

The Goodwins and Smith Wigglesworth

By Mel C. Montgomery

When Smith Wigglesworth was born into this world in 1859 in Menton, Yorkshire, England, little did the kingdom of the Devil realize the devastating blow it had been struck. Who could have realized that this child born into an ordinary family, in an ordinary town, would grow to have an extraordinary faith in God that would lead multitudes to a saving faith in Jesus Christ, help countless individuals to receive miraculous healings from God, and move numerous people to seek a deeper walk with the Holy Spirit.



Wigglesworth learned to read as an adult, and never read any book in his life except the Bible. He said, “Why should I read books when I can read the Book of all books?” He was also a man of deep and continuing prayer, praying usually for a few moments every 30 minutes for all his waking hours. A moving story is told of Wigglesworth traveling by car from one preaching engagement to another. He was caught up in a conversation with a minister next to him in the car. Wigglesworth’s appointed time to pray passed. Several minutes later when he realized this, he shouted to the driver, “STOP THIS CAR!!” The driver quickly stopped and pulled over to the side of the road. Wigglesworth got out of the car, knelt down in the gravel, wept, and said to the Lord, “Forgive me! Forgive Me! Forgive me!” To Wigglesworth, his twice-hourly prayer was not a matter of legalism, but a matter of consecration he had made to the Lord. He wanted absolutely nothing of the flesh or the world to distract his mind from the Savior. He returned to the car, and would not engage in any further personal conversation for the rest of the trip.

Smith Wigglesworth did not have a ministry persona that he put on for the crowds and took off after the services. His private walk with God was consistent with his public preaching. Each day for many years, whether he was on a preaching tour or at home, he also refused to go to sleep until he had won at least one person to the Lord.

Smith had an exceptionally powerful healing ministry, which reached its greatest prominence in the 1920's and 1930's. He had a faith in prayer for healing that was far beyond bold. It was insistent. It was absolutely DEMANDING. However, don't misunderstand his demanding faith. He was not demanding anything of God. As he prayed, his faith demanded that sickness, disease, and devils bow to the victory Christ won against them at Calvary and depart the minds and bodies of the suffering. His friends referred to him as an "Apostle of Faith."

No audio recordings are known to exist of Smith Wigglesworth. However audio recordings of ministers who knew Wigglesworth for years and ministered alongside him can be heard on my website, www.brothermel.com. These include sermons by Stanley Frodsham—author of the first biography of Wigglesworth entitled, "Apostle of Faith," Howard Carter—a British Pentecostal who chaired national conventions at which Wigglesworth preached, WFP Burton—who with Wigglesworth's son-in-law founded a mission in the Congo, and David Du Plessis to whom Wigglesworth prophesied in 1936. As you listen to these recordings, you are able to hear the Pentecostal message in the same type of manner that Wigglesworth preached it.

As is demonstrated by his ministering alongside Frodsham, Carter, Burton, and Du Plessis, Wigglesworth was careful about whom he associated with in ministry. He would have nothing to do with ministers who had immorality in their lives, or who preached anything except sound doctrine. He demonstrated the fruits of an apostle, with multitudes being saved under his ministry, and with countless miracles, however he did not refer to himself as an apostle, but simply as a child of God or man of God.

Interestingly, many individuals today claim to be apostles and prophets and imply that they are following in Smith Wigglesworth's footsteps by creating "prophetic" networks. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. Keith Malcomson, in his book "Pentecostal Pioneers," documents the fact that there were "prophetic" networks of churches in Great Britain from the 1920's or 1930's onward. From time to time, different ministers would wake up one day and suddenly declare that God had called them to lead a prophetic movement or a prophetic network of churches. For some of these churches and ministers, Wigglesworth had ministered many times. But as soon as they began creating prophetic networks of churches, Smith Wigglesworth would from that point on decline invitations to ever preach for them again. Stanley Frodsham, Howard Carter, and WFP Burton also declined such invitations.

