

**Can charismatics be Calvinists?  
New trends within charismatic circles with  
special reference to the situation in South Africa**

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*Abstract*

Calvin's cessationist theologies had an enormous influence within Reformed theology with regard to the operation of spiritual gifts. The article describes how his notion has been challenged by authors from various quarters during the last two centuries. The eroding of the Reformed position on this issue is discussed with specific reference to the situation in South Africa. A small qualitative research project is reported on, indicating that a new trend is to be seen in which more and more people see themselves as Reformed but also unashamedly charismatic.

## Introduction

It is well known that the Pentecostal and charismatic branches of Christianity are growing at a rapid pace – especially in the Third or Majority World. Furthermore, it seems that at the same time many of the mainline traditional churches in most of the First World countries are losing members. However, an interesting phenomenon is that more and more people consider themselves both charismatic and Reformed – something that was almost unthinkable a century ago. Not only was the term “charismatic” not in vogue at that time, but the notion that all of the “gifts of the Spirit” could still be operational

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today in the life of a person who adheres to Reformed doctrine was unheard of.

The purpose of this article is to investigate some aspects of this shift that is taking place. In order to do this, relevant points in the theologies of Calvin and others will be touched on. The influences of these theologies will be discussed and the development of specific trends will be highlighted. Interviews with pastors and church leaders who consider themselves as adhering to Reformed doctrine and who are charismatic at the same time have been conducted. A specific choice was made not to include pastors who at present serve Reformed congregations. Research data will be discussed and possible further research questions will be formulated. It should be noted that the focus of the article is not to discuss charismatic tendencies in Reformed churches but to concentrate on the developments from Calvin's cessationist perspectives to a full acceptance and functioning of charismatic gifts within Reformed circles in South Africa.

## Background to early developments

### *Calvin's influence and cessationist theory*

This is not the right place to discuss Calvin's views on the charismatic gifts in full or to provide possible reasons for his gift-withdrawal theory. However, it can simply be said that his theology limited the understanding and possible use of the gifts in many ways. Elbert (1985:123–129) shows in this regard how Calvin's understanding of the gifts, partly due to the assumed unavailability and assumed discontinuity of certain gifts with reference to the apostolic age, influenced his understanding of the operation of the gifts. He describes Calvin's limited understanding of the "word of knowledge", the "word of wisdom", the "discerning of spirits", the "gift of prophecy", the "gifts of healings" and the "gift of tongues" in particular. In conclusion he (Elbert 1985:141–143) further highlights some positive aspects of Calvin's theology but also shows that the diversity of graces set forth in the infinite variety of gifts was limited in scope by the arbitrary deletion of a substantial portion of the Spirit's dynamic supernatural activity. As a result, a dimension of the practical energising and working of the Spirit was left nonfunctional and unappreciated. The result: Calvin declared a cessation of the visible gifts. Elbert (1985:142) observes that the declaration was based on observation and was made within a highly polemical setting of antagonism regarding the miraculous, and that it was difficult for Calvin to make up his mind about gifts and offices with which he had no personal familiarity. He goes on:

In offering explanations for the forthcoming charismatic discontinuities observed, he posited the ungratefulness and impiety of man. Overlooking the fact that man's nature had not changed from the first century, he erected what I have characterized as the "perishable-permanent" dichotomies along with other fanciful speculations.

MacNutt (2005:141), writing as a Catholic and from the perspective of the healing ministry, laments the fact that healing and deliverance, so central to Jesus's preaching, were totally done away with by the Protestant Reformation in the name of making "the new preaching of the Gospel marvellous forever". He does however sympathise with Calvin's position by saying that the only healing ministry that Calvin actually saw practised in the Europe of the sixteenth century was connected to real abuses. In those days healing in the Catholic Church was confined mainly to three activities: pilgrimages to healing shrines, the sacrament of anointing and the royal touch. MacNutt (2005:140) and DeArteaga (1992:80–84) show that Calvin converted Augustine's cessationist theory into a basic doctrine but that he failed to pick up on Augustine's admission – in his *Retractions* – that he had been wrong in teaching that healing was rare.

