.

No homesickness

The great crowd in heaven, the one that no one can count, consists of people who came out of the great tribulation and who precisely because of that serve the Lord day and night. You can understand their joy and gratitude when you read about them. They had a hard time on earth, but hope kept them up and now they are in the promised land. The sufferings on earth have now acquired a meaning that many times was difficult to discern while they were going on.

Kenyon is very alien to the idea that a good God can allow suffering, or that something good could actually come out of any suffering. Instead, the profession of faith brings such an overemphasis on the present and on freedom from all suffering that heaven is almost forgotten.

A fundamental error

We can express this fundamental error this way: Kenyon promises for this age what the Bible promises for heaven.

This is fatal in view of the whole technique of faith and confession that is taught to make us see what we are supposed to already possess "in our spirit." If the confession can serve as a reminder of which God we belong to, then it can help us in many ways to serve him faithfully and joyfully. But if it is to become a magic formula that will guarantee a kind of spiritual maximum of existence (not -minimum!) that does not belong in this age, then the risk is great that many will be burned and disappointed.

And then finally faith becomes a kind of achievement. Some will fail to "believe in" health, money, victory and blessing simply because Kenyon is wrong.

They will then experience it as if they have failed. They haven't done that. In this day and age, there is no such thing as "taking it out on faith". It is an expression based on Kenyon's misconception that everything would be ours already today and that we ourselves would be like God "in our spirit".

Balance

Kenyon has reacted against a church that has relegated all of God's dealings to a misty and distant distance. He is right about that. God's power in the Holy Spirit is here and now.

Jesus told the disciples that there was no point in them going out and testifying unless the power of the Spirit was upon them. But the power of the Spirit is an advance on the inheritance, not the inheritance itself (Rom 8:23, Eph 1:13-14, 2 Cor 1:21-22). Faith preachers like to read Eph 2:6 where it says that God has seated us with Christ in the heavenly world. Less often the sentence is read: "...that in the ages to come he might prove to us his grace with exceeding riches."

There is a lot of power here and now. But when I seek it, I am faced with the question of whether I am doing it on my own behalf or on behalf of others. Paul himself says: "Thus death works in us, but life works in you" (2 Cor. 4:12). You meet many preachers of the faith who point to their own health or finances to prove that they are telling the truth. This is not a biblical thought. God can give you great power for the healing of the sick but allow yourself to remain sick. Are you humble enough to accept it?

Believe now

We saw at the beginning of this chapter that preachers of the faith often saw how grateful it is to pray for the sick who carry a special conviction that they have already received their healing. That observation is certainly true. I have done it myself many times.

Kenyon interprets this as follows: everyone has already received their healing and it is only a matter of accepting it. But since this does not agree with the Word, we must seek another interpretation. Personally, I think it works so that when God wants to heal, He first gives the measure of faith that is needed. God speaks healing to a person, and even if the body still aches, the healing feels like a resting self-evident. Health is also born from this. When we see things that way, faith does not become the price man must pay, but the sign that God has begun to act.

Summary

When Kenyon speaks of faith, he means that we have already received all that God's promises promise. But we have it in our spirit and must with our confession bring out this which is our own judgment or right to the soul (against sin), to the body (against sickness), and to the environment (against Satan and the circumstances he is considered able to put in our way).

All this would have been very easy, if Kenyon had been right on all points. In practice, we see that many fail to reach the goal despite having understood the message and confessed as Kenyon teaches that one should do. The reason lies in the fact that the Bible clearly indicates that we have not received everything yet. We have the full fulfillment of the promises in hope. We expect to see them at Jesus' return. Because the whole idea of what faith is is based on a false starting point, the doctrine is also distorted. This is most clearly felt when you have to explain to those who "failed" why it went the way it did.

Since it is usually said that "healing belongs to us", you also see another side effect of the proclamation of faith's message of healing. In practice, it turns out that each can and should keep the devil out of his own life. Therefore, you can be greeted with one kind of "you have yourself to blame" when you get sick. You don't always get so fed up because men sometimes live with more mercy than they teach. But it is noteworthy that Kenyon's teaching makes it possible to reason in this way and that sometimes too occurs.

Chapter 4

God's faith

Here and there in Kenyon's books you come across the expression: "God is a faith God". Literally, it means: "God is a faith-God". And this is very biblical. Jesus is the originator and perfecter of faith. Only when you have encountered the expression many times do you start to react. Because you discover over time that here, too, the word has taken on a new meaning.

When Jesus, in perfect loyalty to the Father, allowed himself to be killed and thus showed that nothing could make him abandon his loyalty, the rebelliousness in all of us suffered a decisive defeat (cf. Rom 8:3, 2 Cor 5:14-15). For us it opens an opportunity for repentance from sin. "God is faithful even if we are unfaithful, for he cannot deny himself," writes Paul.

When Kenyon speaks of God as a God of faith, however, it is never about God's faithfulness. As a rule, Kenyon instead talks about how God created the universe. It is said that God did this "in faith".

God created by speaking. According to Kenyon, what was it that caused creation to come into being through the mere word of God? Well, there was a power of faith in the words God spoke, therefore everything came into being. God spoke "in faith". God always does, says Kenyon, because God is a God of faith. He can call upon that which does not exist as if it were - and then it comes into existence. Without scriptural proof, it is said that this is because God speaks in faith.

Faith - also "God's faith" - is considered to work by setting "spiritual laws of nature" in motion. So creation did not come into existence because it was God who spoke. It came about through God speaking "in faith". And God is thus no more God than that he himself is subordinate to the "natural law of faith"! Sometimes one also hears that even sinners can use the natural law of faith to gain victory. Faith then becomes a "power" which does not even have to do with righteousness.

The next step in the chain of thought comes immediately. Kenyon explains that we can also speak in faith - just like God. What we speak "from our righteous and perfect spirit" we speak in faith. When we do, our words become creative in the same way as God's words, says Kenyon. Because he means that we are already like God through rebirth, and if we only express ourselves in that capacity, our words have this ability.

Faith has then moved from being an expression of mutual fidelity and trust to becoming a magical force and a kind of power. When we use it, it does not have to go around the person of God to work. It plays on the same spiritual laws of nature that God played on when he made the universe - it is said. Faith has then ceased to be an expression of our relationship with God. Instead, it has crossed the line into magic.

Move mountains

In Kenneth Hagin's preaching, this view of the nature of faith recurs very often.

Almost always, it is the words in Mark 11:20-24 that form the textual basis. Let us read them and ponder.

"When they went along the road early the next morning, they saw that the fig tree was withered from the root. Then Peter remembered, and he said: Rabbi, look!

The fig tree you cursed has withered! Jesus answered and said to them: You must believe in God! Verily I say unto you, If any man shall say unto this mountain, Be thou lifted up, and cast thyself into the sea! and does not doubt in his heart but believes that it will happen as he says, then it happens so. Therefore I say to you: All that you ask for in your prayers, believe that you already have. Then you shall receive it."

What had happened? Jesus had passed by the tree a few days before Passover in the year he was taken prisoner. He had looked for fruit on the tree but found none. It was spring and not autumn. Then Jesus cursed the tree and went on. Many people think this is a strange story. Did Jesus have poor knowledge of biology? Or was he in a bad mood?

Does not this incident show that the talk of his righteousness was exaggerated?

No not at all. The fig tree stands as a symbol in Scripture for the people of Israel. Jesus himself says that when the fig tree (=Israel) shoots a bud then we can know that the summer (=Jesus' return) is near. The trunk and crown of the fig tree withered and the Jews were scattered over the earth. But from the stump (Isa 6:13) or the severed trunk, a root shoot will shoot up that will bear the fruit that the people did not bear when Jesus came the first time. When Jesus told the parable of the fig tree (Luke 13:1-9) which the gardener wanted to fertilize for another year, it is reasonable to think that Jesus said this a year before his own death.

When Jesus spoke to the fig tree, it was a unique symbolic act. It was part of the Father's plan for world history. Jesus spoke "in faith" ie in faithfulness to the Father. And he taught the disciples that when they speak in the same way in faithfulness what the Father wants to have said right then and there ("You shall believe in God..."), then nothing is impossible. God can lead the believer to actions that go beyond the "natural".

How do you know what the Father wants? Through it, the certainty and security of a faith is born in one's interior. God's will is then born in man in the form of faith.

In the faith movement, this text is interpreted as an instruction in the art of performing miracles of our own choosing. Call only "in faith" to what does not exist as if it existed, then it will exist, they say. Thus, it is "only" the question of "belief" that determines whether you should be able to completely violate the laws of nature at your own discretion. So if you have understood the "natural law of faith" - they say - then you can use it to put all other natural laws out of play.

Tempted to miracles

When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan, he was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1). This temptation parallels Adam's temptation in the garden. Jesus would now be able to do what Adam could not do.

Adam was tempted to try to "become like God". Therefore now Satan comes and says his: "If you are the Son of God..." What did the temptation consist of? In two cases out of three it consisted of miracles to which the Father had not given the go-ahead. Jesus also says it with the words "that man shall live by the words that proceed from the mouth of God". When the devil wanted to tempt Jesus to jump from the temple wall, he used a biblical word. Jesus rejected that temptation with another Bible word.

It is absolutely true that God has promised that the angels will carry us. But he has not promised that they will do it when we self-indulgently wander on our own paths. When we faithfully do his will, we get to share Christ's sufferings. Then the angels come to our aid in the same way that an angel strengthened Jesus in Gethsemane.

Confess the promises of God

Of course, the leaders of the faith movement say that we cannot perform miracles against God's will. But how can one know which miracles God wants to happen? Yes, you read about that in the Bible. There are all God's promises.

If you want something, you look for a promise that corresponds to what you want. Then you confess that promise until you get what you wanted. If you find no other promise, you can always take the words from Psalm 23: "...I shall lack nothing." Whatever you desire, you can then confess that you have already received it in your spirit, and the talk of looking for promises therefore becomes in practice a sham. It is always possible to find a "word to stand on".

God's will is in his word and you are righteous in your spirit, says Kenyon. That's why it works. You speak in faith just as God did when He created the world. The promise of the word breeds faith and you speak out the faith. Kenyon uses a rather revealing expression here.

He says that we must "use the Word". Is it tantamount to God using us? Who decides?

The worst thing is that this is exactly how the devil tried to make Jesus think and do.

Where is the fault? Well, it is in the idea that God would be so bound by his own word, that he must always fulfill all his promises (in practice = all our wishes) regardless of what the external situation looks like. If I can find a promise of financial help, it is sometimes said that I can "credit" money with that promise regardless of what I will use the money for. I don't need to ask permission for that particular occasion.

Why don't I have to ask? Well, I am already perfectly righteous in my spirit.

Since I confess the promise with my spirit, there shall be no place for wrong skill. Then why should I ask? Besides, it is not God who works but the natural law of faith which even God himself had to conform to.

Loyalty is put out of play

If faith is a power that the believer can use in the same way that God would use his "power of faith", then in practice God's guidance over our lives has been made an impossibility. If I can do whatever miracles I want just by finding a Bible word (and there is always one), then I am no longer dependent on the Spirit's daily guidance.

Instead, the spirit often becomes the one who gets to join in and make my will come true.

What Kenyon calls faith thus puts fidelity out of play. Now if the basis of faith is faithfulness, the result is that you end up in unbelief if you take Kenyon's teaching of faith seriously!

Sometimes you see this in the form of a strange lie. You can meet people who talk about things that don't exist as if they did exist. Those who listen then easily believe that this would also really exist, but it does not always. The line between truth and lies is blurred by the technology of confession.

If you meet a person who talks about his large congregation with accompanying video satellites, you should check if the congregation and the satellites really exist or if they only exist in the person's "spirit". People who testify of a healing after a healing meeting may have been healed. But it can also happen that they only profess faith. You can't know which, if you don't get to investigate.

Summary

When Kenyon defines faith as a power rather than as a faithfulness to God, the audience receives an extreme determination and ability to act. The faith movement therefore gives rise to lots of initiatives. Blown away is most of the previous testing of God's will and of one's own motives. That only leads to self-condemnation. In practice, therefore, this power of action easily turns into pure self-indulgence.

The consequence is also that many rush off and do things "in faith" which end in a crash, and when you crash, the explanation must be that you did not "stand in faith", as they say. Then you have yourself to blame, and it is not always that you meet such great mercy. Confusion, despondency and anxiety are therefore also seen alongside the enthusiasm and the extreme power to act. It is not certain that an outsider sees so much of this. After all, one cannot speak of one's anguish without losing the mouth's confession of a perfect righteousness and a completed healing...

Chapter 5

Knowledge and prophecy

As important a cornerstone as the perfect righteousness "in the spirit" is the doctrine of two kinds of knowledge. Kenyon speaks of mind knowledge and of revelation knowledge.

God is Spirit and can only be experienced in a spiritual way. Man is also spirit, says Kenyon. The body is not the person. It's just something she lives in.

Since the body is not her real nature, the knowledge that can be conveyed through the sense organs of the body is not genuine knowledge. The physical world is not really real at all in Kenyon's description. It is only a reflection of the "spirit world". Whoever can change the latter will automatically change the former. This is part of what is usually called "the natural law of faith". This unbiblical overvaluation of the spiritual was the basis of a system of false teachings that gained wide circulation in antiquity and came to be known as Gnosticism.

If we take Kenyon at his word, the consequence is that the knowledge that the senses can convey is only deceptive. In principle, it creates doubt and not faith. The senses can only see and hear physical reality and it is not real. Furthermore, they themselves are part of this world and can be easily manipulated by the prince of this world, says Kenyon.

This is most clearly seen, he believes, when a person who has already been healed gets symptoms of illness and allows himself to be tricked into confessing that he is ill.

Spiritual knowledge is instead about the "real reality", and therefore it must replace sense knowledge in various ways. Kenyon calls this process "renewal of the mind" in accordance with Paul's exhortation:

"So now I exhort you, my brothers, by God's mercy to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God - your spiritual temple service. And do not be conformed to the spirit of this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom 12:1-2; 1917 translation).

Victory through destitution

What is Paul talking about in this text? Does he really mean that we should deny our life experience? In that case, is it the same as crucifying one's flesh?

Paul speaks of the willingness to sacrifice oneself. Jesus conquered by exposing himself to the point of death on a cross. That way of victory is foolishness to the rebellious man. The one who in repentance gives up his struggle against God sees, however, that precisely

this is the ultimate fidelity to him. When we choose to overcome in the same way that Jesus did, God lets his power work.