Wigglesworth and the others were not opposed to organization. In fact, Wigglesworth ministered at the national conventions of the Assemblies of God, for the Elim group of Pentecostal churches, and for numerous denominations. But Wigglesworth had walked with the Lord long enough to see that many times men, in their zeal to be receptive to the five-fold ministries, let their imaginations run wild. It is easy to get overzealous and create ministry structures that have no

real basis in Scripture, and therefore, are the ideas of men and not of God. In such cases, the blessing of God is never really present. All you have is a different form of religious tradition and legalistic bondage with a “prophetic” sign hanging over the door. Accepting invitations to preach in such venues only perpetuates an unbiblical ministry structure. Wigglesworth’s quiet separation from “prophetic networks” proved in itself to be prophetic. Within a couple of decades, Wigglesworth and God both had left the networks and they ceased to exist.

The Goodwins’ Direct Experience with Wigglesworth

The Rev. and Mrs. J.R. Goodwin [pictured here] had a brush with Smith Wigglesworth. Their son, Dr. Charles Goodwin told me the story.



The year was 1935. Charles Goodwin was 18 months old. He had been born with a hernia. Brother and Sister Goodwin had prayed and believed God since his birth for his healing.

Smith Wigglesworth came to Dallas, Texas to preach and hold a healing meeting at the largest Assemblies of God church in Texas at the time. It held 1,700 people. After the sermon, Wigglesworth began ministering to those in the healing line. The Goodwins got in line, with young Charles in his mother’s arms. Wigglesworth worked his way towards them. He quickly laid his hands on Charles, and simply said, "God bless the baby!" Wigglesworth looked directly at J.R. Goodwin and said, "You're called to the ministry!" Brother Goodwin replied, "I know it. I'm making preparations for it now." Wigglesworth said, "OK," and moved to the next people in line.

No healing manifested and time passed.

One day several months later while Charles’ father was at his job as assistant engineer at the Brown Cracker and Candy Company in Dallas, he began to feel the Spirit of God move in his spirit. He took a break and walked out a second floor door that opened onto the roof of the first floor. He stepped behind some air circulation equipment on the roof where no one could see him. He knelt down and began to pray for his son. In just a few minutes the prayer burden lifted and he knew his son was healed. That night when Brother Goodwin went home, he found his son's hernia healed. The healing had occurred at the exact time that Dad knelt and prayed.

Charles told me, "It wasn't Wigglesworth's prayers that healed me. It was the prayers of my Dad!"

Giving Out Sharp Corrections

There were two interesting spiritual similarities between the Goodwins and Wigglesworth of which I wish to make note. Allow me to first give you some background on the Goodwins, and then I'll point out to you the similarities.

"Mom" or "Sister" Goodwin as we affectionately referred to her was born Carmen E. Thacker in 1905 in San Augustine County, Texas. She was the fourth child of John Burton Thacker and his wife Ernest Verna. John Thacker was a strict lay-Baptist preacher. Ernest Verna was a strong Christian woman who had a number of spiritual experiences from the Lord such as visions and dreams. Among her siblings, Carmen and her sister Julia--who everyone called "Ainee" (pronounced A-nee)--seemed to have this spiritual trait also. Even as young children, Carmen and Ainee had visions and spiritual experiences from the Lord.

In Sister Goodwin's lineage, a godly heritage affected generation after generation in a similar way to that of the biblical Timothy and his family. Paul noted that an "unfeigned faith" had been present in the grandmother, the mother, and now resided in Timothy:

When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in you also.--II Tim. 1:5.

It is not unusual to see a godly or demonic spiritual heritage or spiritual tendency pass down from one generation to another in a family. For instance, when you examine the family ties of psychics, you will frequently see a fortune-telling ability pass down generation after generation in a family. In some families, there is an unbroken lineage of fortune-tellers going back for as long as anyone in the family can remember. Edgar Cayce, the notable psychic of the 1940's, had a father that was a water witcher—a person who could find underground water by holding out a forked tree branch. Additionally, Cayce's grandfather had an odd ability to speak to snakes and charm them. That tendency towards demonic psychic power, or witchcraft, passed from the grandfather to the father to the son in the Cayce family.

Although a godly heritage can pass down through a family, each individual member of that family must make his or her own choices. The old saying is true that says, "God has many children, but no grandchildren." Every person in every generation must accept or reject Jesus Christ, his offer of salvation, and the Lord's will and plan for their lives. But Paul's comments about Timothy's ancestry, along with my personal observations of families, have led me to believe that spiritual tendencies toward the godly or towards the demonic can indeed come down through a family.