It is not necessary to discuss the result of Calvin's position at this stage, except to note DeArteaga's (1992:86) notion in his first paragraph in a chapter entitled "Cessationism and the destruction of Christianity in Europe": that the doctrine of cessationism had tragic consequences that are only now coming to light, the most serious of which was the decline and fall of Protestantism in Northern Europe. "This happened as the Reformed churches attempted to maintain their faithfulness to the gospel but denied the need for spiritual experiences or miraculous acts (such as healing), though these were intrinsic to biblical spirituality. Reformed Protestantism became a ghost-like faith because of the lack of support from any analogous experience."

*The doctrine of "the perseverance of the saints"*

Another doctrine developed by Calvin and important for the purposes of this article was intensely discussed in the years before and during the Reformed Synod of Dordrecht (Netherlands) (1618–1619). The synod was called for when Gomarus, a colleague of Jacob Arminius at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands, accused Arminius of developing a false doctrine. Arminius himself tried to adapt Calvinism in such a way as not to give the impression that God himself is the author of sin and that human beings are not like robots in the hand of God. However, Arminius died before the synod was convened (Cairns 1977:351). After his death his followers formulated his

teachings in five main points in 1610 and presented these teachings to the parliament of the Netherlands. These five points were presented as a kind of protest (Seaton 1975:3). It should be noted that Arminius himself never taught that a reborn child of God could lose his or her salvation (cf. Arminius 1956, vol. 2:354). All that he said was that this issue needed to be investigated further. At the end of the Synod the Five Rules or Teachings of Dordrecht were accepted and Arminius's position and those of his followers were rejected.

The importance of this decision lies in the fact that the two streams in Reformed theology developed in two different directions: the Calvinist Reformed group and the group associated with the name of their original leader, Arminius.

## Reformed theology in South Africa

It is common knowledge that the teachings of Calvin and Reformed theology in general have had an overwhelming influence in the Cape of Good Hope since the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck in 1652. It is understandable that the decisions of the Synod of Dordrecht and the other Reformed creeds were taught not only in the original Reformed church but eventually also in the daughter and mission churches that came into being at a later stage. The same applies to other denominations like the Scottish Presbyterian Church, other Presbyterian churches and even churches like the Congregational, Anglican and Baptist churches which subsequently contributed to the influence of Calvin in the English speaking world. The Lutheran churches contributed to another brand of Reformed theology, but even here the cessationist points of departure were never challenged.

It should be noted that in South Africa Reformed theology and specifically Calvinism, generally speaking, developed in its own way – even contributing to the practices and theological underpinning of the policy of apartheid (De Wit 1996:168). For instance, the Prime Minister under whose leadership apartheid first became official policy in 1948, Dr DF Malan, was a former minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. This specific brand of Reformed theology sustained the policies of the Nationalist government for decades although it flew in the face of like-minded Reformed churches in other parts of the world.

It could also be said that Reformed theology as practised by the three “sister churches” in South Africa not only assisted the Afrikaans community in terms of building a theology which they found relevant. It also helped them to build up some very conservative cultural practices (cf. Van der

Merwe 2009:18). This simply means that theology and cultural values came very close to one another and that the one was defended or protected by the other. In terms of the content of this article it meant that any intense discussion of the topics like the cessation of spiritual gifts or Arminianism during the last 100 years touched not only on theological issues but also on points of cultural interest. To put it differently: in such settings theological questions are discussed not only in terms of biblical or other theological points of departure but also on the basis of the question of whether something was different or unfamiliar in terms of what the community had been taught since childhood.

## A “third force” in Christendom

The last hundred years have seen a very important new world-wide feature: the development of a “third force” in Christian circles. This refers to the formation of a major new group of Christians and Christian denominations alongside those of the Reformation churches and the Catholic church, namely the Pentecostal churches and their related charismatic movements (cf. Lederle 1988; 1990:284-287).

It is widely accepted that the Pentecostal churches developed out of the Arminian stream or Holiness groupings of the nineteenth century (cf. Synan 1997:xi). Thus they have strong links with John Wesley and Methodism (Synan 1997:1–21; cf. Botha 1986:13; Buys 1986:19–22; Coetzee 1986) and for that very reason were rejected in Reformed circles. Lederle (1988:1–32) also shows the early developments in the same vein when he discusses the pre-charismatic interpretations of Spirit baptism.