Before we can see that this is God's way to victory even in our lives, we have to start thinking about God's way. As a rule, we want to win through power and not through destitution. But Paul exhorts us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice - just as Jesus did. This alone shows that the body is very real. It is part of God's creation and no part of it is unreal.

Kenyon's interpretation

Kenyon now interprets these verses quite differently. It is important to get rid of the dependence on everything you have seen and heard - your entire life experience. It must be replaced by revelation knowledge - primarily from the Word. Herein lies the idea that the knowledge of the Word could not be confirmed by our life experience. The latter must be killed.

I have often wondered how Kenyon ever dared to trust his senses. Because if the devil can tinker with our minds so that we think we are sick even though we are not, how can you dare to drive a car? Can you even trust the eyes to tell the truth when reading the Bible?

Because, simply put, Kenyon actually means that revelatory knowledge is always true for the believer, while sense knowledge is always unreliable. The latter may seem true, but it only applies when it is tested against other sense knowledge. From heaven's vantage point, it is always false in some way.

If one who "knows his rights in Christ" receives a revelation, it hardly needs to be tested - if Kenyon is right. It is enough to find out what kind of knowledge it is about. What you experience in your spirit is true. What enters through the senses is, at least in a spiritual sense, deceptive.

After the Fall, Adam got into trouble because he lost revelation knowledge and was referred to the false knowledge of the mind. Wonder that his life became full of fear and sin, says Kenyon.

Now we can receive revelation knowledge again, because we are born again. We get it from the Word and through the Spirit. Kenyon states that if the Word says that I am healed in the wounds of Jesus, while the senses say that my body is sick, then the knowledge of the senses must give way to the knowledge of revelation. Then it is noticeable in my body that I had already been healed. Perhaps life experience says that I can never be healed. The word says that I already am, says Kenyon. The former knowledge must give way to the latter.

To some extent this is true. If the experience prevents me from seeking healing, then it should be questioned. But Kenyon pushes the opposition between the two kinds of knowledge beyond all reasonable limits. God gives us far more than we can both ask and think, says the Scripture happily.

Right and wrong

That the new birth makes it possible for us to associate with the Spirit so that we thereby receive revealed knowledge is of course a central biblical thought.

But it is not a biblical thought that our senses would be particularly unreliable. They are not enough to bring us to God, it is true. And if we are puffed up by the world's wisdom, God hides himself from us. But that they should stand in the way of the spirit's perception of God in the life of a broken man is not biblical. Just as little is the case that all revelation is correct simply because it is spiritual. Prophetic messages must always be tested, says the Scriptures.

As we shall see later, physical reality is so unreal to Kenyon that it appears impossible to him that Jesus' physical suffering on the cross could bring salvation. Instead, Kenyon must introduce a completely new doctrine of salvation which says that after his death Jesus went to hell to undergo a "spiritual" suffering for three days and three nights. Sin and sickness are spiritual things and must be dealt with in a spiritual way, says Kenyon without having a biblical word to point to.

According to the Bible, the senses as well as our spirit can give us information that is either true or false. All knowledge is a piecemeal work if we are to believe Paul's explanation in 1 Cor 13. On this point, however, Kenyon has a dissenting opinion. The knowledge of the mind is always a piece of work - he agrees with that. But completely contrary to the Bible, he energetically asserts that revelation knowledge is perfect. It is not a piece of work.

Paul writes that even the prophetic knowledge is a piece of work. This is why all prophesying will come to an end, when the perfect has come at the return of Jesus. Then we get to see him face to face and not as in a dark mirror (cf. 1 John 3:1-2). But this does not prevent Kenyon from saying the exact opposite without further justification. This has extensive consequences within the faith movement.

A multitude of prophecies

Kenyon's thoughts on knowledge open the gates wide for abundant prophesying. There is nothing wrong with that. The problem comes instead when the prophet has finished speaking.

Scripture says that one must then test what he has said. This rarely or never happens. The reason is that what we normally call trial involves, among other things, comparing the message with the entire teaching of the Bible. But then you end up directly in the area of mind knowledge. And it is easily perceived as soiling the message with "spiritual theology". It is usually not relevant. Therefore, you don't see much of a public examination even when the revelation leads to extensive reinterpretation of known biblical words.

Moreover, it would hardly be necessary to test whether Kenyon is now right in his opinion. If revelation is always true and sense knowledge is always unreliable, then the test is not only impossible but actually unnecessary.

Hardly any of Kenyon's disciples go so far as to publicly say this. But in practice it often happens that statements from a legitimized prophet can hardly be questioned. Hagin usually describes how he wished for something or a few confirming Bible words when he received a revelation. And of course this is good. But since everything can be proven with single biblical words, you have not tried until you have tested that there are no texts that reject the message you have received.

Even Kenyon agrees that there are false prophets. But he who is born again and speaks "from the spirit" speaks the truth, he believes. The spirit of the regenerate man is perfect according to him. The only thing you need to check is basically whether the prophet is born again. This is not stated outright in his writings, but I take it to be the consequence of his thoughts on the two kinds of knowledge. It also provides a simple explanation for why so much is prophesied and so little tested in the faith movement. If a widely respected prophet has spoken, people bow.

Prophetic claims

An important dogma in the faith movement is about authoritarian leadership, which in American terms is called one-shepherd (= a single shepherd). This one leader is considered appointed by God for a certain area and he "hears from God" everything while the others submit to him and what he considers to have heard.

The leader therefore comes forward with great prophetic claims to understand God's will better than anyone else. It is empty so that he is considered chosen by God to hear his will for a certain group. Because the others do not have that election, they cannot test his message by receiving corrective revelations. Nor can they test it by comparing it with the entire teaching of the Bible, because then, as I said, you are on the ground of the knowledge of the mind.

So the leader's message cannot really be tested, and it is not needed in practice either. The one who tries is "critical" or "rebellious", he "lacks humility" and "goes against what God is doing today", he is "carnal" and "does not walk by faith". He may also be told that he has "bunches of religious demons hanging on him" or that he is "going against a servant of the Lord." There are many phrases that all have the task of bringing correction to the ranks. You often hear them both in sermons and in personal addresses.

In the teaching of the Bible, it is instead spoken of a leadership that washes the disciples' feet (John 13) or brings the saints to full maturity so that they can test for themselves what is true teaching (Eph 4:11-16).

In the last chapter we looked a little at the teaching that "everything you say in faith will come to pass". Here, Kenyon has contributed to further blurring the boundaries of what is prophecy. Because if everything turns out as I say, only I am sure that I "speak from my spirit", then everything I say becomes prophecy. Then I don't have to worry so much about whether it was me who spoke or the Lord. In any case, it was "said in faith", and therefore it must happen. Nobody teaches this way, but it often happens in practice.

Summary

It is valuable that Kenyon pointed to the existence of revelation in a Christendom that has almost stopped believing in the possibility of hearing God's voice. But he also goes further than Scripture on this point. This says that all knowledge is a piece of work. However knowledge is gained, one must test whether it is true or false.

Kenyon speaks so disparagingly of the knowledge of the mind that in practice it becomes something that must be suffocated. Revelation received by a born-again person, on the other hand, is considered absolute truth. The only thing in Kenyon's teaching that resembles sanctification is precisely this exchange of knowledge.

Biblically, there is nothing that says that the two kinds of knowledge could not complement each other, so that what is true in the spiritual and in the physical would form a coherent unity.

When you combine Kenyon's view of knowledge with the doctrine of authoritarian leadership, the authoritarian structure that you see in the faith movement emerges. People who join a religious congregation must submit to their leader. Those who are not inclined in that direction usually "move on" to start their own congregations.

I have mentioned before that many who suffer from illness or weakness become confused and get anxiety, when they do not experience any change no matter how they "stand by faith in the Word". We now understand how it can happen that these do not begin to test whether the message of faith is true. The knowledge of the mind must be annihilated. It can never correct obvious sense, according to Kenyon. No matter how often it is repeated that not everyone is healed, it can never throw the doctrine into doubt.

In addition, people are sometimes prevented from trying by means of threats. A classic example can be found in Hagin's book *I believe in visions*, page 115. There Hagin tells how the "Spirit" promised that some people who do not receive Hagin's message will fall down dead. And he confirms this by telling about a pastor who would have fallen dead in the pulpit for this reason. When you hear some such "testimonies", it makes you nervous if you dare to try, even though the Bible urges us to do so.

People who in this way, under authoritarian pressure, are taught to wipe out their life's experience and ability to try, run serious risks for their mental health. It is risky to suffocate one's actual life experience in favor of a message, especially if this does not match reality. If it also happens in authoritarian forms, it can end up with a psychosis similar to schizophrenia. I've seen it happen to a few people. Of these, not all have been helped back to full health.

Kenyon's doctrine of the two kinds of knowledge is therefore among the most fatal in his theology.

Chapter 6

False revelations

Let's leave Kenyon for a moment and listen instead to Kenneth Hagin. Right now, he may well be considered the most respected of America's preachers of the faith. Large parts of his teaching are based on revelations that he believes he received from Jesus personally
Gene.

Kenyon also relies on revelations but he doesn't make much of them. Often he writes as he does when he has to teach that Jesus did not save us on the cross but in the abyss:

“One day I saw that it was not his physical death that solved the problem of sin but it was his spiritual death... I saw that he died twice on the cross... I did not want to accept the conditions that I am telling you, and for a long time I rejected them. I refused to allow my mind to accept these facts, but now I have” (The Hidden Man, p. 67).

One can wonder how it happened, when he "saw"!

Hagin, on the other hand, often vividly recounts how Jesus appeared to him and spoke to him. Sometimes he thinks he heard the Lord's voice without being able to see him. In any case, a dialogue spins out, which then turns into a lesson.

You can find several typical examples in the small booklet How to write your own ticket with God and in the slightly larger book I believe in visions.

The impotence of the "Lord".

In the latter, an apparition is reproduced, where "Jesus" appears to Hagin and speaks to him. Pretty soon the conversation is interrupted by a demon who stands between them and jumps up and down shouting: "Yacketi-yack-yack-yack". The conversation could therefore not be quickly settled. After a while, Hagin tells the demon to stop in the name of Jesus, and the spirit then falls flat to the ground. Then comes the strange thing, because then "Jesus" comments on what happened by saying that it was good that he, Hagin, told the demon because Jesus could not do that.

The point - to put it plainly - was that Jesus had already handed over his authority over creation to the church. If any authority is to be exercised at all, the Christians must do it. It does not say that Jesus refrained from ruling over the disturbing spirit. It says he couldn't. "He who asks God to bite the devil is only wasting time," says "Jesus" in this revelation!

The Bible, on the other hand, says that Jesus is exalted above all princes and powers (Eph 1:21) and that he is the head of all creation including the spiritual powers (Col 2:10). Jacob says: "You believe that God is one? You are right in that. Even the evil spirits believe it and tremble" (James 2:19).

The consequence

If we are to take Hagin seriously, this and similar revelations would mean that we ourselves must keep track of all the demons. Jesus cannot offer us any protection because he cannot rule over the spirits. Thus, our carefree bareness would fly all the way to the world.

Likewise, we would come to the conclusion that Adam would have more power over creation than Christ himself, despite the fact that everything in creation is through him and to him and has its existence in him. It better not be true. We should be on our guard when theology leads us to grow and Christ to diminish.

The third conclusion is that the only prayer that is not a waste of time is prayer for anointing in power to deal with all the demons. Ordinary intercession cannot lead very far if this revelation is to be taken seriously. It wouldn't have paid off if Hagin had called out to Jesus to silence the demon. He couldn't.

To that extent, even Hagin himself does not take his revelation seriously. In other contexts, he writes a lot about how God has intervened in response to intercession. Since theology is based on the fact that all problems are caused by the devil, one wonders how the answers to prayers arose in that case.

In any case, it is quite clear that it is very easy to become completely demon-possessed by listening to this and similar revelations. Not infrequently, in the faith movement, more is said about and to the devil than to God or about him.

The song of praise often becomes a whimsical interlude. It, if any, should be directed to God, and perhaps it is. But at the same time you hear a lot of teaching that it is a weapon against the demons. It is said that they cannot stand us singing our praises and run their way. Therefore, much singing of praise is based not only on God listening, but also on the demons hearing us sing.

Laughter services

You can end up at "church services" that consist of everyone on military command being asked to laugh at the devil - literally. This is what Judas warns about in his short letter, and one can understand that. Laughter does not belong to the kingdom of God! And it is not a manifestation of our supposed authority over the demons. The mockery is always an expression of pride, and such goes before a fall says the Bible.

If the demons were so thoroughly vanquished that one should rightly gape at them, then why pay them any attention at all? Don't you think, like me, that it is the devil who laughs most heartily?

It is therefore quite clear what it is really about. The spirits yearn after getting to be the center of our attention. The devil probably wants to work in silence. But when God's people discovered that he is not an old fairy tale but living reality, he changes tactics. Then it is necessary to get us to instead at all costs devote all our time and attention to him.

One can assume that Hagin was fooled by the fine revelation. The other alternative would be too gruesome.

Send angels

At a later meeting with "Jesus", it is described in the same book, how Hagin was taught to send out "his" angel, above all to collect money. The Gestalt requires a Bible word and makes a very clever exposition of Heb 1:14.

This verse would then mean that each of us has a personal angel who stands by at our disposal and awaiting our orders. He does not wait for God's commands but on ours. So strange then that neither Jesus nor Paul seems to know about this possibility. Jesus says that he could have prayed to the Father and the Father would have sent twelve legions of angels (Matt. 26:53). Why didn't he say he could send them himself? Why does Paul never write anything about the art of "believing in money" by sending angels?

Now a closer examination shows that this revelation is also false. Obviously "Jesus" interpreted the King James translation of the verse in question. It can possibly be pressed to the meaning that Hagin was allowed to receive. In the basic Greek text it says on the other hand, it is crystal clear that it is not us who send the angels but God. The difference is a matter of the Greek expression being entirely precise in its aim. No authority is given there for us to give orders to the angels. We must pray to God, nothing else.

What do you say about a "Jesus" who does not know his own Word in its basic language?

This revelation has exactly the same uncanny effect as the previous one: we grow to and The Lord is diminished. When Hagin now announces that he is getting more money since he should send "his" angel, one becomes thoughtful. What kind of angels do you think get it whole to function, if there is nothing in Scripture that gives us permission to send God's angels?

Write your own receipt

The expression "Write your own ticket with God" literally means: "Write your own agreement (= wish list, receipt) with God". The expression itself is colloquial with the meaning that you get something on your own terms.