The spiritual heritage Carmen Thacker received from her lay-preacher father and spiritually sensitive mother imprinted on her life and that of her sister Ainee. This heritage is evident also in the life of her son Dr. Charles Goodwin who is a credentialed bible scholar. Indications of this spiritual trait towards God are seen, in my opinion, into the next two generations of Goodwin grandchildren and great-grandchildren who have a passion for the Lord.

Since Sister Goodwin's father, John Thacker died several years before Charles was born, he is unable to relate to me any personal memories of his grandfather. However, he has said that among his relatives, John Thacker was known for being "strong and blunt in his spiritual opinions." Thus Sister Goodwin's spiritual DNA ended up being a mixture of her father's bluntness joined together with her mother's sensitivity and godliness. This combination produced a powerful personality and ministry gift in Sister Goodwin. The result was that Sister Goodwin sensed in her spirit things about people, like her mother did, and she followed in her father's footsteps by telling those people—in no uncertain terms—what they should do about their shortcomings.

It was a remarkable gifting to see in operation, and it was usually painful to be on the receiving end of one of her rebukes. As anyone who knew Sister Goodwin well will tell you, if she believed she perceived sin, a wrong attitude, or anything unbiblical in your life, she would rebuke you in the name of Jesus. Believe me, when Sister Goodwin rebuked you, you certainly knew you had been rebuked. Her corrections could be so sharp that you almost felt like your hide was being peeled off your bones.

The first time I ever visited Mom in her home, I got a dose of Mom Goodwin's corrections. I had been there only a few minutes, when I started to say something and I didn't even get the chance to finish my sentence. The conversation went like this:

I said, "Sister Goodwin, I believe God has given me the gift of--"

And Mom corrected me immediately.

Increasing in volume by the second, She said:

"No He didn't!

NO HE DIDN'T!

NO HE DIDN'T!!!

She continued, "Honey, God didn't give YOU anything. It is His gifts, and His power, and He will not share His glory with anyone. You are just a vessel He uses."

YIKES! My jaw had dropped to the floor, and it took me a few seconds to recover.

Sister Goodwin had the remarkable ability to give you a stinging rebuke one minute, and then be very supportive of you, and compassionate towards you the next minute. A person who knew Sister Goodwin for many years gave the following colorful description: “She had the ability to snatch your teeth out of your mouth, shine them up for you, put them back in your mouth, and have you smiling and thanking her for it at the end.” Amen.

People who were willing to receive Sister Goodwin’s corrections came to love her very deeply because she had the backbone to tell you when you were wrong, and yet also the sensitivity to pour the healing oil into your soul when you needed it. Ultimately, the sharp corrections served to shake the religious nonsense out of your head. They forced you to shape up and mature much faster than a bunch of pampering would have ever done.

God chooses sometimes to mature his servants in this way--by putting them in very challenging situations, which forces them to grow up fast. I believe this is demonstrated in the life of Joseph. He started out as the pampered favorite son of a Patriarch. As such, he was useless to himself and to God. So God prepared him for a great work by putting him first in slavery and then in prison. What a rude awakening! But the difficulties brought Joseph into great wisdom, discerning, maturity, and prepared him for a great work. Be careful when you ask God to give you a great work to do. The price you have to pay may be much more than you imagine!

The corrections Sister Goodwin gave usually stung quite a bit. But the reason we all tolerated such stern corrections was because we knew Sister Goodwin genuinely loved us and she had our best interests at heart. She knew more than we did and her corrections were almost always 100% on target.

Yet, I must present an objective picture of Sister Goodwin and her corrections. Although her rebukes “were almost always 100% on target,” a couple of individuals have related to me over the years an example or two where Sister Goodwin was 100% wrong. In those couple of instances the rebukes were delivered in a devastatingly harsh manner, which wounded the individuals very deeply. As far as I can tell though, those off-base corrections occurred very late in her life, when she was not as mentally sharp as she was in her prime. In her last few years, she sometimes misunderstood things that were said to her or around her. I can recall Sister Goodwin rebuking one time me for something I hadn’t even done or thought of doing. She simply misunderstood something I had casually mentioned.

