

SMITH WIGGLESWORTH

A basic primer for the Word and Spirit Movement

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The Word and Spirit Movement

Within Protestantism there have been two important doctrines coming out of the twentieth century. One is the primacy and importance of the written Scripture. The best manifestation of this has been with those who not only uphold the inerrancy of Scripture, but who say that we have a perfect Bible today, the people who point to the King James Bible, that it alone should be used.

Also within Protestantism has been a connection to the Spirit of God, that people should be moved by the Spirit, and should themselves move spiritually. This has risen up in evangelical outpourings, into the Pentecostal outpouring and ultimately with the Word of Faith teachings.

The Word and Spirit Movement is the entwining together of these two into one, that the written Word, the Scripture, be upheld, and that believers be filled with the Holy Ghost. This means people who use the King James Bible speaking prophetic faith words and seeing the manifestation of God's words coming to pass in power.

Smith Wigglesworth was the spiritual grandfather of the Word of Faith Movement of the twentieth century, and Kenneth Hagin, the spiritual father of the Word of Faith Movement, acknowledged wearing out his Wigglesworth book through excessive reading. When a Pentecostal Faith preacher talked about standing on and believing the Word of God, the implication was the King James Bible.

“The Word of God is from the Spirit of God: Holy men of old wrote it. The Word of God is of utmost importance. But you'll never understand it with your head; you must understand it with your heart. Don't put the Spirit above the Word. Put the Word first and the Spirit second, and you'll be safe. The well-known Pentecostal editor Stanley Frodsham, the author of

Smith Wigglesworth's biography, brought out the fact that Wigglesworth was, first of all, a man of God's Word, and, second, a man filled with the Spirit of God. That's an excellent combination."¹

"A week before his death, Wigglesworth prophesied again ... This time, he foretold a second move of the Spirit. The first move would bring the restoration of the gifts of the Spirit; the second would bring a revival of emphasis on the Word of God. He said, 'When these two moves of the Spirit combine, we shall see the greatest move the Church of Jesus Christ has ever seen.'"²

Smith Wigglesworth

Smith Wigglesworth was born in Yorkshire in 1859, born again in an old-time Wesleyan Methodist revival meeting at eight years of age, and began to give his testimony as a child, and began to witness to others. He then attended an Anglican Church, where he was confirmed by the bishop. His parents moved to Bradford, and there he went forth in the Wesleyan Methodist church "possessed with a mighty zeal, a burning desire to get people to know my Saviour."

"I always carried a Testament with me even though I was not able to read much." This was, of course, the King James Bible, which Methodists used. "When I was sixteen years of age the Salvation Army opened up a work in Bradford. I delighted to be with these earnest Salvation Army people." They too used the King James Bible.

"In the mill where I worked there was a godly man belonging to the Plymouth Brethren. He was a steam-fitter. I was given to him as a helper and he taught me how to do plumbing work. He talked to me about water baptism and its meaning. I can

¹ Hagin, page 49.

² Stormont, page 123.

remember that he said to me: ‘If you will obey the Lord in this, you do not know what He may have for you.’ I gladly obeyed the Word of the Lord to be buried with Him in baptism unto death and come forth from that symbolic watery grave to a newness of life in God. I was about seventeen at that time. It was this good man who taught me about the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus.” These folks also used the King James Bible.

“I continued with the Salvation Army because it seemed to me they had more power in their ministry than anybody else at that time. ... Alas, today many are not laying themselves out for soul-winning but for fleshly manifestations.”³

“Now, that is one class of prophecy. General Booth knew it. He got the vision as clear as anything from Wesley. The greatest revival that has ever swept the earth yet that we remember is the revival the Salvation Army brought. I know they have lost the glory, the power, and the unction because they turned to philanthropic positions. But that does not mean that we have to lose it. God revealed Himself unto Booth, every person was saved that would testify, and He moved the people that were saved, drunkards and harlots, into the streets to prophesy in the Spirit of Jesus.”⁴

“Therefore, if we wish to be open air speakers or inside preachers, and wish always to have that divine touch of prophetic conditions, it will never come on any line except being filled with the Spirit. If you wish to be anything for God don’t miss the plan. God has no room for you on ordinary lines. You cannot afford to be on ordinary lines. You must realize right away that within you there is another power of the promise of the Spirit, which is forming everything you require.