It comes from an epiphany that Hagin is said to have had when he was once preparing a sermon on the story of the woman who had abdominal bleeding. Suddenly "Jesus" stood there and "explained" the text. Her healing would have been due to she followed a strict schedule. At first she said she would get well if she could touch

by him. Then she touched him. Then she received her healing and finally she testified.

Four steps are therefore formulated in the art of claiming benefits in faith: "Say it, do it, receive it, tell it". In Swedish it becomes: "Say it, do it, accept it and testify". The last point can mean that you thank Jesus or that you tell others about what happened. It is sometimes laid out a little differently.

The "Jesus" of Revelation emphasizes that "anyone can have anything anywhere" if he only takes these four steps. Once again we are told that those who pray to God to gain victory over the world, the flesh or the devil are only wasting time. They must write their Inca sock receipt instead (page 20).

From this revelation we see the same consequences as from the previous ones. It no longer applies to asking for what you want. Instead, the normal thing is to pick for yourself without asking. The Lord does not need to be addressed until at the earliest when everything is ready. Thus we have once again grown while the Lord has diminished.

All this could be accepted if it were clearly stated that it worked in the woman's case because she received the faith for healing as a personal gift from God. But you don't say that, and therefore only self-inflicted anger remains. If she had first asked for the go-ahead of faith for a healing, she would have wasted time.

Spare parts warehouse

We encounter a similar line of thought in the revelation that Roberts Liardon had, when he was in "heaven". There he meets a "Jesus" who shows him a large layer of eyes, legs, arms and other body parts. This "Jesus" is said to weep because so few people want to take what they need from his store when they get sick. Here, too, we meet an impotent all-ruler. He cries

in his despair that no one wants to take spare parts out of his warehouse. He himself seems unable to help the sick. If he has all power in heaven and on earth, why does he shed tears of powerlessness in this revelation?

When the real Jesus walked this earth, he wept with pity for Jerusalem, which would soon reap the fruits of its own hardening. The people did not want to see their sin. This is a matter in itself. But why would Jesus stand in heaven and weep because the sick insist on praying to him instead of taking the spare parts themselves?

Summary What fruit do

these and many similar revelations lead to? The answer is self-indulgence. The demons shall be commanded, and the angels shall be sent. The heavenly benefits should be taken for granted without talking to the Lord until afterwards. The lord tom cries if we don't pick for ourselves.

Jesus cannot command the demons himself. The angels will not be sent away if we do not. Jesus, despite his stock of spare parts, cannot help the sick in answer to prayer. He can

just wait helplessly until we take care of ourselves, which we shall do without asking. I'm not exaggerating now. It actually says this.

Jesus is thus described as powerless in his own creation, while we have all the resources and free hands. Who on earth has an interest in us believing this?

From this proclamation many become overconfident and hard. Others break down completely when faced with the task of keeping track of all the demons themselves. I have heard people tell of preaching the importance of the Christian speaking in tongues the first thing he does when he wakes up. Otherwise, the devil can fly at him in the morning. Why in that case he doesn't rather do it when we sleep, I have wondered without getting an answer. In any case, the announcement is frighteningly nasty for anyone who does not have such massive arrogance that they believe they can manage creation in God's place.

The one you fear becomes your god. Therefore, the Bible speaks a lot about the fear of God, which is a trembling before God's holiness. It is not the kind of fear one feels before someone who is evil. The creed makes God strangely small and stereotyped in the midst of all exaltation and praise.

The one who is truly terrified by this proclamation is the devil. Those who finally break down usually have a deep and difficult-to-master fear of the devil. The message about the devil is so confusing, because he is sometimes so small that one should rightly laugh at him. In the next moment, it is his "attacks" that are behind all suffering, from the common cold to nuclear war.

The believer is told to constantly speak in tongues to defend himself against the ridiculous little devil. Is he strong or is he weak? In any case, he has received an attention that he really does not deserve.

Chapter 7

The power and the glory

I once heard a preacher - Sam Whaley - marvel that Adam was deceived by the serpent's promise that he would become like God. He already was! Since he was the image of God and a sort of god of creation, he was trying to become what he actually already was, Sam said. Apparently he had not understood what it meant to be the image of God.

But in this he is wrong. Scripture testifies that God created man almost as a divine being. And on this point, above all, many of Kenyon's followers clearly differ from the Bible. They say that man was created to be the god of creation - of course with a small "g", but still. This is not true. Adam seems to have understood that better.

What is an image?

In Romans 3:23, Paul says that all have sinned and thereby lost the glory of God. The divine glory is to the saved as the priest's white linen garment - a covering of glory over that which is nothing in itself. For Adam was not created to be something in himself, but to be something in Christ. Christ is everything and then I don't have to be anything. That's how I'm made. That I am nothing in myself is not a consequence of the fall. Instead, it was intended that the glory of Christ should be sufficient for both of us.

God has his own glory. Adam had not. He could only reflect the glory of God. God has power. Adam had no power but could convey God's grace and God's will to creation. When he does so in obedience and in awareness of his place and absolute dependence, then he rules over creation. He doesn't own it. He only manages it in total fidelity to him who owns it.

Wonder that it was possible to tempt him!

Obedience and authority

You remember the Roman officer who prayed for his sick slave. Jesus said of him that he had never seen such great faith in Israel. Why? Well, the officer compared himself to Jesus. He had a "glory" over his soldiers. But it was only because he himself was under the command of others. If he had mutinied against his superiors, he would have lost all authority vis-à-vis the soldiers. The authority was in the uniform and the obedience and not in himself.

This is a good picture of what happened at the Fall. Adam reached for the knowledge offered to him in order to gain the power to own creation himself without depending on God. Then the whole creation also rebelled against Adam.

Faith according to Kenyon

Kenyon says that Adam was destined to have power over creation. When he ate from the tree of knowledge, he gave that power to the devil. Now Christ has come and taken back the power from the devil and has given it again to the believers. If you just think you've got the power back, you might as well exercise it - at least if Kenyon is to be believed.

This is the function of faith in Kenyon's theology. He means that even though Satan has lost his power, he tries to deceive us into believing that he still has power. We must only stand up in the name of Jesus, and Satan will always have to give way, because he is only bluffing.

Adam had the power but was tricked into giving it to the devil, says Kenyon. Don't you go and do likewise! Do not accept his illnesses or accidents. How Adam could be tempted to make such a bad choice when he was God's equal remains to be understood, since Kenyon had his say.

The Bible says the opposite

While Kenyon says Adam had all power but lost it and got it back, the Bible says the exact opposite. Adam had no power but was to rule by an outpouring of God's grace that flowed freely. As he grasped for power, he lost grace. Salvation means that Adam received grace back, if he renounces all claims to power. It is this attitude of powerless and unassuming submission in trust and faithfulness that the Bible calls faith. It leaves no room for self-indulgence of any kind.

Power or grace

Jesus has all power in heaven and on earth, but he does not use it as we would in his place. He wants to rule by grace and not by force. He wants to rule by letting goodwill flow over those who voluntarily submit to him and who want to give him all the glory and power, although he already has them.

But then what does man's authority consist of? Not trying to tell the mountain to throw itself into the sea, until God told us to do it. You don't decide where the mountain will be. You are only conveying God's decision.

Kenyon says we may use the name of Jesus. It doesn't say that anywhere. On the contrary, it says that no one will go unpunished who misuses the Lord's name. When he has decided, you can speak on his behalf - in his name. But his name is not an account card with which you can make whatever purchases you want. But you can greet from the Lord and say that the mountain will move. If it was the Lord who wanted it to happen, you can rest easy. Then a statement in normal voice mode is sufficient. When and how it should then be done

happening is not your thing to worry about. The Lord takes care of that. You have only conveyed His will to creation.

Raise the dead

If we had the authority over creation that Kenyon claims we have, we could raise all the dead. We cannot and will not be able to, no matter how we confess. The dead will be raised on the last day, and the one who does it is the Lord himself - not us. He is not so powerless in his creation, as we saw in the last chapter that people often proclaim.

When Jesus stands outside Lazarus' tomb, he thanks the Father for having heard his son's prayers before. Only then does he tell Lazarus to come out. Jesus had asked and received the go-ahead. The Son only did what he saw the Father do. It is real

believe.

Theology of the Serpent

The serpent told Adam that he could become like God by eating from the Tree of Knowledge. Kenyon says that we become like God by being born again and renewing our minds with the knowledge of our "rights in Christ." This is the same old temptation in a new guise.

Regarding the "rights in Christ" there is an argument that is often heard in modern confession of faith. It begins with the preacher reading Deuteronomy 28, which deals with blessing and cursing. When the covenant of law was made between the Lord and Israel, the Lord attached certain conditions to the covenant. If the people lived by the law, they would be blessed with peace, health, prosperity and success. If it violated the law, it would be cursed in the same respects.

When the preacher reads this, he turns to Gal 3:13 where it says that Jesus has borne the curse of the law for us. Then he continues with the question what will then be left for us when Jesus has borne this curse of the law. The answer comes immediately: the blessing.

The rest of the sermon is then usually spent reading Deuteronomy 28 about which blessings the Christian is now entitled to. "Blessed shall your vat be, and blessed be your Merce des...", says the herald

This is a school example that anything can be proven with a clever combination of Bible words. The whole must be allowed to correct wishful thinking. What does the Scripture say?

Two completely different associations

God did not give the law in the hope of making man righteous by it. Thus the blessing promised by the law could never come true. Instead, the law only served as a curse. In this latter sense, Jesus carried the law in his body on the cross (Col. 2:13-15). And then it was the whole law that was crucified in Christ - thus also the blessing of the law.

The law's association was based on a rights-based approach. The union was as one agreement, where the law spoke about what rights God had against man - and man against God. The carnal man wants that kind of agreement for the longest time, because she loves rights.

To prove that the relationship between God and man cannot be based on equality or rights, God gave her the kind of contract she automatically desires.

The idea was that she would thus discover that she is unable to fulfill her obligations, which are God's rights. For according to Paul, God did not give the law with one hope that man would be justified by it but that he would cover the depth of his unrighteousness (Rom 7:7-16, Gal 3:19-24).

The promises that God formulated in the old covenant were certainly an expression of God's heartbeat. But since the union itself was without a chance from the start, they stood there anyway mostly for the sake of completeness.

The new union, which, unlike the old one, was supposed to work, had to be built on the basis of grace, since the whole thinking of rights has been nailed to the cross. God let his rights crucified and made it possible for man to become his child, if she was willing to crucify his longing for rights.

The old covenant was based on mutual rights. The new union is based on that both parties waive all rights. The creed here makes a strange combination, so that God loses his rights and we keep ours. In practice ends up then God in the new covenant, and we remain in the "best bits" of the old.

This is probably not a deliberate deception, but it is full of false teaching. If you let yourself be deceived, and you cease to understand the covenant that God has actually entered into you. And then you're out of luck! Because you can't see the grace, if you think you have rights.

Either you then become bloated and self-indulgent with the "rights". Or collapses you, when you discover that the right to cast out all the demons also means a new guilty pleasure: to keep track of them all yourself. If you have any self-awareness, you're lying! Some have so much self-awareness that they even end up in a mental institution, when they are unable to find the fault in this teaching themselves.

During my collaboration with the faith movement, my wife said early on that she experienced the skill as joyless. At first I didn't understand what she meant, and she couldn't explain yourself. But now I understand. Of course there can be praise and jubilation without limit all talk of rights. But whoever has deeply experienced the joy of real grace, realizes that something important is missing despite the volume.

Summary

The creed offers a new gospel, which at first sight appears to be significantly better than the old standard. Of course, it is not brought out as a new gospel, but as the only true but forgotten one. It triggers great joy and action, but it is not based on grace other than just when you are saved. His life as

Christians must then build on rights rather than on a grace that is every mother pretty new.

If you have a little self-awareness, you soon discover that you are not competent to handle the great rights that are promised. In addition, they don't always work as promised, even though you did what you were supposed to. Then you end up in confusion and anxiety.

I have spoken to many who have been deep in the faith movement and then stepped off or fell off. Many say that they experienced both a strong pull to go deeper into preaching and, at the same time, a growing anxiety when they did. A young man combined these two feelings into a single image. He said: "It was like being sucked into a black hole."

Many believe that the attraction comes from God - that it is God's call to a deeper commitment. Anxiety, on the other hand, is said to be "Satan's attacks". Sometimes it is claimed that those of us who distance ourselves from the faith movement - not its people but rather its teachings - radiate curses that provoke this anxiety. I don't do it myself and I don't know anyone else who does. But if it were - why should it be so difficult to resist that anxiety in the name of Jesus?

No, the relationship is definitely the opposite. The lure is the serpent's temptation and not God's call. It is a sucking temptation to spiritual power. The anxiety comes at least in part from God. It is his warning signal.

If you have been to a real laughter service and both laughed and laughed like the Lion of Judah and then you feel bad, then don't think that the devil hires you because you have started to become so dangerous to him. You feel bad because you engaged in something that does not belong to the Christian life. Only in God's presence is there real peace and real childlikeness. Be warned while there is time!

Chapter 8

Child emergency prayer

We shall now get into the question of what prayer has become in practice within the faith movement. A development has taken place since Kenyon's days.

In his books, Kenyon talks a lot about prayer and prayer, and as we have already noted, it is important to have faith and not hope. Already in his vintage, however, it becomes unclear what prayer really is. If I've already got everything, I really shouldn't need to ask for something. Then idle confessions would suffice. God would be addressed through thanksgiving but hardly through prayer.

Claim to God

From Kenyon comes the teaching that the covenant with God is a "blood covenant". Here he has taken the model for this knowledge from primitive peoples' way of stopping peace. The chiefs entered into a blood alliance. Everything that one owned then it could others make an appeal to, and both parties were obliged to defend each other with their life.

Kenyon believes, without solid evidence from the Bible, that God has made that kind of covenant with us. We can read about how David and Jonathan made a covenant with each other on such terms. But a covenant between God and man is not entered into between two equal parties. If you don't see it like Kenyon, of course - that we actually do can associate on equal terms with God.

Since Kenyon now sees it that way, it also becomes natural to him that the supplicant on somehow demands from God what he has promised in his covenant. In the book *What happened from the cross to the throne* he says of fallen man: "He has no covenant claims on God" (page 61). This roughly means that "he has no federal requirements on God." With this, Kenyon wants to have said that the believer can demand God on prayer answered by virtue of his covenant with us.