It is safe to say that whatever the main origin of a particular brand of Pentecostalism is, the movement has grown in numbers and in stature all over the world. Since the 1960s it has added the “charismatic” label and later on the “Third Wave of the Spirit” as well. Referring to a statement made by Wagner that “in all of human history, no other non-political, non-militaristic, voluntary human movement has grown as rapidly as the Pentecostal-charismatic movement in the last twenty-five years”, Synan (1997:xi) says that if this is true then Pentecostalism indeed deserves to be seen as a major Christian tradition alongside the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Reformation Protestant traditions.

## The meeting of two worlds

### *The role of Edward Irving*

The main question remains: how is it possible that the heritage of Calvin is diminishing while Pentecostal/charismatic influences can be traced in many of the Reformed churches? And how is it possible that more and more pastors view themselves as charismatic and Reformed at the same time? This is not only applicable to the European and North American branches of Reformed theology and related church practices; it is also true of the South African church and theological environment.

In answering these questions, Elbert's (1995:142–143) position should be noted. He indicates that Calvin's doctrine was accepted until about three centuries later (1830) when

Irving, who could be labelled the Father of the Pentecostal Reformation and/or the Scottish John the Baptist of the Charismatic Movement, swept away the unscriptural hypothetical basis for the truncation of ensuing dichotomies. Building on Calvin's substantial groundwork of the doctrines of Scripture and Spirit, Irving produced a coherent theological understanding of the person and power of the Holy Spirit and the operation of His gifts, resulting in a more complete recapture of apostolic patterns.

Elbert (1995:138), quoting Strachan, says that Irving saw the real shortcoming of his day with regard to the reception of gifts and speaking as

our having ceased to lament their absence, and to pray for their return; our want of fasting, and humiliation (paralleling some of Calvin's concerns here) and crying unto the Lord; our contentment to be without them; our base and false theories to account for their absence, without taking guilt to ourselves. Any one of these causes was sufficient, all of them are far more than sufficient, to account for their long absence from the bosom of the Church. These are the true reasons, and the commonly given reason, that they were designed only for a short time is utterly false and most pernicious.

This means that in Irving's theology the strongholds of Calvinism were at least in principle brought down on Calvinism's own terms, not by borrowing

concepts or thoughts which could be linked to the heritage of Arminius or his followers. Thus Irving exposed for the first time the weaknesses in Calvin's thoughts and logic.

However, as has been shown, this branch of theology did not produce the new Pentecostal/charismatic phases introduced in the early part of the twentieth century.

#### *The charismatic movement*

It is common knowledge that the modern Pentecostal movement started around the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. The Azusa Street revival is the best known and most documented of these (cf. Robeck 2006). In the early 1960s a new phase started to evolve which was called the Neo-Pentecostal Movement, later dubbed the charismatic movement – its adherents were people who either had a Pentecostal experience themselves or who subscribed to the idea that the gifts of the Spirit could be operational today and did not leave their existing churches in order to join classical Pentecostal churches (cf. Connelly 1985:184-192; Lederle 1988:xi). In the words of Grudem (1994:763), charismatics refers to

... any group (or people) that trace their historical origin to the Charismatic renewal movement of the 1960's and 1970's, seek to practice all the spiritual gifts mentioned in the New Testament including prophecy, healing, miracles, tongues, interpretation and distinguishing between spirits and allow differing viewpoints on whether baptism in the Holy Spirit is subsequent to conversion and whether tongues is a sign of baptism in the Holy Spirit

The existence of these people or groups – formal and informal Reformed charismatic movements and organisations as well as the activities of Reformed theologians and pastors – interest us in this article. Another important but recent development that also needs some scrutiny is that some pastors who grew up and now minister in a Pentecostal setting are *also* saying that they see themselves as from the Reformed tradition.

The basic questions that thus need to be answered, and that need much more attention from a research point of view, are how it is possible for these Reformed people to stay Reformed and to ascribe to Calvin's viewpoints but to differ from him in fundamental ways, and why people in Pentecostal churches would consider themselves to be Reformed.

It should be noted in passing that this would not be the first time that people have asked questions about others who change allegiance in one aspect of their theological viewpoint to that of another in a subsection of their

respective theologies. For instance, Calvinistic Baptists have doubted whether Calvinistic charismatics had the right to call themselves “Calvinists” in the light of Calvin’s cessationist theology. But as Catherwood (2007:125) observes, the Presbyterian Church could by the same reasoning say that Reformed or Calvinistic Baptists reject Calvin’s position with regard to infant baptism and thus have no right to call themselves Reformed Baptists. The same applies to the Reformed Baptists’ rejection of Calvin’s ideas on church government.