“General Booth, with all his weaknesses and lots of things which he had which no one else wants; and Charles Wesley and

³ Frodsham, chapter 1.

⁴ Wigglesworth, *Paul speaking in tongues*.

John Wesley who came forth in a right time in a right order — God showed them on the line of what prophetic utterances would do in the new, saved conditions, and the formation of all Wesley's plan which has come right up till now. I don't say it is Wesley's touch now because it has lost that which he gave to the Church. In John Wesley's formation of Churches in his day, every member had to testify. The cottage meetings all over were turned into testimony meetings. And in every testimony meeting they were so on fire that every night people were saved.

“Perhaps you have no idea what our experience was in the early days of the Christian Mission which turned out to be the Salvation Army afterwards. I have never seen anything like it in my life, nor in Pentecost yet. The power of God rested upon the worst character and they were saved. Every class of people was saved. Drunkards were saved all along the line, and the next day they were put up for testimony and their testimony thrilled the place. There was no such thing as a building holding them in the days of the Christian Mission when it opened. It was always a market place, or a place where they put cattle, and they put great big wagons there. The people who were saved the night before were speaking, and the power of God so fell upon us that those helpless people were strengthened by the power of God, and by the witness of the salvation of Christ. According to Revelation the Spirit of Jesus, or the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.

“I maintain that we are in a different order than that, and a better, but we lack. We have too many preachings and too little testifying. You will never make a live Pentecostal Church with a preacher every night preaching, preaching, preaching. They get tired and weary of him but they never get tired of the whole place being on fire, 20 being on fire at once and won't sit down till they have said something. Therefore I can understand the exhortation ‘that ye may prophesy.’ And so remember, you must awake out of your lethargy. There is no room for a man that is settled in this business. If you come into a Pentecostal

meeting and sit through it without weeping, crying, or shouting you have never touched it, you know nothing about it. Dearth will fall on any church if it becomes one man, or a half dozen men. The whole place must prophesy.”⁵

“[After going into business for himself,] Wigglesworth had to go into Leeds one day each week to purchase plumbing supplies. In this town he found a place where there was a Divine Healing meeting. There was such a note of reality in these Divine Healing meetings and the Lord was so graciously healing people, that he began to hunt up sick people in Bradford and he would pay their fare to Leeds, where the prayer of faith was offered for them. At first he said nothing to Mrs Wigglesworth about this; for he was not sure of her reaction to this ‘fanaticism,’ as most people dubbed Divine Healing in those days. But she found out what he was doing and since she herself had need of healing she accompanied him one day to Leeds. There the prayer of faith was offered for her and she was healed by the Lord. From that time forward she was as ardent for the truth of the Lord’s healing as he was.”

“The work in Bradford grew, and so they had to move to larger and yet larger premises, until they settled in quite a large building in Bowland Street. In this Bowland Street Mission they had a huge text painted as a scroll on the wall back of the pulpit that everyone could see, ‘I am the Lord that healeth thee.’ In the course of years many testified to being healed through the inspiration of that word of scripture.”

“[At Leeds] These leaders knew that I had a compassion for the sick and needy, and one day they said to me: ‘We want to go to the Keswick convention and we have been thinking whom we should leave to do the work. We can only think of you.’ I said, ‘I couldn’t conduct a healing service.’ They said, ‘We have no one else. We trust you to take care of the work while we are away.’”

⁵ Wigglesworth, *Love*.