In traditional Christianity, prayer is an appeal to God. It doesn't have to be creepy. By its very nature it is bold, for the suppliant knows that God is good. But it is one appeal. With Kenyon, it has turned into a claim on God.

As long as we plead, we count on God to have his free will. When our claims are due replace the plea, then it sounds as if God bound himself to that extent through his promises that he no longer has any freedom of action of his own left! He has to give it to us we request. That can't be right.

A displacement

Since the days of Kenyon, many have received lines of revelation. Some of them were described in chapter 6. They tell us that God cannot do much in his creation, if we do not take care. We can do this without asking permission. It even seems like there is more faith in not asking.

The claims will then gradually cease to apply to God. He has already given us everything and really has nothing more to add. In addition, it sounds strange in the ears of many to claim God, so the consequence has been that they proclaim that the claims must be directed against the devil.

But then the question returns with renewed weight: What does the word prayer mean in that case?

War tongues

There is a kind of speaking in tongues that you only hear in the faith movement. It sounds like a stone crusher at high rpm, and those who have been doing it for a long time eventually suffer from chronic hoarseness. The first time you hear it, many sensitive people feel uncomfortable, but you get used to it like so many other things.

Prayer meetings of this kind are quite difficult to have in an apartment in an apartment building. The neighbors complain about all the strange noises. And it is not possible to reduce the sound level. It is considered necessary for the demons to give way.

In the past it was often said - which is not in the Bible - that the subtlety of speaking in tongues would be that the devil does not understand anything of one's conversation with God. Now it is said on the contrary - which is also not in the Bible - that aggressive speaking in tongues would have a special ability to scare away demons.

It is the latter that currently applies. The hard appearance is an expression of "authority", and therefore it is called war tongues or simply war tongues.

One hears a lot of teaching about the importance of the Christian "charging the batteries" by speaking in tongues several hours a day. The word you then fall back on is 1 Cor 14:4 that he who speaks in tongues builds himself up. If speaking in tongues is a heartfelt worship to God, this is certainly true. But when instead it is the devil who is addressed in "harsh terms" - what happens then? Is it still building? Maybe it builds up more than "ordinary" speaking in tongues?

Black anxiety

I was put on the trail by a young man, who told me that he entered a state of deep anxiety when he began to "war in tongues". Before he had not been bothered by any anxiety worth mentioning but now it was black as night. Curious as I am, I have continued to ask about this when I have met people who have been deep into the faith movement. Roughly calculated, half of them state similar experiences. The usual "explanation" is that you have now become so dangerous for the devil, that he attacks you more than ever. The problem must therefore be solved with more tongues, not less.

My understanding is that this "prayer" is neither prayer nor authority in the biblical sense. The Christian cannot be meant to spend hours every day speaking to the devil - not even in commanding form. We do not find a single example of such a prayer life in the Bible - neither in the Psalms, in the teaching of Jesus, in the lives of the apostles or in the letters.

If we assume that the false revelations come from demons masquerading as angels of light, then we can also safely assume that one of their most important goals is to get Christians to stop praying to God. Of course, it is not a coincidence that "Jesus" in one vision after another speaks of prayer in the old ordinary way as a waste of time.

Furthermore, we must expect that the same powers want to teach the supplicant a series of "better" techniques to win victory. And when we look for what these mean in practice, we see that God is no longer involved. Either the Christian just has to deal with it or the "answer to prayer" is the result of a showdown between the Christian and the devil.

The latter is often called spiritual warfare - a term not found in the Bible. The expression is quite in order if we mean that it stands for intercession until God gives authority over obstacles or spirits. But it is often meant instead that one immediately begins to seek out princes and powers in order to hammer them with speaking in tongues and persuasions.

The question is whether we are tasked to do so or whether we are even allowed to do so. Does not all the night-black anguish, which many suffer, show that the warrior in these cases has gone out of the protection of the blood? Because it is all too easy for a kind of pleasure and power intoxication in war (Luke 10:20). Therefore, one can suspect that there is a temptation in all revelations that call for direct confrontation instead of prayer.

Seeking out spirits for their advice is called spiritism. We can exercise authority over them when we receive the go-ahead from God or when they manifest spontaneously. But are we allowed to seek them out on our own initiative even to command them? Or does this also count as spiritism in God's eyes? (Remember that I'm not talking about "ordinary" speaking in tongues, but about war tongues and other self-chosen forms of knocking on the devil.)

Bring forth answers to prayer

In 1983 I heard for the first time about "a new way of praying", in American called travail in prayer - a somewhat difficult to translate expression that roughly means "to pray during labor pains". In Swedish, it has come to be called "barnsnödsbön".

The theology is largely based on Paul's words to the Galatians "...you whom now again with pain I bring to life" (Gal 4:19). It is nothing new that intercession and suffering go together. Before, we have always said that the intercessor shares the sighs and agony of creation. But the new thing in this context is that the pain is not primarily a pain of pleading but of procreation.

Because if we have already received everything, then we do not have to go to God in the pain of pity with all the pain of creation. We need not pity the ill-behaved multitudes. We shall instead take out of the heavenly storehouses.

In this way, it is no longer God who is responsible for the answer to prayer, but that is precisely what is the service of the intercessor when he "gives birth". But isn't this what Paul is writing about to the Galatians? Hardly, he speaks of the hardships and hardships he went through to bring the gospel to them the first time (cf. Gal. 4:13).

An opened door

When you become interested in new methods, which previous generations did not know, you are on dangerous ground. This is especially true if the techniques are based on revelation and not on the Bible. First, one is seized with the false idea that the question of revival would be a matter of technology rather than repentance from the love of this world. Second, one becomes wide open to increasingly strange forms of spiritual methods.

In Sweden, as this is being written, we see how a couple of preachers from the USA are coming with a new form of liberation ministry that God allegedly revealed. They play rhythmic music and then turn to howling in each other's ears. You don't even call out the name of Jesus, you just scream as loud as you can. When everyone in a large congregation has to free each other, all you hear is a cacophony of howls and screams.

The music and howling sounds like Africa before the missionaries, and it can be mentioned that even some preachers of the faith have distanced themselves from this method. The interesting thing is that it is possible to launch only with reference to "revelation". A door that should be closed has been opened, when you can come up with new methods and largely avoid having them tried.

Summary

The teaching that we already own everything means that the concept of prayer has partly acquired a completely new content. War tongues and children's prayer are the consequence of Adam being considered to have regained power over creation. Never is Adam's desire to be like God more clearly seen than in the prayer for children. Imagine giving birth to answered prayers! Before, we have always said that this was God's part in the whole thing. Now it looks like humans have taken over.

Many prayer groups have broken through this theology. It is difficult to pray together, when you no longer mean the same thing by the word prayer. Half the group cannot appeal to God, while the other half speaks loudly in tongues to the devil. When the community is broken, many people are confused. What just happened?

We who had it so good before! Now everything has collapsed. What did we do wrong??

Among those who fought, there are many who feel very bad about their fighting, and who still believe that the solution lies in more fighting. We have a fight to fight it is true. But isn't there a great risk that we will be deceived in that fight if we allow ourselves to be taught "spiritual warfare" via revelations that are clearly false? Is it not an expression of

our distrust of God that we are not content to fight the battle in his way, with persistent prayer? The fact that we are looking for other methods is an expression of that

unbelief and not for faith, because we want to win bigger, faster and easier victories than God gives in answer to "ordinary" prayer.

Chapter 9

Jesus in Hades

A part of Kenyon's teaching that has been much rewritten, and that most people have therefore heard of, is the new view of Jesus' atoning work. The Church has always proclaimed that it was Jesus' physical suffering on the cross that saved us. For this position there is also overwhelming support in Scripture. Please read Eph 1:3-10, Phil 2:5-11, Col 1:19-23, Col 2:13-15, Heb 9:27-28 and 1 Peter 4:1-2.

But for Kenyon, this is not enough. Even though Jesus says, "It is finished" just before he dies, Kenyon proclaims that it is not finished. What came more later is the actual work of salvation.

Then Kenyon says that the devil took Jesus down to Hades thinking that he and the demons had won a final victory. They would therefore do what they could to torment Jesus, and he then suffered what all mankind would otherwise have had to suffer throughout the wheat.

Made to sin

Kenyon's text background is the thinnest imaginable. He starts from a single Bible word, namely 2 Cor 5:21 where it says:

"He who knew no sin, him he made sin for us, so that in him we might receive the righteousness that comes from God."

Actually, we also have to read the King James translation, which is the only workable one in English-language parts of the faith movement:

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Kenyon's oft-repeated thought is that Christ was made sin that we might be made righteous. "He became what we were so that we would become what he is," is often said by both Kenyon and Hagin. And that's perhaps how this verse could be interpreted if we didn't have the rest of the Bible available. Here, Kenyon thus finds something more than that Christ would have just entered our place.

Cross the line

Kenyon claims that Jesus not only suffered for sinners but that he was literally made a sinner. He received the sinner's nature says Kenyon. He died slowly. From previously being "God in human disguise", he became, according to Kenyon, only a human being with a sinner's nature when he died. He is said to have died spiritually before he died physically. Had he not done that, he could not have died physically either, says Kenyon.

Kenyon makes a rather complicated reasoning about the incarnation of Jesus: "Jesus did not partake of his mother's nature. She clothed him only in sinless flesh. Had he been conceived through Joseph's seed, his body would have been mortal.. He had the same kind of body that Adam had in the garden before the fall" (What happened between the cross and the throne, page 21). Jesus must therefore be made a sinner and die spiritually in order to die bodily. He must have the nature of Satan in his spirit.

What then does Kenyon say that salvation consists in? Yes, not in that Jesus in righteousness gave his life as a gift and a sacrifice. Instead, he became a sinner who ended up in hell until the Father said on the third day, "Enough is enough!" Then Jesus was born again to spiritual life and divine righteousness. He then took power over the devil by wresting from him the keys to death and Hades. Then he rose from the dead, and afterwards offered his blood in the heavenly tabernacle.

The key word is always the word "cross-border". Jesus is said to have crossed the line between God and man twice - both before he died and when he was reborn in the abyss. Kenyon then believes that when Adam fell into sin, he crossed that line and lost his original divinity. When he is born again through salvation, he crosses the same border in the other direction. Which would be proven.

The consequences

This completely new doctrine of salvation is therefore needed in order for Kenyon to be able to build on his thesis that we get rid of our "satanic nature" when Jesus took it to hell and are transformed into God's equals when Jesus was born again. This is why preachers of the faith in general have such a hard time renouncing this theology. Most people are low on it, knowing that it is easy to criticize. But you can't get them to admit it's wrong, because it's needed in their system.

Actually, one might think that it is immaterial whether Jesus saved us on the cross or in the abyss, as long as we are saved. But it's not. If we were saved in the abyss according to Kenyon's model, then we will be "in God's class" when we are born again. That is why one clings to a false theology even though it is easily disproved. But many are a little low. It shows that people seem to know that this is a sick thing.

The second consequence is that Jesus did not save us by exposing himself before the Father, but by snatching the keys from the devil. If that's how he won, that's the model for our victory too. We do not overcome by laying ourselves bare before the Father, but we overcome the devil by using power.

Jesus' victory was a victory of love, but Kenyon turns it into a victory of power.

Third, Kenyon uses this doctrine of salvation to build under his extreme demarcation between spiritual and physical. Sin and sickness are spiritual problems for Kenyon. He repeats that time and time again in his books. A spiritual problem cannot be solved through physical suffering. It calls for spiritual suffering, says Kenyon. As usual, there is no Scriptural support for these detailed thoughts. Kenyon just says it is.

But maybe Kenyon is right?

Much depends on whether Kenyon has correctly understood what Paul means by Jesus being made to sin. Does that really mean he crossed the line and lost his divinity before he died?

The New Testament is written in Greek and we have the Old in Hebrew. When we go to the Old Testament, we can find that in Hebrew the same word is used to denote both sin and sin offering. In the New Testament, very little is said about sight doffer, and it is therefore not possible to find whether the corresponding language could apply here as well.

It may still be considered entirely conceivable that the words are translated that "he who knew no sin was made a sin offering for our sake". Jesus could become that without losing his divinity. This is what the Church has proclaimed throughout the ages.

However, there is clearer testimony. Jesus himself says: "It is finished", before he dies, and he promises the thief: "Today you will be with me in paradise". Here, however, Kenyon pleads for an alternative translation. He points out - which is true - that there are neither periods nor commas in the basic text. Therefore, he believes that the text should be translated: "Truly, today I say to you: You will be with me in paradise."

Peter erases any doubt with the words:

"Even Christ suffered death for sins, once for all. Righteous he suffered for the unrighteous, that he might bring you to God. He was killed in the body but made alive in the spirit. In the spirit he went and preached to the spirits who were kept in prison, those who did not obey the time when God in his patience gave them respite in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built" (1 Peter 3:18-20).

Here it is excluded that Jesus would "have the nature of Satan" when he dies. He does not go to the underworld to be tormented by demons. He goes there in triumph to proclaim the goodness of God. Exactly what that proclamation meant to those who heard it we don't understand, but we don't need to either. It is clear in any event that if Kenyon is to be right, this text must be torn out of the Bible. Less is not enough.

Since every matter must be decided by two or three testimonies, the Bible gives us two more which are completely clear. It was when Jesus died that forgiveness in the temple was broken. As long as it existed, it marked that man was not allowed to enter God's presence. When Jesus said that the work of reconciliation was completed, the way back was opened.

If Kenyon was right, it would have fallen on Easter Sunday, because only then would sin have been atoned for, and Jesus then only received the keys to death and Hades.

John makes it clear that they broke the legs of the two thieves but not of Jesus.

If we read Psalm 34, it says that the righteous must suffer much, but not a bone in his body will be broken. Thus the Father gave the testimony that Jesus died in righteousness and not in "Satan's nature".

The border is fixed

It says about Jesus, that he became "like us men" (Phil 2:7). He became **"like** one of us", but he never became "one of us". He renounced equality with God, but he never ceased to be God. The boundary between God and man was added in the fall and not in the fall, and Jesus never broke it down in his atonement either.

John warns of the spirit of error that denies that "Jesus is the Christ, who came to me as a man of flesh and blood" (1 John 4:2). We encounter this false view everywhere in the New Age. There, Jesus is one of the "enlightened masters", but there is no species difference between him and us. However the fallacy is formulated, it means that the border would be demolished. That was the line Adam wanted to cross, and his yearning has not yet ended.