What follows are brief descriptors of some of the factors that have in the past played or are still playing a role in the growth of the charismatic movement. Each one of these could be further investigated. Related issues, for instance the role of changing worldviews, the discussion on the influences of rationalism, modernism and postmodernism and even political issues, are not focused on.

#### *The influence of theologians*

Lederle offers various insights that should be investigated. He (1988:ix) himself had a vivid charismatic experience which caught him unawares theologically. He continues:

My doctrinal apple-cart was overturned, and I spent a year or two trying to get my bearings again. I had been blessed “right out of my socks” and needed time to digest what God was now doing in my life and in my family. I had found a new dimension to my faith, which I experienced as deeply meaningful, integrative, and transformational. Coming from a Reformed background with both evangelical and ecumenical roots, I sought an acceptable interpretive framework for the fresh upwelling of doxology in my heart. My seminary training seemed to have left me in the lurch. As I started charting my own course I discovered that a variety of contemporary theologians were grappling with the same issue, and I wanted to classify their differing interpretations and develop my own perspective.

Lederle (1988:37) helps us to identify an important aspect, namely that the charismatic renewal movement is unashamedly experiential in its nature and that the experience of Spirit baptism usually takes people by surprise. Thus theologians from most church traditions, including Reformed theologians, have – due to the strong influence of a Western rationalistic mind-set – insufficient theological resources and historical insight to be able to interpret



“what has happened to them”. He then proceeds to interpret and classify the efforts of numerous theologians in this regard. Relevant to this article is his (Lederle 1988:5–7) description of the views of the “Reformed Sealers” (seventeenth-century Puritans) in his chapter on “Pre-Charismatic interpretations of Spirit-baptism”. He further discusses the insights of Reformed/Presbyterian charismatics such as J Rodman Williams (Lederle 1988:90–96) as well as B Bradford, under the heading “Sacramental interpretations of Spirit-baptism” (1988:128–130), and D Griffioen and B Pursey (1988:199–205) under “Integrative interpretations of Spirit-baptism”. The main point here is that there is a growing number of theologians who want to or need to interpret their own experiences or those of others from within the framework of their own Reformed theological presuppositions.

Another theologian who needs attention is Wayne Grudem, Professor in Bible and Systematic Theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois (USA). He obtained his doctorate from the University of Cambridge and published a major work, *Systematic Theology*, in 1994. It is interesting to note that he dedicates the work to lecturers at the very Reformed oriented Westminster Seminary because they, more than other people, taught him Reformed theology and an appreciation and high regard for the Word. He singles out Edmund Clowney, John Frame and Vern Poythress. But he also honours Harold Bredesen (a Reformed pastor) and John Wimber (a well-known charismatic leader, the original leader of the Vineyard group of churches and someone who also considered himself to be Reformed) because they taught him about the work and power of the Holy Spirit. In a chapter on “Baptism in and filling with the Holy Spirit” with the subtitle “Should we seek a baptism in the Holy Spirit after conversion? What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?” Grudem says that Systematic Theology in general never dealt with the issues of baptism in or being filled with the Holy Spirit (Grudem 1994:763). Grudem’s book is currently being used in various charismatic Bible Schools and seminaries. It also appears on the shelves of both Reformed and charismatic book stores.

He does not agree with Calvin on the issue of infant baptism and on every detail of the teachings of the Synod of Dordrecht, but he fully defends those teachings in principle. For instance, as a Reformed theologian he says “Election is an act of God before creation in which He chooses some people to be saved not on account of any foreseen merit in them, but only because of His sovereign good pleasure” (Grudem 1994:670). With regard to the perseverance of the saints he formulates his position as “The perseverance of the saints means that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God’s power and will persevere as Christians, until the end of their lives, and that only those who persevere until the end have been truly born again” (Grudem 1994:788). The main point is that Grudem strengthens the communication lines between Calvinists and charismatics. He is an example of one who

accepts the continuation of the spiritual gifts, including speaking in tongues and prophecy (cf. Grudem 1988), and at the time strictly adheres to Calvinistic doctrines such as election and the perseverance of the saints.