“After this the Lord opened the door of faith for me more and more. I announced that I would have a Divine Healing meeting in Bradford on a certain evening.”⁶

“I used to work with a man, who had been a Baptist minister for twenty years. He was one of the sweetest souls I ever met. He was getting to be an old man, and I used to walk by his side, and listen to his instruction. God made the Word in his hand as a two-edged sword to me, and I used to say, ‘Yes, Lord.’ If the sword ever comes to you, never straighten yourselves up against it, but let it pierce you. You must be yielded to the Word of God. The Word will work out love in our hearts, and when practical love is in our hearts there is no room to vaunt ourselves. We see ourselves as nothing when we get lost in this divine love. This man of God used to prune and prune me with the sword of God, and it is just as sweet to me today as it was then. I praise God for the sword that cuts us, and for a tender conscience. Oh, for that sweetness of fellowship with Jesus that when you hurt a brother by word or act you could never let it rest until you make it right. First, we need to be converted and to become as little children, and to have the hard heart taken away; to have a heart that is broken and melted with the Love of God.”⁷ All this study was with the King James Bible.

“When I was a young man I always loved the fellowship of old men, and was always careful to hear what they had to say. I had a friend, an old Baptist minister who was a wonderful preacher. I spent much of my time with him. One day he came to me and said, ‘My wife is dying.’ I said, ‘Brother Clark, why don’t you believe God? God can raise her up if you will only believe Him.’”⁸

⁶ Frodsham, chapter 3.

⁷ Wigglesworth, *The confidence that we have in him*.

⁸ Wigglesworth, *I am the Lord that healeth thee*.

“I was a novice at this time and did not know any better, so I poured all the contents of that bottle of oil over Mrs Clark’s body in the name of Jesus! I was standing beside her at the top of the bed and looking towards the foot, when suddenly the Lord Jesus appeared. I had my eyes open gazing at Him. There He was at the foot of the bed. He gave me one of those gentle smiles. I see Him just now as I tell this story to you. I have never lost that vision, the vision of that beautiful soft smile. After a few moments He vanished but something happened that day that changed my whole life. Mrs Clark was raised up and filled with life, and lived to bring up a number of children; she outlived her husband many years.”⁹

“My wife and I always believed in scriptural holiness but I was conscious of much carnality in myself. A really holy man once came to preach for us and he spoke of what it meant to be entirely sanctified. He called it a very definite work of grace subsequent to the new birth. As I waited on the Lord for ten days in prayer, handing my body over to Him as a living sacrifice according to Romans 12:1, 2, God surely did something for me, for from that time I began to have real liberty in preaching. We counted that as the Baptism in the Spirit. And so, at our Mission on Bowland Street we stood for both Healing and Holiness.”¹⁰

“I can remember the time when I used to go white with rage, and shake all over with temper. I could hardly hold myself together. I waited on God for ten days. In those ten days I was being emptied out and the life of the Lord Jesus was being wrought into me. My wife testified of the transformation that took place in my life, ‘I never saw such a change. I have never been able to cook anything since that time that has not pleased him. Nothing is too hot or too cold, everything is just right.’ God must come and reign supreme in your life. Will you let Him do it? He can do it, and He will if you will let Him. It is no

⁹ Frodsham, chapter 3.

¹⁰ Frodsham, chapter 4.

use trying to tame the ‘old man.’ But God can deal with him. The carnal mind will never be subjected to God, but God will bring it to the cross where it belongs, and will put in its place, the pure, the holy, the meek mind of the Master.”¹¹

“Such a bad temper I used to have, it made me tremble all over and it would make me furious with its evil power. A man came around preaching. I saw that this temper had to be destroyed, it could not be patched up. One day the power of God fell upon me. I came out to the meeting and fell down before the Lord. The people began asking, ‘What sin has Wigglesworth been committing?’ This went on for a fortnight. Every time I came to the altar God used to sweep through me with such a manifestation of my helplessness, that I would go down before God and weep right through. Then the preacher or the leader was broken up and came alongside of me. God made a revival begin in that. God had broken me up and revival began through His revival in me. Oh, it was lovely! At last my wife said, ‘Since my husband had that touch, I have never been able to cook anything that he was not pleased with. It is never too cold and never too hot.’”¹²