It is here, then, that the trap itself is rigged. Christianity is always employed from the kingdom of darkness by forces that want to transform man from almost being a god-being to truly becoming one. This is most easily accomplished if one proclaims a Jesus who was or became a man and nothing else.

Very strong forces are in motion. How should we recognize them? They all break down the special position of Jesus. He was at once true God and true man, says classical theology. And this formulation has stood through two millennia of wrestling with delusions of various kinds. It is thoroughly tested.

Kenyon says that Jesus was never sick. How can he know that, when it says that he "was familiar with sickness" and that he was "tempted/tried in all things, just as we are"? The answer is simple. Before Jesus died spiritually, he could neither get sick nor die, says Kenyon. Thus, Kenyon claims, that Jesus was not in practice a true man until he died "spiritually" and received the nature of Satan. And when that happened, he was no longer true God.

But now he was meant to be true God and true man at the same time, ever since he was born. It is only when we strictly adhere to that idea that we can understand that Jesus identified himself with us without blurring the line between God and man.

"Don't mess with the doctrine"

Many religious wars have been fought in the name of pure doctrine. Many are therefore skeptical of analyzing the teachings of new movements. They mean that you have to be a little practical and accept the good bits. You can let go of the rest.

Therefore, many admit that the whole doctrine of Jesus' salvation in the abyss is incorrect. We should reject it, they say. But then we can accept a lot of other things from the profession of faith. Therefore, you can meet people who are convinced that we can "take out heavenly benefits in faith", while at the same time holding on to the classical theology of salvation. They claim to have rejected what was bad and kept what was good.

But they haven't. The doctrine that we can "take out in faith" is based on the fact that we become God's equals through justification. And it, in turn, is based on the fact that Jesus crossed the line and saved us in the abyss. So the moment we say we hold to classical theology of salvation, we must purge all the consequential theologies that the false doctrine of atonement has brought with it.

We assume that you go out with a broker to buy a house. The foundation is crooked and full of mold, but the rest of the house looks nice. The broker tries to sell to you and says that "the foundation can always be removed". Do you believe that? Have you seen a house floating freely in the air?

You can get a pretty simple rule of thumb as to what is left after the false doctrine of the atonement and all its ramifications have been purged. Enter a charismatic Pentecostal church and listen to the preaching there. It roughly corresponds to what is healthy in religious movements late.

"Partaker of divine nature"

Before we end this important analysis, for the sake of completeness, I want to comment on two more biblical texts, which are often used to support Kenyon's thoughts. In 2 Peter 1:4 it says that we have become partakers of the divine nature. Doesn't that mean we've become gods? No. The word translated "participant" is the Greek "koinonos". That word has no exact Swedish or English equivalent. It primarily means "the one who lives in community". We often bless each other with "the participation of the Holy Spirit" and then mean as it says in NT 81 or in Giertz: "communion with the Holy Spirit".

As Christians, we share in each other. That's the community secret. But that doesn't mean that Svensson becomes Andersson because of it. That limit remains. The difference is that there is a communication across that border. So it is also between us and God. The border exists, but in Christ there has also become a new communication.

The second text is Ps 82, where God speaks sternly to the "gods" Who are they? Answer: they are earthly kings and rulers, i.e. people. In those days, kings pretended to be gods or demigods, and were worshiped by the people. But all this was an abomination to God. You can see that from God's reaction, when Israel's elders came to Samuel and wanted a king over him (1 Sam 8). God took this as another rebellion. If you want more texts that talk about God's view of the people who think they are gods, then carefully read Isa 41:21-29 (ssk verse 23) and Eze 28:1-10.

Summary

Kenyon has tried to change the doctrine of Jesus' atonement, so that the central point is that Jesus crosses the line between God and man before he dies. Then when he is resurrected, he crosses that line again and then regains his divine nature. Then Kenyon lays this erroneous thought as a template for man. Through the fall, she crossed the same line and lost equality with God, he believes. And through rebirth she would then have regained her original divinity.

Therefore, she can "take out in faith", and therefore she can rule over creation again, says Kenyon.

It's just that this is surely wrong, for Adam was almost a deity and not a god. And since this teaching has been made the basis of everything that gives the profession of faith since its peculiarity, we do the wisest thing in rejecting it all. It is not possible to try and keep what is good, because what separates the teachings of the faith movement from good charismatic Pentecostal preaching always has the false reconciliation as its starting point.

When reading Kenyon's books, it seems that the doctrine of the atonement came quite late, after most of what Kenyon otherwise presented. Everything begins with the rebirth and thoughts of the atonement are the conclusion that seemingly confirms that everything else would be right. So one still cannot return to classical atonement theology without jeopardizing the rest. The keystone is needed for the building to hang together.

Kenyon's book *What happened between the Cross and the Throne* is precisely about his new doctrine of atonement. Kenyon has given the book a subtitle, which reads: "Should have been written 400 years ago". It is difficult to agree with him, when one sat in on all the consequences of the new teaching. But the title shows that it is actually a new gospel.

Chapter 10

The allure

Very briefly, we shall ask the question why the proclamation of faith is so attractive. Many believe that this is because it promises man everything he desires. In the USA, a number of different slogans have been coined to point to this - "health and wealth gospel", "name it and claim it" etc.

Of course this contributes, but I know many people who are involved and know that some of them live in a great willingness to sacrifice. One may ask why a more biblical theology could not trigger at least as much rapture.

Goodness and omnipotence

There is a very attractive side to the profession of faith, and that is that God's goodness and omnipotence lose all the enigmaticness with which so many Christians otherwise struggle. Satan is made responsible for evil, and thus no shadow falls on God for its origin.

We have also been commissioned to exercise God's power in his place, so therefore it does not depend on God but only on ourselves when suffering comes.

The existence of evil and suffering in the presence of a good and all-powerful God has a simple explanation. Then wonder that this teaching triggers great action! Because ever since the beginning of the 18th century, this theological problem - which is called the theodicy problem - has been one of unbeliever's heaviest weapons against faith.

If the great point of the proclamation of faith is that God becomes comprehensible, then we can see how tormented the believers have long been by the problem of theodicy. When this only appears to be resolved, both the willingness to sacrifice and the joy of going out and witnessing are released.

A sham solution

But unfortunately, the issue is not resolved according to biblical pattern. You notice that when you have "resisted" according to all the rules of art and the suffering still continues. You have been given a simple and appealing map of reality, but the most important thing about a map is not that it makes you happy to look at it. It must be possible to get around with it in unknown terrain, otherwise it is not much to have.

I remember one person who first became enthusiastic about the declaration of faith. He had been taught early on that "God has already done everything that he will do for your sick judgment". But when the map proved incapable of leading him out of his misery despite doing as he was supposed to, he entered into great darkness.

Abandonment

God's goodness which had been so easy to understand from the beginning became confusing when he himself could not "cast the devil out of his life". Then he felt instead like a child that his father had abandoned in the forest. Dad had given the child a tent it couldn't pitch, and a liquor stove it couldn't light. There was no use in calling out to father, for he had gone his way and said he would not give any more help than he had already given.

In that situation, the sick person felt as abandoned by people as by God. Most of his friends just repeated the Bible words that he would "stand on" and then stayed away. Torbjörn Swartling, who was himself active in the movement (see bibliography), describes that one's whole faith can be shaken if one gets too close to those who do not get well. Because boldness is based on believing that you have understood how God's goodness works.

An intelligible God

When the creed makes God so totally comprehensible that he must respond when we claim his promises, rapture is triggered. But because of that, existence has not become less enigmatic - if you think about it. For, as I said before, the devil instead becomes so unfathomable that some break down. One moment you can laugh at him, the next you have to be on your guard against all kinds of attacks.

For my own part, I prefer, like past generations, to have a God who is so great that I cannot understand him in everything, while the devil is considerably smaller and thus easier to understand. Having a God who actually becomes quite small in his comprehensibility while the devil becomes unfathomable ultimately creates a terrible insecurity.

Also, I think the classical view is true. If you want to know my position in more detail regarding God's goodness and omnipotence, may I ask you to read my book *The Reason for Suffering*.

Chapter 11

A little fairy tale

Now that we have understood that Kenyon's teaching goes far beyond the biblical word in several ways, we naturally begin to wonder how it can go so crazy. Must we say that he himself and all who think and teach like him are evil heretics? No, it doesn't have to be like that at all. In this chapter I want to tell the story of Persson, who received a gift of grace without really understanding the grace in it.

Once upon a time there was a godly evangelist named Persson. One day he discovers that God has blessed him with a grace gift of mighty works. He hasn't earned it. It is grace. He didn't even behave in any special way to get it. God chooses whom He wills and He rarely if ever explains the motive for His choice.

How do you wonder?

Now when Persson prays for the sick, the strangest things happen. Dying cancer patient gets out of bed and starts to dress. Depressed people start laughing and cheering.

We usually say a bit piously that it is God who should have all the glory, but he rarely or never gets that. Instead, we give Persson a good share of the credit. How does it happen? Do we praise him and honor him? Well, we've learned not to do that. Some do it anyway and it's bad. But most people honor him by starting to study how he "behaves" to heal the sick.

In other words, they begin to seek the explanation for the miracles in Persson and not in God. Persson may even fall victim to this fallacy himself and opens his own Bible school to teach how to perform miracles. Because everyone expects that the explanation to an important part lies in Persson and not only in God, everyone now begins to pray with the same words, tone of voice and speaking in tongues as Persson. As if it would produce a gift of grace!

Once, when an extra-large miracle occurred, Persson happened to place one hand on the sick man's head and the other on one of his feet. Since then, Persson teaches that "that's how you do it, when you heal the sick. When you lay your hands just like that, God's power can flow through the sick person in a special way," he explains. In the future, it is generally considered that one is behind the times if one does not pray for the sick in that particular way.

Why not everyone?

Like everyone before him who received the healing of the sick on his heart, Persson suffers from the fact that not everyone is healed. He longs for the day when he can help everyone. And he is a pious man. He seeks the Lord in prayer for more strength. But he also seeks to refine his technique, because he is a child of the 20th century to a far greater degree than he himself understands. So he continues to search for answers to the question of how to behave so that more people will be healed.

The question is wrong, because it does not depend on how we behave. It is the Spirit that heals. And as little as the Spirit gives the gifts of healing to all, so little does He heal all before the last day even through those who have received the gift. It says in the Bible that this can happen, but then it speaks of "powers of an unusual kind".

But Persson doesn't think so. He hopes that if he can only find the right method or technique, everyone will be healthy. There is not one line in the entire Bible about such technology. It just says that we should go to the sick, pray for them and anoint them with oil. There is just no more talk about the healing technique in the Bible - a fact that should call for caution.

Persson therefore starts from his experience, that God already in this time heals some through some. Then he surely wants to heal everyone through everyone, he thinks. Since not everyone is healed, Persson now believes that there must be an obstacle to healing in their lives.

No other explanation can be imagined because he has already decided that God always wants to heal everyone.

Persson therefore begins to look for obstacles, and to some extent his search is crowned with success. Because sometimes there are obstacles to discover. But at the same time as his list of possible obstacles grows, the human part of healing becomes increasingly important.

Finally, Persson begins to teach that healing has already taken place in everyone. The only thing that remains is a piece of human action, so that it can also be seen. Then healing has turned entirely into a matter of human technology. Everything that this technology stands for in some way, he calls faith. Doesn't Jesus say several times: "Your faith has helped you"? So, he says now, it was not God who helped but faith.

The great obstacle to healing is, of course, Satan. And most of the items on Per son's list of obstacles therefore have to do with him. Persson creates a lot of dogmas about how to bypass the demons' obstacles, so that more people will be healed.

Without meaning to put the demons in the center, Persson slips in his presentation to the point that he actually talks far more about the demons than he does about God. They eventually occupy his mind so much that those who are not his faithful followers begin to react.

Healing has now transformed from being a wonderful but unfathomable possibility to becoming a matter of advanced spiritual technology. And in the middle of it all, God has ended up in the shadows, while man himself has become so important and Satan so great. The more Persson talks about how Satan can prevent God's healing in a thousand different ways, the more powerful Satan appears to be, while God, despite all the praise, seems helpless and weak. The more Persson emphasizes that people must "believe in" their healing, the more people now begin to see their illness as a spiritual defeat if they do not immediately get well.

All offices

When other preachers want to correct Persson, he feels opposed and as a result. In that state, he becomes receptive to revelations. In a less crowded situation, he would have asked a person with the office of teacher to test the revelations. Now he is content to find one or another Bible word that seems to support the revelations which in turn support everything he previously thought but was criticized for.

From the beginning, Persson was an evangelist who received a grace gift of mighty works. The more he begins to teach "how to," the more he also begins to see himself as a Bible teacher. The revelations result in him also starting to call himself a prophet. A growing crowd of disciples arises around him.

As other preachers find it difficult to see that his teaching is as biblical as it is claimed, he feels ostracized and therefore forms his own congregation. Then he becomes a pastor. In the end, the confrontation becomes so clear that he believes that everyone else is dead and that they have betrayed God's Word. He himself thinks he is left alone on the barricades and therefore calls himself an apostle.

From the beginning he was an evangelist. Now he has also become a teacher, prophet, shepherd and apostle - at least in his own eyes and in the eyes of his followers.

In the invisible

Since this is a fairy tale, we can also tell about what happens in the invisible spirit world, when Persson develops his new doctrine.

When Persson begins to perform mighty deeds, a great activity is started among the princes and powers in the kingdom of darkness. Just as Satan had the opportunity to tempt Jesus in the desert, he is allowed to tempt Persson in the same way. The tactic is not to stop the use of the gift of grace but to tempt abuse.

Many demons are therefore sent out. Some are assigned to dress up as an angel of light and begin giving revelations. Some of the demons are also happy to offer their services to collect money, if nothing else.

Other demons who already have influence over people are instructed to allow themselves to be cast out, even though they could remain. People who want to live in unbelief and sin suddenly lose all stimulation from the evil spirits when Persson "takes authority" over them. The end is that they become Christians, although they never really mourned the sin in their lives.

Therefore, Persson and his disciples are now beginning to look differently at the question of how the gospel should be brought out. For them, it is less and less about telling people that they are sinners who need forgiveness. No, now it's more a matter of exorcising spirits and demons. This must be done through proclamations and spiritual warfare.

Prayer meetings and meetings are characterized by this thinking. When you gather to pray for revival, it can happen under the motto: "Brave warriors clear the spirit world with

Power of God". It sounds as if it was man and not God who ruled, set and cleansed with the power of God.

