

## The Alpha Course: 2

Written by K B Napier  
Thursday, 18 March 2010 17:56

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In many areas of life, people see only what they want to see. They interpret everything according to their personal beliefs and see everything through those beliefs. The Christian, however, should operate from a different perspective. He should believe only what has been revealed to him by God in His word. Everything in life is then made subject to that word, NOT to the man's personally-achieved beliefs which are really nothing more than a summation of his sinful opinions and desires, no matter how 'good'.

We learn what is true by reading scripture properly, not by reading it like a novel. We must discover what words really mean, by letting the texts speak for themselves. They do this by giving us specific meanings for Biblical words. These meanings alone can sometimes be confusing, until we place them into their correct setting, the context in which they are written. The context helps us to interpret the texts: we are never free to 'interpret' any way we wish.

Charismaticism, which grew out of the Pentecostal movement, developed **extra**-Biblical ideas and used these man-made theories when interpreting certain texts; mainly those concerned with the Holy Spirit and the spiritual gifts, etc. Now, after 30 years of charismatic teaching, we have 'charismaticism', a distinct set of theories different from the host, Pentecostalism (however, Pentecostalism was the beginning) and which is now separate from it and heretical. It is this charismaticism that underlies and promotes the Alpha Course now so prevalent in the churches, alongside, and promoting, the Toronto Blessing, either in experience or in thought. Most churches, including many Anglican and even non-charismatic, teach the course without understanding what is wrong with it.

It has already been shown that charismatics diverge from basic Pentecostalism. Charismaticism is a cult. How can we say that, when so many charismatics are horrified by the Toronto Blessing and have distanced themselves from the 'excesses'? There are certainly different types of charismatics, but my question, **"So what?"** If charismatics who dislike the 'excesses' are truly of God, they would cast off their charismatic image and name, and get back to God's unadulterated word. Otherwise, they are essentially the same as their 'excessive' counterparts, by remaining in their camp.

This is because they see the Toronto Blessing and similar activities merely as 'excesses'. But, are they? If we say we have an 'excess' of something, it means we have too much. If we have excessive weight, it means that a certain amount of weight is 'good', but when we go over the limit the extra weight is in excess and is 'not good'. This is entirely the wrong way to view the activities and beliefs of charismaticism. To say that they are 'excesses' is to condone what is

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done, because it suggests that:

(a) The basic premise is good and holy, (b) The people involved are basically good and holy, (c) What they do is basically good and holy - but they have somehow 'gone too far'. So, all that is needed is to remove the 'extras' and to get back to 'basics'. What are these basics?

**Preaching:** Charismatics believe we may choose Christ. This is highly significant. The Bible tells us that **God chooses us**, and that we are **unable** to find Him. Charismatics tell us that all men seek after God. God says that

**no** man seeks after God, only after some 'idea' of Him based on human notions. Charismatics say that all we need do to be saved is to 'make a decision'; scripture tells us that we

**cannot** decide for Christ - Christ

**chooses** who will be saved. Many leaders of the Alpha course think that if a person attends the course and agrees with everything in it, then he is saved. The above facts deny this flatly! The most marked sign of a cult is the way it denies God's way of salvation; it exalts and teaches Man's ability to reach God by his own efforts. This is a direct lie and is anti-God.

**Gifts:** The spiritual gifts are also given freely by God, to whom He chooses. Thus we may not demand them, especially not separate from salvation. Yet, those who attend an Alpha course are taught otherwise. They are told to speak in a language not known to them: in other words, to vocalise garbage; words that do not make sense. **Anyone** can do this, including psychiatric patients! It is taught that we can 'get tongues' simply by beginning with this garbage. From these halting attempts, we are told, will come a beautiful heavenly language, and a growth in 'vocabulary'! This isn't a gift but a self-made invention. God defines 'tongues' as being simply 'foreign languages' (of this earth) and He says that He gives the gifts to people as He sees fit, and for His own purposes. We do not have to entice a gift out of God by speaking garbage!!

**Fruit:** People are being taught that God sends His 'fruit' upon people suddenly and without any special requirements. This is another fallacy and a lie. The 'fruit' of the Spirit only attend those who are saved, and those whose lives have been given over to God in truth. Fruit are not separate from truth (proper doctrine), and are never given suddenly to people who have not previously sought and practised righteousness. These are laws of spiritual life, yet charismaticism overturns all this and rejects it.

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**The Holy Spirit:** According to charismaticism, we can call on the Holy Spirit to give us salvation, gifts and fruit. We can 'call Him down' to do our bidding, whenever we wish. In the section of the Alpha course that deals with the Spirit, this is exactly what is taught! Often, in the final weekend session, it is all put into practice, so that Toronto-style manifestations are sought, and often evidenced.

With all these facts observed in the Alpha course, we can say that it is charismatic - although many leaders try to deny it. They say it is a good introduction to Christian faith and doctrine. This must be challenged, given the above facts. There is no such thing as an 'introduction to faith': we either have faith, or we do not. We cannot manufacture it just by attending a course.

Faith is a gift of God, and it is heavily linked with righteousness and true doctrine. The course is NOT true doctrine at all. Several of the course teachings are truthful, and that is a big danger, for it lulls people into thinking that because one part is true, then so must be the other parts! But the sections on the Holy Spirit are highly dangerous. Satan is more than willing to teach truth, to a point. Then, he will use this as a springboard for his own agenda, which is a lie. By basing much of his heresy upon truth, he deceives Christians and unbelievers alike. The course does just that.

The degree of error depends partly on who the teachers are. For example, many Anglican churches teach the course. We know that the majority of Anglican clergy are unbelievers anyway, so they do not have a clue when it comes to teaching doctrine. And of those clergy who are 'evangelical', only a small number believe scripture to be authentic and inerrant. So, teaching by Anglicans is bound to be very patchy and mainly in error.

The same can be said for charismatic leaders, because they are 'charismatic' rather than 'Christian'. A true Believer simply believes scripture and is content to be called a Believer or a Christian; he has no need of labels that somehow make him a different 'brand' of believer. Many other, dead, churches also teach the course. The aim of them all is to cover their own deficiencies with the course and to gain numbers. By the use of 'love', dinners and informality, people are drawn into a web of deception, which even the **teachers** do not understand or are aware of!

When God calls a man to the pastorate, or to be an evangelist, He gifts that man accordingly. God 'succeeds' NOT through men's clever courses or activities, but by His own design, and through faithful preachers. The Alpha course (sorry - course) was devised by a leading

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charismatic. Much of what he teaches is true, but even Satan knows what truth is and he will use it to deceive, through false teachers.

If we get it wrong concerning the Spirit, and we are taught that God moves in ways that are marvellous and outside of His past ways, then we are open to the suggestion that we cannot 'put God in a box'. Once we believe that, we start to believe that God can act even outside of His own word. Then we start to believe that anything we experience in a 'spiritual' setting must be 'good' and from God. When we believe **that -we are set to believe anything at all.** Hence my judgement, that the Alpha course is just one ploy amongst many being used in an attempt to 'theologise' charismatic heresies, and to prepare people for more, future, charismatic sins (NOT 'excesses'). Oppose it, friends, or be duped.

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