This holding of previously opposing systematic theological truths together in one system agrees with an observation of Catherwood (2007:114), a tutor at Cambridge University and well-known British Reformed author:

Yet Calvin's influence is wider today than that of any of the other Reformers. Not only do Presbyterians follow in his footsteps but so do millions of Protestant evangelicals in other denominations, even if they would not always describe themselves as being primarily Reformed theologically. Many a Baptist, Independent, Anglican and Charismatic would hold large swaths of Calvin's theology and openly admit their enormous debt to the way in which he helped them systematize biblical truth.

He (2007:114) further says that during the last decade of the previous century he encountered many Pentecostal pastors who told him that although they did not agree with Calvin on his interpretation of God's grace, their worldview as Christians living in a secular world was based on foundations laid by Calvin. This also is in line with a comment by the well-known charismatic leader in Britain, Earl Paulk (1988:95), who said as early as 1988 that he believed that God was busy combining the pure teachings of the Reformed faith with the warmth of the Pentecostal movement. He (Catherwood 2007:200–201) elucidates this point further with regard to Calvinistic charismatics:

A fascinating and more recent development is the mixing of Reformed Theology with charismatic belief, something that is perhaps more prevalent in Britain where one large charismatic denomination, New Frontiers, has a strong Reformed leadership as opposed to the U.S.A. where such a combination is still perhaps in its infancy. Many Reformed Charismatics would claim deeply to be influenced by Martin Lloyd-Jones, who while not a charismatic himself nevertheless believed in the continuation of the sign gifts but without such gifts being a necessary evidence of baptism with the Holy Spirit. While Calvin was firmly cessationist, this group strongly follows Reformed theology on all the major doctrines of grace. Because many in the Southern Baptist Convention are legitimately being called Reformed because they too follow scripture (and Calvin) on that issue, I think it legitimate to

allow for those British and American Charismatics who call themselves Reformed to be allowed to do so as well.

RT Kendall is probably the most well-known Calvinist Charismatic today. He was the pastor of Westminster Chapel for 25 years, following in the footsteps of preachers like Campbell Morgan and Dr Martin Lloyd-Jones. Westminster Chapel is a Congregational church. Interesting biographical data with regard to RT Kendall is that he grew up in the Church of the Nazarene, a church very much associated with Arminian theology. He was a student at Travecca Nazarene College in Nashville, Tennessee. One Monday morning during 1955, while driving back from a preaching commitment, he had a remarkable encounter which he refers to as his “Damascus experience” – to be distinguished from his experience of becoming a child of God. He had a vision of Jesus interceding for him at the right hand side of the Father. He was unable to hear everything that was being said, but was overwhelmed by God's love. Later on he started to see visions and four months later spoke in tongues for the first time. For our purposes it is important to note that this vision – his charismatic experience(!) – totally changed his theology. On the basis of what he saw and heard in the vision with regard to election and predestination, he became a staunch Calvinist – except for Calvin's ideas on the continuation of the gifts of the Spirit (cf. Kendall 2004:2–3).

Actually, one should not be surprised by all of this. The same happened in the past as well. It has already been shown that Irving as well as a group of Puritans in centuries past differed with Calvin on some important issues but still saw themselves as being Reformed. It should also be noted that in Wales there is a Calvinistic Methodist Church (see the contradictions in the name!) originally based on the ministry and teaching of George Whitfield who, together with John Wesley, is seen as one of the pillars of Methodism. Other names to mention are those of John Bunyan (author of *Pilgrim's Progress*), Jonathan Edwards (a key figure in the “Great Awakening” in the USA), William Cary (the missionary to India and important figure in the missionary movement in general) and John Newton (author of the hymn “Amazing Grace”). Dr Andrew Murray from South Africa is also widely accepted in Pentecostal and charismatic circles, although he had very strong Reformed convictions and subscribed fully to the Reformed teachings on the perseverance of the saints (cf. De Wit 1996:150; Murray, 1976:208–209). His role as a stimulator of charismatic thoughts and practices within Reformed circles in South Africa is worthy of investigation in a separate study.