The goal

Where does the devil want to go? What kind of Bible word does he have in mind? Let's read Luke 10:17-20:

"The seventy returned full of joy and said: Lord, even the evil spirits obey us when we speak in your name! But he answered: I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning. Yes, I have given you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and all that the enemy offers, and nothing shall hurt you.

But do not rejoice that the spirits obey you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Here Jesus is talking about the protection we need to exercise authority over the spirits of evil. He also talks about how we can lose that protection. As long as we rejoice that our names are written in heaven, God is everything and we are nothing - in a healthy sense. Then we wait to exercise authority until God has sent us, much as Jesus had sent this crowd out on a limited mission.

So we persevere in prayer to God until He gives the go-ahead for us to exercise authority. No other warfare exists.

But when we rejoice in the power over the demons, we begin to boast that we ourselves can start war against the spirits. Then we lose the protection we had before.

This is the devil's big and perhaps his only chance.

The tactic therefore simply consists in luring Persson and his followers to excessive courage and self-inflicted human-centeredness. Then everything seems to be going well, but many warriors among the infantry are carried away from the front with their feet first, because the protection was no longer there.

Summary

Was this how it happened when the faith movement arose? I do not know. But if I see the course of events like this until proven otherwise, it becomes easier for me to distinguish between things and people. For we are called to mutual love. It means being called to love both Persson and all those who are confused by his teaching.

If the latter category did not exist, the whole thing would be quite simple. But when it now exists, the situation becomes easiest for oneself if one sees the whole of theology as a gigantic accident at work. Then you can clarify where the errors are and learn something from them without having to attack people.

This does not rule out that Persson can move on dangerous ground for his own part. When he takes the time to listen to what other preachers have to say, he has deliberately taken a very risky step.

There is yet another important merit to this little tale. It shows us how easily any charismatic revival can derail. Here are some lessons to be learned in the art of returning to a healthy exercise of the gifts of the Spirit. Let us therefore leave Kenyon and his teachings for a while and try to find ways to a healthy charismatic ministry.

Chapter 12

A piece

If we are now going to try to listen to a teaching from the Bible that can lead us on the right track, it may be appropriate that we start with a word from Paul. It is about the use of the gifts of grace, but we rarely or never read it when we are to teach about the gifts of grace. In 1 Cor 13:8-13 it says like this:

"Love never fails. The gifts of prophecy, they shall pass away. The speaking in tongues, it will be silenced. Knowledge, it will have an end. A piece is all we know, a piece what we prophesy. But when it comes that is complete, then the piece gets an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, thought like a child, reasoned like a child. But since I became a man, I have stopped doing things that belong to the child.

Now we see a dim image in a mirror. Then we shall see face to face. Now my knowledge is a piece of work. Then I shall know him as completely as I have been known by him. So they become permanent: faith, hope, love, these three. But greatest among them is the game of love."

"The high wisdom of love"

Often we read the thirteenth chapter without thinking about the context in which it is written. When we have to teach about the gifts of grace, we like to read chapters 12 and 14. When we have to speak loudly about love in completely different contexts, we go to the thirteenth chapter.

As a rule, we then completely miss that this chapter constitutes the very high point of Paul's teaching about the gifts of grace. The gift is, after all, an expression of grace, i.e. of love. Therefore, the chapter begins with a comment that if I have any gift but am not driven by love when I use it, then the whole thing is basically meaningless.

There are people who find self-reflection easy. They can brood over the question of whether there is love behind the smallest action that they have to do. They brood until every opportunity is over, and then practically nothing gets done. That is not how one should understand Paul. The word is for those who think that life becomes easier if you never examine your motives.

Then Paul gives us some characteristics of agape - genuine, divine love. After that come the lines I just quoted. And then we are back in the graces again. Because these are the ones Paul wants to teach us about.

A provisional

So what does he have to tell us? Well, his message is that all the gifts are temporary and will disappear when the perfect kingdom of God has arrived. In the kingdom of heaven there is no speaking in tongues. There everyone knows the Lord perfectly, and then there is no place for prophesying either.

After the resurrection, everyone is healthy, and we can therefore forget the gifts of healing when eternity has broken in. They are not needed. Spirit discernment is something you have to practice at a time when you don't really know who or what you can trust. When we live in the world of truth, such things are not needed.

But that's only one side of the story. Paul also tells us that when we now usually receive the gifts, we must know that none of them is complete. They do not have the ability to give us more than a sliver of the heavenly state today. Prophets can mishear, and so messages must be carefully tested. One does not do it out of suspicion of the prophet. You do it because you know that all graces are incomplete pieces.

It is the same with healing. Some are healed, others are not. Sometimes people get better but not well. And we puzzle ourselves half to death to get an answer as to why it is so. The explanation is simple: all graces are a piece of work. Yes, but we say, why is that? What are we doing wrong?? We are not doing anything wrong. Creation is not yet so reunited with God that we can see him face to face.

Persson's mistake

If we go back to the story of Persson, we see that he derailed in his ministry the day he wanted to elevate his gift of grace to infallibility. When he could not rejoice in what happened spontaneously but would improve the result beyond what God had given, the gift finally became a human work. Then there was a multitude of accomplishments in everything man, and the associated teaching moved away from the Bible word.

Suppose you were given the gift of always healing all the sick. You just had to line them up and run past the entire queue and touch everyone, and everyone was healed too. Oddly enough, you wouldn't have to love any of the sick to do that. It would cost you no more than the effort of praying for power and then the actual touching of the sick.

Now that this is impossible, you always approach the sick with the risk of not being able to help. When no help comes, you have to share the suffering of the sick person instead of solving it. Much more love is needed for that task than is needed for the anonymous act of power.

Almost a godlike being

The one who is a true deity can perform absolute miracles. He who, even after rebirth, is only "almost a god-being" can convey miracles but only on an incomplete level.

When Adam ate of the Tree of Knowledge, he wanted to be more than he was created to be. When we seek in the realm of miracles the knowledge that will transform us from "almost" to complete equality with God, we are in practice going from righteousness to sin. In the case of miracles, such "improvement sin" is called magic.

What is magic?

Let me then immediately say that I am now putting a slightly different meaning into the word than is usually done. Many people mean by "magic" a miracle, which came about by consciously seeking the help of evil spirits through spiritism, spells, amulets and what it can be more. Here I use the word in the sense that the miracle has become so mandatory, that I, as a human, have power over the miracle.

Thus it is not stated whether it is the power of God or not. What makes magic magic, according to this way of seeing, is the fact that I, as a human, consider myself to be so equipped as to possess wonder. It is I who decide when and how it will happen - not God.

Many people are confused when they read Matthew 7:15-23. There, on the last day, the Lord meets the false prophets, those who outwardly were so nice and looked so enormously righteous but who were ravenous wolves in their hearts. They say they performed all kinds of miracles in the name of Jesus, and Jesus does not contradict them. Even so, he turns them away and calls them criminals.

The power can be abused

What surprises many is the question why God does not turn off the power when he sees it being misused. Sometimes it happens that people who have received gifts of grace derail and begin to live in obvious and conscious sin. It may apply to fornication, fraud, abuse of power or the like, and yet the gift of grace does not dry up. The sick continue to be healed, people come to faith and money flows in like never before, even though society has become impure.

Over the years I have met several confused wives. They have complained that the husband could beat them or abuse them mentally. Soon after, he was able to go to a meeting and lay hands on people, so that they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. The woman's conclusion is often that it must be her fault, because people were well signed by the husband's service.

When the bubble bursts, and people learn how that man treated his wife, many become worried and wonder what kind of baptism they experienced. Was it the power of God or the devil? All parties would do well to understand that God is big enough to bless even through a man who himself is on his way away from God's grace in his own life. I personally believe that all real good that happens on earth comes from God even if it is done by the worst scoundrel and denier.

So it was probably the power of God in the baptism of the Spirit, but in the life of the blesser it was perhaps no longer a matter of use but of abuse. This is especially true of the gift of grace

is used to legitimize sin according to the old principle "my sin is not a sin even though it looks like it, because the gift of grace is still there". But once again we then ask: Why doesn't God turn off the power?

The answer is simple but requires quite a long consideration to become more than empty words. If the gift of grace dried up, it would not be grace but merit. Because the incredible thing is that I, a poor, sinful person in the midst of all my own struggle against sin and rebellion, can convey something of the power and righteousness of the kingdom of heaven even before that struggle is finally over in my own life.

God, by grace, does not immediately take away our natural gifts when we begin to misuse them. If a Christian gets greedy, God doesn't directly take all the money away from him either. He is long-suffering, it says.

Moreover, the gift of grace is not for the person who exercises the gift, but it is given by God so that those around the practitioner will be blessed. And he can let it be, even if the tool takes cleanliness lightly.

It is a common mistake that Christians do not dare to reach for gifts of grace for the simple reason that they are not finished with their sanctification. "I, who get so angry sometimes, can't get a gift of grace", it could be called. Yes, it is precisely for such people that gifts of grace are needed if the kingdom of heaven is to shine at all.

The gift is not a medal. It is a grace, and despite our imperfection, that grace can retain its purity, if only we do not claim to own it or control it.

And should we still do that, the purity can still work in the surroundings. However, we ourselves run the risk of hardening our hearts, if we consciously take advantage of the fact that the power remains despite our willful sin.

It is at this point that I mean that the real line is drawn between grace and magic. Adam sought knowledge to get more than God had willingly given him. It was about owning creation rather than managing it. Of course he thought it was an improvement - a word so positively charged that we almost cannot understand how our pursuit of perfection can sometimes be a rebellion.

It is through our fleshly improvements that revival dies, just as it was through Adam's "improvements" that the Garden of Eden was closed. Because behind the improvement lies our longing for the power that God claims to have for himself.

Signs and wonders

We often speak of "signs and wonders", as the Bible also does. More rarely do we ask ourselves what the very combination of these concepts stands for. Now if the wonder is a sign - then what is it a sign of?

Many live in the ill-conceived notion that the wonder would be a sign that all is well. Preachers who work miracles would then prove with their miracles that they are living right, and that their teaching is correct.

But this is not true. The gift does not show that the one who conveys the gift is living right, we just saw that. But the wonder also does not mean that the teaching that may have been given before the miracle need be correct.

We must learn that wonder is a sign that the kingdom of God is near - or approaching if you prefer to put it that way. The one who has been given the gift of healing the sick can have a teaching that is up the walls and his gift still works. For the sick are not made well by his teaching but by his commission and gift to heal the sick.

Summary

One of the most important things to understand about the gift of grace is that it is an imperfect gift in an imperfect man. The spirit that gives the gift is of course not imperfect. But he chooses to express himself in this time in an incomplete way. Maybe he does it so that we will long to go home to the kingdom where we can see God face to face.

The person in whose life the Spirit is to express himself does not need to be perfect for it to happen, and he does not become more perfect when it happens. If God required perfection, then we could completely abandon all thoughts of grace. No one is perfect on this site. On the other hand, we have reason to always feel awe and wonder when we see how grace flows, despite our lives as they are. There is a temptation to take grace for granted, so that one no longer cares about purity.

Actually, the gifts of grace are an expression of what the Bible calls imputed righteousness. We are included in the crowd that will receive full salvation when the Lord returns. Even before it has happened, we get to reap the fruits of what is about to happen.

That is wonderful!

Now we have seen a lot about what happens when the gift of grace is derailed. Maybe it's time to ask instead what the gift really means when we don't abuse it.

What is heavenly in the gift as long as it testifies to the kingdom of God?

Chapter 13

Charisma

The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, and the New Testament we have from the beginning in Greek, which was the "world language" of the time, much like English is now.

It is interesting to take part in these basic languages, because the words in modern languages are so poor compared to the words in these older languages. Today, we strive for precision when we express ourselves and then want the words we use to not have ten different meanings but one. In olden times, people were perhaps not as keen on accuracy as we are now. In any case, many biblical terms have whole rows of meanings, where the corresponding word in Swedish only has one meaning, and a rather narrow one at that.

The concept of "faith"

Let's take a clear example. The Hebrew words most often translated faith are derived from the word aman which is closely related to amen. The word means, among other things, to be cared for and carried like a baby. From this we better understand Jesus' words that we must repent and become like children (Matthew 18:1-5). He also says that God hides himself from the wise and prudent but reveals himself to those who are like children (Matthew 11:25).

In a figurative sense, the word is therefore used in the sense of being carried on God's arm. It is synonymous with being true and truthful, which in turn has several secondary meanings. He who is truthful does not waver here and there, for the truth does not change. Thus the word may well mean statute and maturity. He who is true also does not betray his neighbor, and therefore the word also means faithfulness and reliability.

Since it is God's arm that carries one, the word is also an expression of safety and security. It can also be used in the sense of "to gain trust". In modern Hebrew iska, a derived form of aman is used in the sense of getting credit (= trust) in a bank.

With us, the word belief means that one has an opinion or a belief of varying degrees of certainty. Then there is nothing more. And every time we read the word faith in our Swedish Bibles, we miss the world of associations that meet us in the basic language.

Gratitude

In the same way, it is with the word charisma that is the Greek root word for "gift of grace". That word belongs to a family that stands for grace but also for joy and gratitude. The first Christians called the Eucharist Eucharist, which means thanksgiving.

All of this means that we could just as well call the gift of grace a gift of joy or a gift of gratitude. These secondary meanings are important for us to understand the function of the gift and character.

A little simplified, you can say that a gift of grace is what flows out of it Christians together with his gratitude to God. And this gives us a relaxed path to discover what gift we have been given. We can approach the question however we like express our gratitude. The answer to the question is usually our gift of grace.

Everyone gets a gift

In the sparse teaching that the Bible gives about grace, it is clearly stated that all can expect to receive a gift. This assertion often creates deadlocks instead interest. Not infrequently, the blockages are due to the fact that a gift of grace is always there totally supernatural, and one gets attached to the idea that it "must be required of one's unlucky achievements". That is not the case at all. There are lots of graces that touch itself in the natural area. Let's read in Romans 12:6-8:

“And we have gifts of grace that are different, according to the grace we have received. It could be the gift of prophecy - as far as faith goes. It can be the gift to serve, just in a certain service. Or to be a teacher, with the gift of teaching. Or to be a comforter, with the gift of comfort and exhortation. He who distributes gifts, he does without ulterior motives. The one who has become superintendent, he is that with zeal. The one who practices mercy, he does it with joy.”

Here is the entire register. Gifts that are totally supernatural - eg the gift of prophecy - mixed with ones that look quite natural but still get their Christ scent from that they are performed in the joy of gratitude.