“We thought that we had got all that was coming to us on spiritual lines, but one day we heard that people were being baptised in the Spirit and were speaking in other tongues, and that the gifts of the Spirit were being manifested. I confess that I was much moved by this news.”¹³

“Then he turned to me and remarked, ‘Have you heard the latest? They are receiving the Holy Spirit at Sunderland and speaking in other tongues. I have decided to go up to Sunderland to see this thing for myself. Would you like to come with me?’ I declared that I would be delighted to go.”

¹¹ Wigglesworth, *Present time blessing*.

¹² Wigglesworth, *Uttermost salvation*.

¹³ Frodsham, chapter 4.

“It was a Saturday night when I went to the meeting, which was held in the vestry of the parish church at Monkwearmouth, Sunderland. What I could not understand was this: I had just come from Bradford, where the Spirit of God was working mightily. Many had been prostrated, slain by the power of God the night before I left for Sunderland. It seemed to me that there was not the power in this meeting that we had in our own assembly in Bradford. I was disappointed. But I was very hungry for God, and He knew my hunger even though nobody seemed to understand me. I can remember a man giving his testimony that after waiting on the Lord for three weeks, the Lord had baptised him in the Holy Spirit and caused him to speak in other tongues. I cried out, ‘Let’s hear these tongues. That’s what I came for. Let’s hear it!’ They answered, ‘When you are baptised you will speak in tongues.’ According to my own opinion I had been baptised in the Spirit. Thinking back to my ten days of waiting on God and the blessing I had received as a result, I had called that the Baptism in the Spirit. So I said to them, ‘I remember when I was baptised, my tongue was loosed. My testimony was different.’ But they answered, ‘No, that is not it.’”

“Pastor Boddy, who was vicar of the Episcopal Church where those first Pentecostal meetings were held, gave out a notice that there would be a waiting meeting all night on Tuesday. ... For four days I wanted nothing but God. But after that, I felt I should leave for my home, and I went to the Episcopal vicarage to say good-bye. I said to Mrs Boddy, the vicar’s wife: ‘I am going away, but I have not received the tongues yet.’ She answered, ‘It is not tongues you need, but the Baptism.’ ‘I have received the Baptism, Sister,’ I protested, ‘but I would like to have you lay hands on me before I leave.’ She laid her hands on me and then had to go out of the room. The fire fell. It was a wonderful time as I was there with God alone. He bathed me in power. I was conscious of the cleansing of the precious Blood, and I cried out: ‘Clean! Clean! Clean!’ I was filled with the joy of the consciousness of the cleansing. I was given a vision in

which I saw the Lord Jesus Christ. I beheld the empty cross, and I saw Him exalted at the right hand of God the Father. I could speak no longer in English but I began to praise Him in other tongues as the Spirit of God gave me utterance. I knew then, although I might have received anointings previously, that now, at last, I had received the real Baptism in the Holy Spirit as they received on the day of Pentecost.”

“My wife said to me, ‘So you’ve been speaking with tongues, have you?’ I replied, ‘Yes.’ ‘Well,’ she said, ‘I want you to understand that I am as much baptised as you are and I don’t speak in tongues.’ I saw that the contest was beginning right at home. ‘I have been preaching for twenty years,’ she continued, ‘and you have sat beside me on the platform, but on Sunday you will preach yourself, and I’ll see what there is in it.’ She kept her word. On Sunday she took a seat at the back of the building. We had always sat together on the platform until that day. So the contest had begun right in the church. There were three steps up to the platform and as I went up those three steps the Lord gave me the scripture in Isaiah 61:1–3, ‘The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.’ I was no preacher, but hearing the voice of my Lord speaking those words to me, I began. I cannot now remember what I said but my wife was terribly disturbed. The bench on which she sat would seat nine people and she moved about on it until she had sat on every part of it. Then she said in a voice that all around her could hear, ‘That’s not my Smith, Lord, that’s not my Smith!’