## Being Reformed and charismatic in South Africa

The development of the charismatic movement and charismatic influences within Reformed churches in South Africa still needs to be researched. Theron (1989:31–47) did some work in this regard, but his study is outdated in the light of numerous developments during the last 20 years. It also focuses only on the theoretical theological discussions within Reformed churches. Many other topics need our attention. For instance: how gifts are being used by church members, pastors and others in ministry, what influences the manifestations of gifts have on the lives of churches, whether gifts and ministries are used in local churches or in mission situations, in what ways the manifestations of gifts affect the broader society, the poor and disadvantaged or the privileged – if at all – and so forth, are not known at this stage.

### *An exploratory research project*

However, for the purposes of this article we would like to focus on people who are operating in all the gifts of the Spirit – including the gifts of tongues and prophecies, healings and so forth – but who see themselves as being Reformed. We have approached six such individuals whom we know and who are outspoken in this regard in order to start exploring this topic.

The interviews were conducted between 25 May and 5 June of 2009. Two women, one foreigner, previously from Benin in West Africa, and three white males were interviewed. None of them has any official tie with any Reformed church at the moment. (As was stated earlier, the purpose of this article is not to focus on Reformed pastors.) Of the two women, one grew up in a Pentecostal church and the other in the Reformed church (Potchefstroom). One male grew up in the Dutch Reformed church but left the church when he started to confess his personal faith in Jesus Christ, one in the Lutheran church who later joined the Dutch Reformed church when he married the daughter of a Reformed pastor, one as a Muslim and the other as an atheist. One interviewee has obtained a doctoral degree, the other a Master's degree and is enrolled for a doctoral degree, one is qualified as an orthopaedic surgeon, three are pastors and one is serving as an elder although he also used to be a pastor for seven years. Two of them have been missionaries to Russia where they were involved with the training of church planters. Three of them are training missionaries in South Africa or are becoming mis-

sionaries in a foreign country. The important but common factor is that all of them have had a charismatic experience somewhere along the way, meaning that they now have the gift of speaking in tongues and that they often operate in various other gifts of the Spirit.

The important factor point however is that they all strictly adhere to Reformed theology. Some of them openly confess that they subscribe to the five points of Calvinism or the TULIP principles (cf. Seaton 1975). It is interesting to note that they opted for Reformed theology for more or less the same reasons: they found Pentecostal/charismatic theology on its own too shallow with regard to the main theological issues in the Bible, and they realised that to rely “only” on experiences, as practically taught in some charismatic circles, does not help people with serious problems in life. They even felt that some people have become disillusioned with the church and with God for this very reason. Furthermore, they were influenced by the writings of Calvin, Spurgeon, Tozer, Jonathan Edwards, Martin Lloyd-Jones, RT Kendall and Michael Eaton, to mention a few. In terms of the discussion earlier on, they specifically agree with the Calvinistic doctrines on the perseverance of the saints and election.

#### *Some findings*

The question arises of the meaning and implications of these preliminary findings. Taking into account that the qualitative research that has been reported on has all the characteristics of a pilot study, that it is limited in nature and that it would be impossible to extrapolate much from the findings, it at least opens up avenues for further research. It is important to note that the information gathered confirms the findings of the material offered in the main part of the article.

#### **Conclusions**

Thus the results of both of the literary research and the empirical results could be listed under the following points:

- It is clear that in spite of Calvin's strong endorsement of the notion of the cessation of the spiritual gifts, support for it is waning.. Too many inroads have been made into his theology by Reformed theologians for it to remain intact
- Even if we consider the issue of numbers and church memberships, charismatics outnumber Reformed Christians by millions.
- It also means that Reformed people will in the near future be influenced by those of a charismatic persuasion on a larger scale than before. This has specific implications for the situation in South Africa,

where the Reformed churches previously had an almost unassailable position in many areas of public life.

- The charismatic influence will come not only from Pentecostals but from within the ranks of Reformed people themselves. One of the reasons for this is that many charismatics adhere to the teachings of Calvin but simply reject his position on the continuation of the spiritual gifts. His theological and exegetical weaknesses with regard to this particular issue will be exposed more and more, and the fact that he had no practical examples to make use of in his theological reflection will be highlighted more and more.
- Church leaders and theologians should give attention to the way in which people experience their spiritual lives. Emphasising only a rational, logical, unemotional, cold theology will satisfy some people but it will not satisfy millions of others – especially not in the new South Africa. This issue should be discussed within white Reformed churches, but even more so in the black Reformed community.

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