The gift of being a teacher, for example, is a funny mix. A Spirit's help is needed, so that you yourself understand the Scriptures, but you certainly also need quite a lot of regular, ground-level training in the art of speaking comprehensibly and clearly. You get to train in microphone technology and voice processing and learn the art of coming up with clear illustrations that can capture the audience's interest. Much is supernatural but far from everything.

Here we encounter a phenomenon that is often seen, namely that the gift of grace usually corresponds to the person's own personality. And there is nothing strange in that. The Lord has both created you and reborn you. Both parts must match well when the work is done clear! Quite often you see that when star salespeople come to faith, they become evangelists. I myself, who have almost never been able to sell even a May flower, have to find my way in the task of teaching those who have already come to faith.

Sometimes people get so overly spiritual that they think the gift of leading praise only given to those who can neither sing nor play from the start. No, that's rarely the case. Often it is the other way around that the gift of grace arises when one is out of gratitude and joy uses the prerequisites already in place from birth.

Therefore, you can see a parish treasurer who has the bookkeeping as a gift. He have had to attend many courses in the art of keeping track of debit, credit, taxes, fees, balance, financial statement and other details. But he does it of free will, because he feels gratitude to the Lord who gave him the mission. He has received grace as one gift and passes it on of free will. As a rule, the gift works naturally and not by chance. But one day the congregation may need money for a new building. Then perhaps he receives a guidance from the Spirit about how the money is to be obtained.

There are people who make the congregation's church coffee or clean the church for that reason that they want to express their gratitude to the Lord. Then the coffee is not only made from beans but also on prayers. And the cleaning might technically have been done just as well by one cleaning company, but spiritually there is a huge difference.

Not everything is a gift

Now I sense that many people frown and think that I do everything as gifts of grace and therefore takes away the beauty of the crow's song. No, I certainly don't. Because in our congregations quite a lot is done out of duty, peer pressure and bad conscience rather than out of gratitude and joy. And then the grace is gone. Then it is slavery and not freedom.

My wife was a teacher in the congregation's Sunday school for a few years. She was mostly because she "should", because she is not nature's teacher. A lot happened that was nice during those years. It happened that children experienced the Spirit in their lives. The work was not wasted in any way. But her joy lay elsewhere - including keeping in touch with persecuted Christians in the Eastern countries. She has that task today on behalf of the congregation, and she can perform that service in a completely different way in freedom and grace. Sunday school didn't end because she turned in. It is managed today by people who are more suitable for teaching than she was.

So all church services are not gifts of grace. But what is done out of gratitude comes about out of grace and gives grace. And then it must be called a gift of grace. If we see the matter, we need no one gets a cramp or sits on their hindquarters.

The border fades away

Then it is a lovely side effect that when grace flows in the community, the line between natural and supernatural is blurred. The Lord's presence grows in power and importance, and then it becomes easier to perceive his thoughts and signals. This is experiencing some more than others, and it may lead to a ministry of prophecy or to a task to try the spirits behind what is said and done.

People who often share the sufferings of the sick can have a gift to comfort and listen. Others - or the same people - may receive a gift to mediate healing.

The great gift

In some places in the Bible, Jesus himself is mentioned as a gift of grace. And so it is nature. He gave himself out of grace. We receive the great gift of salvation and are seized with gratitude. Then we want to pass it on in the form of some grace, which now expresses our gratitude. Grace flows as a gift. If it then takes place within or outside what we call for the limits of natural laws are meaningless. Grace can be allowed to take any expression any.

That then the supernatural operations of the Spirit of God in a special way become one challenge to the unbeliever is another matter. It is of great importance that these signs exist. But we must not limit the gifts of grace to being merely supernatural.

You know, a real charismatic is not just a well-dressed young man with a wild twinkle in him corner of the eye and bold projects ahead. It might as well be an old aunt who praying for her congregation and her grandchildren as she sits in a wheelchair.

Chapter 14

In Christ

Let us return to Kenyon's point of departure, that whoever is in Christ is a completely new skin (2 Corinthians 5:17).

For Kenyon, these words mean that we have (again) become equal with God. People who take in his message, often invest in becoming a kind of mini-Jesus, often with everyone gifts and all services and in any case with great claims. Because one in the visible should become what one already is spiritually, one is advised to "meditate on one's identity in Christ".

Now the Bible speaks clearly about what we should discover when we meditate on our new identity. For the new creation is not only myself. We must also remind ourselves that the congregation is the body of Christ, and in that body - in Christ - I am a member. The power and life is in the body rather than in me. When I see my new identity, I see also what a member I have become. And when I do, even my flaws make sense. Because what I lack also determines my place in the body as much as what I am have.

I am not speaking now of our sins, but of talents, talents, and gifts which are lacking. Song Let's assume that you have reading and writing difficulties. Your place is hardly to be a secretary. But you are good at listening, because you have an ease of empathizing with others woes. Perhaps your difficulties in reading and writing have contributed to it by giving you a humility before those who struggle with problems.

In the choice between doing pastoral care or writing protocols, your place is given. You become a pastor or a comforter - not only because you are easy to listen to, but also because you have difficulty writing.

Your flaws, which before were just an annoying black on the foot, now become something that actually opens you up to community when they make you dependent on the other members of the body. Before you became a member, you had to struggle to cope with what you were not equipped to do do in order to function as a "strong" and independent individual. Now you are at mercy context. You can therefore feel your weaknesses in a new way and invest more wholeheartedly in doing what you can do.

Now let us suppose that you did not see that your "identity in Christ" was also the identity of the members in the body. But you meditate on your new identity and think that Jesus had none reading and writing difficulties and then you shouldn't have any either. Therefore, you take out the gift of writing in faith and report yourself as suitable for the task as secretary.

Let me say right away that I believe there can be healing for illiterates in the Holy Spirit. But you act as if you were still in the world

and not in the body. Because your greatest desire is to escape the dependence that the entire community is actually based on.

Well, we say you become secretary because everyone is so impressed with your faith. But if the difficulties remain, what will happen to you, and what will happen to the congregation? You may be disappointed and confused. Or you let your wife fix the records on the sly, so you can keep up appearances. But sooner or later you will be caught and exposed. And then the whole talk of grace falls into disrepute.

The role of gratitude

Why do I now say you did wrong? You thought you were extra charismatic when you proclaimed your new gift of grace that never came off. But I don't agree with you. Let us return to the idea that the gift of grace is an expression of gratitude.

A grateful person sees what he has received and rejoices in it. But you were still most preoccupied with what you hadn't gotten. And that is the lifestyle of the flesh - that you mostly look at what you lack and fight to get it. Then you end up in the constant chasing which usually leads to disappointment and means that one's actual abilities are either not used at all or are also used for the wrong purposes.

That's what happened to you. You didn't even see the gift of listening. It came completely out of hand. You became so busy seeking your desired gift of grace that grace never got a chance to express itself with the dispositions that were already there ready to be used. You were driven not by gratitude but by desire into the world of grace. And when you did, you yourself became confused and disappointed, and you burned the ground for many others.

Actually, it was wrong because you sought the gift for your own sake and not for those around you. The gift was there in your ability to listen, but you looked more to your own needs than to the body's.

When Paul urges us to primarily seek the gift of prophecy (1 Cor 12:31), he does not mean that we should reach for the gifts that bring us the most honor, but that we should seek those that mean the most to the church. For one's own part, the gift usually brings with it an extra large participation in the sufferings of Christ.

A finger without a hand

This gives us further reason to think of the gifts as a collective phenomenon.

It generally seems to be the case when reading the New Testament, that the baptism of the Spirit and other spiritual manifestations were experienced by whole multitudes of people rather than by individuals. On the other hand, we ask individual people whether they have been baptized in the spirit or not, as we mostly have experience of it happening to one person at a time.

Of course, it will be much easier to find your graces if many others are doing it too. After all, it is easier for a finger to find its place if there is a hand and an arm to work with. Therefore, one can easily be tempted to leave one's congregation if the majority in it does not want to hear about gifts of grace.

But then you run the risk that always arises when a limb separates from the body. Because the development towards increasingly unhealthy teaching that we have witnessed has its basis in exclusivity. People have been too willing to leave "the dead congregations" - as it was called. But then one has instead been caught by the compulsion to chase after the most awesome for the connoisseurs with the strangest messages.

If you leave your congregation for lack of grace towards the people you consider failing their calling - how much grace can there be in your gift of grace? You may be able to make your gift more powerful, but how much grace will there be? Scripture says that power is made full of weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9). This does not necessarily mean that it will then be the largest, but that its quality will be the finest.

Even if we assume that you are right about the others failing their calling, it is still your primary task to give grace. This does not mean that you should always remain silent. But if you make demands on how people should function in order to have fellowship with you - aren't you back in the world's way of thinking and acting? God doesn't do that with you. Why do you do that to your siblings?

Jesus could sigh: "How long will I have to put up with you?" (Mark 9:19). But he did not go out into the wilderness with a crowd of like-minded people to form a small effective group. Love forced him to stay where he was. If you and I share no more of Christ's sufferings than the pain of people with whom we associate burying their pound, we have still got away rather lightly.

The job of the saints is not to make the gifts work. The mission is to build up the body of Christ. The gifts are an important aid for the task to be carried out. If we make the function of the gifts the real calling, we will soon begin to break down the body of Christ - the temple of living stones - to get the gifts into the strongest possible function. That's what they did in Corinth. Listen to what Paulus has to say:

"Do you not understand that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. Do not deceive yourselves" (1 Corinthians 3:16-18).

This does not mean that one must remain in a congregation at all costs. We see the basic rule in Paul. He remained in the synagogue until he was cast out, and he made sure that it was not for his pride but for Christ's sake.

Chapter 15

Blessed are the poor

The gospel is the message of joy for the poor. And everywhere on earth where it is preached to people who are poor both in spirit and in wallet, it also has its full force.

People are being healed and transformed. The spirits go out with loud cries.

But in the wealthy West, we must quickly turn to Peter's words to the lame and say:

"We have plenty of gold and prestige, so there will be no miracles today." At least it will not many.

When the gospel does not go to the spiritually and materially poor but to the rich, it does not lose only much of its healing power. Infectiousness also drops and then it becomes difficult to evangelize. Then we are seized by many kinds of temptations, all of which can be seen as an island's ability to change the message of joy for the poor into the message of joy for the rich.

We can distinguish two major paths to the new goal – to adapt the gospel to different kinds rich people. The first consists in deleting or concealing the parts of the message that can be perceived as challenging for others - and for oneself. The other way consists of reinterpreting and making additions. In practice, you usually work with both the methods but perhaps in different ways and with different emphasis. What you erase or naturally distorts the dimension of grace from the message of grace, because if love is to prevail, all kinds of wealth are in danger.

The salt becomes sugar

When you mostly go in to delete texts from the Bible, you end up with only a general one message of tolerance and commitment. The salt has turned into sugar. Then the collection stands wide open for humanism, which is an atheistic philosophy with exactly this message.

The scoffer Voltaire is considered the father of humanism, and in the social field its work is carried on by the scoffer Marx. The one who brought the ideas of humanism to it the field of spiritual human care was Freud the scoffer. Through these, humanism gained a semblance of science that made one feel compelled or enticed to mix it into the Christian message. Many did not notice that they were slandered after the purchase into the congregation as a Trojan horse. Many are ashamed of the gospel.

"Christian Humanism"

Training in pastoral care for pastors today is often based on the principles of psychotherapy, although Freud and many leaders after him used their own insight to destroy

faith in God. The church gained a respectable exterior, but she lost her birthright to a gruel, and a pretty bad one at that.

Although no one meant it, the future pastors were thus taught that the gospel is only good for Sunday at eleven o'clock. In everyday problems it does not work - unless Jesus happened to have said something that Freud and the others could sign off on. One sometimes encounters the expressions "Christian humanism" or "Christian Marxism". I know all well-meaning people who subscribe to these views. But the concepts themselves are a combination of words that lack content in the same way as "Christian Buddhism" or "Christian bank robberies".

You may think this was harshly said. But reverse the problem and you will see. Imagine that future pastors were taught that no point of departure for human care could be compared to the gospel they were set to preach. Then imagine that they were given an education that showed it to be true in practice. What a sermon it would be on Sunday at eleven o'clock!

But that's not what you might say. It is beautifully thought out but unfortunately the gospel is not so good. Then think of the LP foundation, which with the power of the gospel helps people who have been declared by most authorities to be hopeless cases. And the care of addicts would not have to be the only example, that is my definite experience.

Because no matter how we look at it, it is humanism that caused the entire de-Christianization of the West. Trying to mix that ideology into one's pastoral care and preaching must lead to ideological suicide. So when the pastor between the lines has learned that his wisdom cannot be used on weekdays, he easily begins to doubt whether it is that much to use on Sundays either.

Then it may happen that he stops preaching conversion to Christ and turns to preaching social commitment instead. And such commitment is good. It is part of our calling. But when it is allowed to replace conversion, humanism reappears. Because then the gospel's message of truth and grace is not sufficient as an ideological basis for community work. As a rule, it is instead considered that one should join political parties or struggle groups in order to find the forms for social engagement. Sometimes we form Christian associations that almost have to compete with the world's groupings in the art of being solidly risky under the sign of humanism.

If, on the other hand, you live out your social commitment by, for example, starting to speak out against free abortions, then you should expect to be opposed or silenced - sometimes even in church.

The fruit of tolerance

Humanism has a concept of truth that is based on philosophy and not on divine revelation. In principle, we can say that the only thing that is recognized as real truth is what can be proven with natural scientific methodology. Since faith is based on revelation, we get a head-on collision between two different concepts of truth when we mix Christianity and humanism. It is this conflict that has given rise to Kenyon's contempt

for mind knowledge. But there is nothing wrong with the senses. We just have to decide what the truth looks like, then it's enough to use both eyes and ears.

You don't have to become an enemy of science just because you believe. But many who do not know how subjective even the best natural science is, are easily tempted to argue with faith's concept of truth when they encounter humanism. Because a cornerstone of humanism is that everything that cannot be studied scientifically - morality, coexistence - must be embraced with tolerance because there is no fixed truth in these areas. There can be a certain utilitarian morality, and it is usually said that love and equality should prevail. But when you come to the question of what love really is, you usually get stuck.

The truth should set us free, but humanism denies that it can be expressed in clear terms in the areas that concern us most deeply. When humanism gains ground in Christian congregations, we should therefore expect to meet people who have not tasted the liberating effect of the gospel, but who have instead ended up in a new kind of pursuit of performance.