“I was giving out the last hymn when the secretary of the mission stood up and said, ‘I want what our leader has received.’ The strange thing was that when he was about to sit down he missed his seat and went right down on the floor. Then my eldest son arose and said he wanted what his father

had and he, too, took his seat right down on the floor. In a short while there were eleven people tight on the floor of that mission. The strangest thing was that they were all laughing in the Spirit and laughing at one another. The Lord had really turned again the captivity of Zion and the mouth of His children was being filled with laughter according to the word of the Lord in Psalm 126:1, 2. That was the beginning of a great outpouring of the Spirit where hundreds received the Baptism in the Holy Ghost and everyone of them spoke in tongues as the Spirit of God gave utterance.

“God knew that I should have to go all over the world and proclaim this glorious truth, that all could receive the Baptism in the Holy Ghost in exactly the same way as they received on the Day of Pentecost with the speaking in other tongues as the Spirit of God gives utterance.

“The first call that I received after I had been baptised in the Holy Spirit was from a man who had a factory in Lancashire, and who employed more than 1000 people. ... Up to that time I had had no preaching abilities, but then I felt that I had a prophetic utterance which was flowing like a river by the power of the Holy Spirit. So I went to Lancashire; and that manufacturer closed down his factory, and from 1.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m., with short intervals, I was preaching. Surely Christ fulfilled His promise, ‘He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.’ Quite a large number in that factory were gloriously saved. Soon after this my dear wife received the Baptism in the Spirit and then we went forth together in response to the many calls that came from different parts of the country. Wherever we went the Lord baptised people with the Holy Spirit. ... Many people from different parts of the country would come to our mission and on almost every occasion they would express the wish that I would visit their place and do something for them.”¹⁴

¹⁴ Frodsham, chapter 4.

Another important breakthrough happened where Wigglesworth came to pray for a young man called Matthew Snell. The villagers told him, “We believe Matthew will be raised up.’ Wigglesworth had asked the family to air Matthew’s clothing for him to put on, but they didn’t do it because they did not believe he would be restored. For six weeks he had been in a serious condition, becoming weaker all the time. Mr Wigglesworth insisted on their airing Matthew’s clothing and they did it, not because they believed for healing, but to satisfy him. ...[Afterwards] the young man was walking up and down, shouting and praising God and clapping his hands.”

“A friend once remarked: ‘All the people who say they live by faith seem to have their heels worn out, and their clothes are old and green.’ I believed that God would abundantly provide if I served him faithfully. I promised Him at that time that I would obey Him implicitly, but I laid down the condition that my shoe heels must never be a disgrace, and I must never have to wear trousers with the knees out. I said to the Lord, ‘If either of these things take place, I’ll go back to plumbing.’ He has never failed to supply all my needs. He increased my vision and faith and gave me calls all over England. I was a pioneer with the Pentecostal message to a great many Assemblies throughout Great Britain. Soon calls began to pour in from other countries also.”¹⁵

“I was saved among the Methodists when I was about eight years of age. A little later I was confirmed by a bishop of the Church of England. Later I was immersed as a Baptist. I had the grounding in Bible teaching among the Plymouth Brethren. I marched under the Blood and Fire banner of the Salvation Army, learning to win souls in the open air. I received the second blessing of sanctification and a clean heart under the teaching of Reader Harris and the Pentecostal League. I claimed the gift of the Holy Spirit by faith as I waited ten days before the Lord. But in Sunderland, in 1907, I knelt before God and had

¹⁵ Frodsham, chapter 5.

an Acts 2:4 experience. The Holy Spirit came and I spoke with new tongues as did the company in the upper room. That put my experience outside the range of argument, but inside the record of God's Holy Word. God gave me the Holy Spirit as He did to them at the beginning. I want harmony, unity and oneness, but I want them in God's way. In the Acts of the Apostles, speaking with new tongues was the sign of the infilling and outflowing of the Holy Spirit, and I do not believe that God has changed His method."¹⁶