This should serve as a warning to all of us in ministry, and to those used in spiritual gifts: Be very sparing, and very careful, in giving out stern corrections to individuals. If your stern warning is on target, and given sharply, but in love, the person may be helped greatly in their walk with the Lord. However, if the rebuke is off target, or unwarranted, you may rub salt in the wound of an already wounded person, causing them to stumble severely in their Christian walk. The example of Sister Goodwin shows us that even the best of us can miss it.

Wigglesworth, like Sister Goodwin, was also well known for giving sharp rebukes to individuals. When someone develops into a high level of anointing, like Wigglesworth and Sister Goodwin, it is easy to so appreciate their spiritual gift that one can begin to lose the ability to see the human being objectively. Many people honor Wigglesworth so highly today that audiences assume that anything he did was so spiritual that the man was nearly without flaw. Yet I have heard recordings of a minister who knew Wigglesworth that presents a slightly different picture. The minister commented positively on Wigglesworth's faith, holiness, and boldness, but he also added that he had observed Wigglesworth be absolutely obnoxious and needlessly rude in several situations. Spiritual characteristics, even when given directly from the Lord, can be taken too far sometimes.

A Similar Ministry in Tongues

In addition to rebuking people sharply, these two giants of the faith shared another spiritual characteristic. Wigglesworth and Sister Goodwin were both used of the Lord in a particular pattern of giving messages in tongues and interpretation that seasoned observers had never seen before or since.

I read a biography, which I believe was written by George Stormont—a British minister who had known Wigglesworth well and had attended his meetings for 20 or 30 years. Numerous times he observed Wigglesworth stop in the midst of his sermon, speak out a message in tongues of about a sentence or two in length. He would promptly interpret the message, and continue on with his sermon. The message in tongues always fit within the context of his sermon and blessed people immensely. Stormont noted that neither he, nor the ministers he knew at the time, had ever seen messages in tongues given in a brief manner in the midst of a sermon, with the speaker himself interpreting the message.

The only way in which any of them had seen the gifts of tongues and interpretation operate was in the common manner of a person giving a fairly lengthy message in tongues ranging from approximately one to several paragraphs in length, with the interpretation being given in entirety by someone other than the speaker. While Wigglesworth developed in this particular format of giving brief messages in tongues and interpretation in the midst of a sermon, on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, the Lord brought Brother and Sister Goodwin into the same manner of speaking in tongues with an additional twist that I will describe later in this document.

Wigglesworth's pattern of speaking brief messages in tongues and interpreting them was common also in the ministry of the Goodwins. It was the usual order of things for Brother Goodwin to pause, perhaps even several times, during his sermon. Oftentimes, Sister Goodwin would be inspired of the Holy Spirit to suddenly speak a message in tongues varying in length from an apparent sentence or two to perhaps one that would be of about a paragraph in length. Brother Goodwin would listen and immediately interpret the message. Sometimes Sister Goodwin would give perhaps several brief messages, which Brother Goodwin would interpret. This was both amazing and inspiring to see and hear.

You can hear beautiful examples of the Goodwins' manner of ministering in tongues on recordings on my website, www.brothermel.com. Dr. Charles Goodwin has graciously made recordings of his parents' numerous sermons available to me and I have uploaded the majority of them to my website. In nearly every audio and video recording, Brother Goodwin preaches and Sister Goodwin also gives one to several messages in tongues, which are interpreted by Brother Goodwin. In the following recording, Sister Goodwin gives two messages in tongues at the start of the recording, which are interpreted by Brother Goodwin. A chorus of "Sing Hosanna to the King of Kings" follows this. Afterward, two additional messages in tongues can be heard faintly coming from the congregation or from Sister Goodwin, which are interpreted by J.R. Goodwin. Click on the link below, and once you are taken to the recording page, click on the player button, and you can hear the recording instantly through your computer via live stream. Here is the link:

<http://brothermel.com/befilledwiththespirit.aspx>

These examples are lengthier than the usual messages in tongues of a sentence or two that are common in the Goodwin recordings. I imagine that the Goodwins' messages in tongues and interpretation sound very much like Wigglesworth's did many years previous to these recordings.