This gives us an explanation for a phenomenon that can otherwise puzzle. When we enter a congregation that has been influenced by humanism, little is said about sin in the name of tolerance. We could imagine that everyone would be at ease there. Instead, one soon discovers that almost everyone is wallowing in self-condemnation.

So strange you might think. No not at all. People do not stop discovering their sin just because we no longer preach about it. The only difference is that they cease to see the grace that is the only thing that can help them. Because we don't talk about sin to put people down, but so that they can identify it and find the way out to freedom.

If, in the name of tolerance, we only talk about kindness and commitment as if the person were kind and committed, then we do not reduce the experience of guilt, we increase it. The debt we brought with us to the church was never identified and lifted. We were only told that the suffering in the world was ours to bear. It would also take place with such hopelessly inadequate means as our commitment.

Let us now remember that the gifts of grace arise when gratitude flows from the interior of a liberated person. Then we can begin to understand why there are so few gifts of grace in many congregations, although the Scriptures speak of the gifts being for everyone. If someone comes with shining eyes to such a congregation and starts talking about grace, men can become surprisingly aggressive. They experience the speech about gifts of grace as yet another demand for commitment and it easily becomes the straw that breaks the donkey's back.

"God bless"

When a pendulum has been drawn to an extreme position, sooner or later something will cause it to swing to another equally extreme position. As humanistic Christians have long been rich with a bad conscience and confused concepts, a market for the belief system arises which says with firm and clear statements that God wants man to be rich.

When you preach material prosperity, the idea is that God wants to give man the means for spreading the gospel. But it is also said that if the Christians were poorer than people in general, no one would want to become a Christian. So the sum of it all ends up being that the camel still seems to get through the eye of the needle quite well.

Basically, the problems of the poor should not be solved by the rich sharing, even if that is also good. The situation of the poor must primarily be solved by them learning to utilize the "spiritual laws of nature" for prosperity which are considered to prevail in the invisible.

When we give money to help the poor, it is said that we "sow out" our money. In whose field does the seed end up? The answer must be that it is in our own field that we hurt, because from our "generosity" we expect to receive a hundredfold again. Because that's how they say that the spiritual laws of nature for prosperity work. So we don't just give for the sake of the poor, but a hundred times more for our own sake.

In practice, one therefore appeals to the desire for profit to make people generous. This is not repentance from greed - although it leads to record-breaking collections. Instead, it is something that looks like Christianity while it feeds greed – at least for a time. Because sooner or later you notice that it does not work as a natural law for the simple reason that it is not a natural law.

The great preachers are usually able to stand on the platform and talk about how they believe in money for God's work - including themselves. But for them it works in part because the many who sit and listen are willing to pay for the party without being compensated.

The second option

We can say that this is the second royal road when it comes to turning the message of joy for the poor into a gospel for the rich. Because here it is energetically claimed that nothing has been deleted from the Bible's message. But whoever searches for him finds many biblical words that do not agree with theology and that have been passed over in silence.

In addition, more texts have been angled and the meaning of a number of words changed. In practice, therefore, new teaching points have been added that lack support in the Bible.

In any case, the liberal theologians have the merit of not being sneaky with their deletions and attempts at censorship. You put an honor in them, and it may seem like a rather dubious honor. But any literate person can see right away that their message does not match that of the Bible. They themselves are also the first to agree with this.

In any event, the faith movement has gotten past the bad conscience that previously stood as a stopper in the spiritual flow. The price for the change is, however, terribly high, because now spirituality also becomes something to live up to. And since the truth has been tampered with yet again with other technology, this gospel also does not work as well in practice as it is said it should. Many then end up in a new kind of confusion and depression. In addition, you get an unnecessary conflict between the two directions

the arna.

Same breathing kids

Let us then think like this: we have to reckon with two types of Christianity whose representatives today hotly fight each other's teachings. But both of these are really just different adaptations of the gospel to the same wealth environment and should therefore show far more similarities than differences. Let's see if it's true!

Positive human outlook

The first thing that perhaps comes to mind is the positive view of man that one encounters both in humanism and in the proclamation of faith. There is a lot of talk about commitment within humanistic Christianity, but little is said about conversion. It is mostly about setting people in motion, not so much about giving this movement a new direction. When you get into a movement, it is natural that you go parallel to people who are not Christians and learn from their techniques in human care, peace work, etc.

Exactly the same applies to the declaration of faith, but in a slightly different way. Here you don't get along with the unsaved, it's true, but you still have the same kind of positive view of humanity. Man only needs to regain his equality with God and he will live rightly, it is said. Sin then really becomes more of a deficiency symptom than a question of one being so depraved that one actually wants to love mammon more than God.

Materialism survives

Both camps are therefore similar in that neither of them frees people from materialism. The cross would free us from the worship of mammon, but that does not happen in any of the movements. Remorse and desolation are equally uncommon in them both.

Funnily enough, the faith movement is often accused of being alien to the work of the cross. One then mostly thinks that the teaching aims at freedom from illness and suffering. But the work of the cross is primarily a matter of conversion from the idols – mammon – to God. That part of the work of the cross is missing pretty much everywhere.

When you say that the faith movement is alien to the cross, it seems to mean that the faith movement cultivates wealth with a good conscience where everyone else does it with a bad one. But that is not enough of a difference. The similarities are greater than the differences.

Confidence

The second thing that easily catches your eye is that both systems are based on human performance. Whether it's social performance or spiritual, the result is that God seems to need our help to cope with his situation. Man becomes great and important and the Lord becomes small and weak. In both cases, we get the performance anxiety in the bargain.

Therefore, both messages are also about human self-confidence. Within the faith movement, there is a lot of talk about the spiritual self-confidence that should arise when one

realizes "who one is in Christ" and confesses it. In humanistic Christianity, they talk a lot about human dignity and borrow many ideas from psychotherapy. The legal self-condemnation must be alleviated through a "love-yourself-movement". How will it happen if you can't find something in yourself that you can love?

Real Christianity speaks of "I am dead but Christ lives in me". You neither can nor need to have any trust in someone who is dead. However, you can have confidence in the person who took over. With him you can always find something worth loving. Then it becomes a "love-Jesus movement". Love for him redeems us from self-absorption in a much deeper way.

Christianity is about the Lord being my strength, wisdom, righteousness and holiness. When he is in the right way, I can feel my unrighteousness and inability without breaking down or resigning. I don't have to look at myself anymore, but I can look at Jesus and forget myself. This is not self-confidence but trust in God. It is him I trust—not myself.

Lawfulness

As soon as we start building something on the works of man instead of just trusting in God's grace, we become lawless. Self-condemnation is the natural sign that law rather than grace prevails. When you painfully feel your inadequacy and perhaps even your reluctance, you desperately reach for every technique that will give you the confidence and ability you need. You see a lot of this in the faith movement, but just as much in many other contexts.

Faith is the opposite of performance. When you turn it into the performance that man must perform in order for miracles to happen, faith has become deed and thus law. I have actually heard a preacher say outright: "Faith is the price for healing", which means: "Faith is the price for healing." You don't always get such direct information, but the expression "you should just believe" also means that you say what a person should do to get healthy.

That this is legalism is easy for humanistic Christians to see. On the other hand, they usually have a harder time discovering that humanism is just as legal. Because they like to equate legalism with intolerance, while humanism takes pride in at least appearing to stand for tolerance.

But the first and most sacred commandment of humanism is this: you must be tolerant. Now notice the word "shall"! A Swedish bishop is said to have criticized Paul a few years ago for being so intolerant. That the bishop himself was just as intolerant – towards Paul – apparently did not occur to him.

Another topic that often causes tolerance to flake is the questions surrounding creation or development. If you calmly state that the theory of evolution suffers from such severe scientific flaws that you prefer to believe that the Bible's creation story is true, then you are wise to count on disagreements - also in many churches.

This means that humanism is a legalism, which at first glance appears to be the opposite of legalism. But it has only dressed up. Like any other law, humanism says what man should do, while grace says what God has done and will do.

Rights

The one who receives grace experiences a goodness to which he has no right and which will never become a right. He receives an undeserved kindness because the giver is kind. As long as we see that grace is undeserved, it can make us grateful and then grace flows on. Then our lives are fertilized to become gifts of grace and services in our smallness and his power.

But the flesh does not want mercy. It wants goodness as a right and a property.

Therefore, the faith movement speaks of "our rights in Christ", while humanism and Christians who are under its influence prefer to speak of "human rights". These too are children of the same spirit because both make it difficult to see grace and both so easily extinguish gratitude and make man demanding again.

Kingdom of God

When humanism got hold of theology, people increasingly began to worship "the good" instead of God. Then they gradually stopped talking about Jesus' return. Instead, the kingdom of God became something in which one actually lost faith. The end was that we ourselves would straighten out the kingdom with political and social means in this day and age. Relief work is good but God's kingdom is something else.

In some groups that are close to the faith movement - so far mostly in the USA - we encounter the idea that we must establish a spiritual kingdom of God even before Jesus returns.

"Manifested Sons of God" have gone the furthest and say that since we already have God's capacity, we can establish God's kingdom ourselves. Of course, it must happen in a supernatural way by exercising dominion (= dominion) in the spirit world and then taking over.

Then God's people will "prepare the way" for Christ's return. He is then not expected to come to establish his kingdom and wipe our tears. He comes because we have taken over and already created the kingdom that the Bible says he himself will create, after we were caught up in the clouds to him.

There is an unbiblical developmental optimism here in both cases. The church must grow in scope and influence until it finally encompasses everything. The Bible, on the other hand, speaks of apostasy and tribulation at the end of time. A growing evil will pave the way for the Antichrist.

Revival or Reformation?

Luther's reformation sprang from his overwhelming sense of self-condemnation. Surely he was not alone in feeling this way, since his discovery spread so quickly.

What did he discover? He did not find the art of loving himself or of professing some new Christian identity. He discovered the grace of God.

Where had it gone? The church had increasingly begun to preach what man should do instead of letting everything depend on God and him alone. In the end it ended up in the indulgences because the church needed money (mammon!). How did this happen? In its eagerness to become comprehensive and respectable, the church had tried to mix its own message with ancient Greek philosophy. This in turn stands as a precursor to humanism, so in many ways we see that we have now ended up in the same situation as Luther.

What we need is not just a revival but a reformation which is something much deeper.

For a while it seemed to me that the message of the faith movement would be the reformation we so desperately long for. Now I realize that it cannot be, unfortunately. The problem is not that the differences are so great between the two camps that are currently fighting each other. On the contrary, the two movements have largely the same goals, although the methods are different. It is the similarities that are the great tragedy. Therefore, it is not possible to find a "third way" by getting in between, because the two are not in different ditches, but they are fighting for space in the same ditch.

Reformation is about starting over empty-handed from the very beginning. It is neither a faith movement nor an activity movement that is needed. May God give us a movement of grace, so that we look again at Him and not at ourselves! Probably such a movement cannot come until we wear ourselves out and really admit how empty-handed we are.

Literature

Much has been written about the proclamation of faith. This list is short, which means that many good books have also been passed over. However, those mentioned here are of particular importance as a supplement to this book. I have ranked them according to my own assessment:

1) D Hunt and TA McMahon: *The Seduction of Christianity*. Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon 97402, USA, 1985

This book is about much more than the faith movement. It is a well-documented study of the entire religious landscape in the United States. The authors have taken a special interest in such supernatural processes, which have nothing to do with Christianity (New Age) in order to chart how these find their way into the congregation. The declaration of faith is thus placed in a larger contemporary context.

2) DR McConnell: *A Different Gospel*. Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Mass. chusetts 01961-3473, USA.

The book is based on a thesis done at Oral Roberts University. It contains detailed data about Kenyon's person and what impulses he encountered when he attended Emerson College of Oratory - a place where "New Thought", including Christian Science, was cultivated. Then an analysis is made of the doctrine in relation to the impulses that Kenyon received.

3) T Swartling: *The faith movement. A personal experience*. RI report no. 2, Kyrkans hus, Uppsala 1988.

Swartling himself has been strongly involved in the Swedish faith movement. He left this one when he understood that some people get hurt. He reports very matter-of-factly his reasons for leaving the movement and how it felt purely personally. He also describes how people get hurt and what it is in doctrine and practice that gives rise to problems.

4) JA Matta: *The Born Again Jesus of the Word-Faith Teaching*. Spirit of Truth Ministry, Fullerton, California 92633, USA, 1987

The book takes up the concept of Gnosticism and compares the creed with the Gnostic heresies that flourished in the first centuries of church history. Here, too, there is some personal data about Kenyon, but not as detailed as in

McConnell's book. The doctrine is analyzed with emphasis on modern preachers of the faith in the United States.

5) K Rydén: "You shall be like God" - Kenyon and the proclamation of faith. Compendium available through the author. Address: Peter Baggegatan 8 B, 461 40 Trollhättan. Phone: 0520/188 75.

Citing and commenting on a seminar at Lifets Ord, May 1986, where Bobbie-Jean Merck addressed the doctrine that we become gods through rebirth.

Rydén comments on Kenyon's teaching with quite a few illuminating quotes from his books.

6) S Reichmann: Faith without performance. InterSkript, Stockholm, 1986

Analyzes the concept of "faith" from the perspective that faith is the opposite of performance - not a price that God demands to save or heal. Faith is a gift from God.

7) S Reichmann: The God of History. Part 1: The Why of Suffering. InterSkript, Stockholm, 1988

An attempt to describe God's goodness and omnipotence in a suffering world. Satan's power is compared to God's. The role and responsibility of humans are described.

8) D Hunt: Beyond Seduction. Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, Oregon 97402, USA, 1987.

An after-harvest to "Seduction of Christianity".

Cover text:

Not least during the early days of the church, there were many "revivals" that were based on a false message. Today we can be grateful that they did not come to characterize the church more than they did. They were received with jubilation but they did not agree with the gospel. There were men who tried shoes and found that foreign thoughts had entered.

New gospels are usually "better" than the original. Enthusiasm is therefore not a good measure of the authenticity of the message. Wonders and signs before also come outside the church and also do not provide safe guidance.

In the wake of the charismatic revival, we have been reached by a message that is more than 50 years old - the creed. However, the problem is not that it is too old, but that it is too new. Because it is inconsistent with neither the Bible nor experience, it creates unnecessary division and confusion.

Sven Reichmann, who himself collaborated with preachers of the faith for a time, reports a biblical trial with perspectives on his own experiences.