"One day God said to me, 'Come out.' I had not been in long. I was in the Wesleyan Church. Was there anything wrong? No. Only God said, Come out. He had something further. The Salvation Army was in full swing. I was very anxious to get the best. Revival was at full, but they turned to other things. So God said, Come out. We need to have the hearing of faith, always soaring higher, understanding the leading of the Spirit. Oh, the breath of God. Then I went to the brethren, they had the Word, but so much of the letter with it, and splitting of hairs. God said, Come out. Oh, they said, he has gone again, there is no satisfying him. Then came the baptism of the Holy Ghost, with signs following according to Acts 2. God alone speaking. Faith bringing us to a place of revelation to cover us, God coming in and manifesting His power."¹⁷

"For many years the Lord has been moving me on and keeping me from spiritual stagnation. When I was in the Wesleyan Methodist Church I was sure I was saved and was sure I was all right. The Lord said to me, 'Come out,' and I came out. When I was with the people known as the Brethren I was sure I was all right now. But the Lord said, 'Come out.' Then I went into the Salvation Army. At that time it was full of life and there were revivals everywhere. But the Salvation Army went into natural things and the great revivals that they had in those early days ceased. The Lord said to me, 'Come out,' and I came out. I have

¹⁶ Frodsham, chapter 11.

¹⁷ Wigglesworth, *The hearing of faith*.

had to come out three times since. I believe that this Pentecostal revival that we are now in is the best thing that the Lord has on the earth today, and yet I believe that God has something out of this that is going to be still better. God has no use for any man who is not hungering and thirsting for yet more of Himself and His righteousness.”¹⁸

“For years and years God has been making me appear to hundreds and thousands of people as a fool. I remember the day when He saved me and when He called me out. If there is a thing God wants to do today, He wants to be as real to you and me as He was to Abraham. After I was saved I joined myself up to a very lively lot of people who were full of a revival spirit, and it was marvellous how God blest. And then there came a lukewarmness and indifference, and God said to me as clearly as anything, ‘Come out.’ I obeyed and came out. The people said, ‘We cannot understand you. We need you now and you are leaving us.’ The Plymouth brethren at that time were in a Conference. The Word of God was with them in power, the love of God was with them unveiled. Baptism by immersion was revealed to me, and when my friends saw me go into the water they said I was altogether wrong, But God had called me and I obeyed. The day came when I saw that the brethren had dropped down to the letter, all letter, dry and barren. At that time the Salvation Army was filled with love, filled with power, filled with zeal; every place a revival, and I joined up with them. For about six years the glory of God was there, and then the Lord said again, ‘Come out,’ and I was glad I came. It dropped right into a social movement and God has no place for a social movement. We are saved by regeneration and the man who is going on with God has no time for social reforms. God moved on, and at that time there were many people who were receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost without signs. Those days were ‘days of heaven on earth.’ God unfolded the truth, showed the way of sanctification by the power of the blood of Christ, and I saw in that the great inflow of the life of God. I

¹⁸ Wigglesworth, *The gifts of healing and the working of miracles*.

thank God for that, but God came along again and said, ‘Come out.’ I obeyed God and went with what they called the ‘tongues’ folks; they got the credit for having further light. I saw God advancing every movement I made, and I can see even in this Pentecostal work, except we see there is a real death, God will say to us, ‘Come out.’ Unless Pentecost wakes up to shake herself free from all worldly things and comes into a place of the divine-likeness with God, we will hear the voice of God, ‘Come out’ and He will have something far better than this. I ask every one of you, will you hear the voice of God and come out? You ask, ‘What do you mean?’ Everyone of you knows without exception, there is no word for Pentecost, only being on fire. If you are not on fire, you are not in the place of regeneration. It is only the fire of God that burns up the entanglements of the world.”¹⁹

¹⁹ Wigglesworth, *The appointed hour*.

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