How this Anointing Came Upon the Goodwins

Brother and Sister Goodwin, when asked how this anointing came upon them were adamant that they had never seen anyone operate in this specific pattern of speaking in tongues and interpretation before the Lord began using them. George Stormont reported that he had seen this pattern only once in his lifetime and that was in the ministry of Smith Wigglesworth. J.R. and Carmen Thacker Goodwin believed that this pattern of ministering in tongues and interpretation originated with them. Let's take a moment and examine the biographies of the Goodwins. We will see that they came into this anointing independently of other ministers, receiving it directly from the Lord.

As far as we can tell, Carmen had no exposure, from her birth in 1905 to her marriage to J.R. Goodwin in 1921, to any substantial teachings on spiritual gifts. Books on spiritual gifts—as they are taught today—were not published and widely available until the late 1930's and early 1940's, by which time Sister Goodwin was already developed in these gifts.

J.R. Goodwin is not known to have had any notable spiritual experiences as a child, but the visions and spiritual experiences of Carmen Thacker Goodwin began probably around 1910 when she was approximately five years old. The experiences of Sister Goodwin's mother Ernest Verna Thacker, her sister Ainee Thacker, and her own experiences in the Thacker home in Texas occurred independently of the Pentecostal outpouring that took place hundreds of miles away in Topeka in 1900 and later at the Azusa Street revival in LA about 1906.

The Thacker family attended a Nazarene church and Carmen was born-again there at a young age. J.R. Goodwin married Carmen Thacker on October 31, 1921, and they began their married life together. As the years passed, God continued to give Sister Goodwin visions and other spiritual experiences. Sister Goodwin told many times the story of how she and her husband were led supernaturally to attend an Assemblies of God church. In the middle of the night, an angel smote the bottom of her feet, waking her up. He smote her feet again, and pulled her feet in the direction of a particular Spirit-filled church. She and Brother Goodwin believed this was a direction from the Lord that they were to go to that church. At this church, Brother and Sister Goodwin were filled with the Spirit and spoke in tongues. Here is a link to the recording in which the Goodwins tell the story of the angel and how they came into the anointing in which God used them, and entering the ministry in 1936:

<http://brothermel.com/jrgcfni11071afternoon.aspx>

When telling of how she came into being used by the Lord in spiritual gifts, Sister Goodwin consistently said that she had very little understanding of how to explain or categorize them until Brother Goodwin searched the scriptures and found examples that paralleled her experiences. She told me that even then, their clearest understanding of spiritual gifts came after reading Howard Carter's book "Questions and Answers on Spiritual Gifts."

The gifts of tongues and interpretation came slowly into operation after 1936. Sister Goodwin and other members of the church congregation began to be inspired to speak out messages in tongues. However, no one seemed to be able to interpret any of them. The Goodwins and the church made it a matter of prayer, asking God for the gift of interpretation. Sister Goodwin had been praying for a period of time, asking God to give her the gift of interpretation. After awhile, God sent a prophet across her path with a rebuke.

A prophetess, who did not know about Sister Goodwin asking the Lord for the gift of interpretation began to minister to her during a time of prayer in the Goodwins' home. By the Spirit of the Lord, the prophetess rebuked Sister Goodwin, the Lord asking why she was even asking for this gift. Did she not know that He was the Lord, and it would be far better for her to allow Him to choose the gifts He wanted to use her in according to His own will? Thus humbled, Sister Goodwin turned the matter over to the Lord and asked instead that He give the gift of interpretation to her husband, since Brother Goodwin was the pastor of the church.

Brother Goodwin, aware of all of these happenings, was in a service in their church some time later when a member of their congregation gave a message in tongues. Immediately, Brother Goodwin had the interpretation in his spirit and spoke it out. They were all amazed and blessed. In the coming days and weeks, numerous people gave messages in tongues and Brother Goodwin interpreted every one of them. Then there came a day when someone gave a message in tongues and Brother Goodwin was unable to interpret it. Nor could he interpret any other messages in tongues.

Puzzled, Sister Goodwin asked him if he had gotten off into fear or unbelief, and he replied that he did not think so. Actually, this was a time of testing. After a little while when someone gave a message in tongues, Brother Goodwin reported that the Devil began speaking to him along the lines of, "You know, you can stand up and say 'thus and so.'" Brother Goodwin replied, "Yes, and if I do, I'll be nothing more than a performing monkey." He refused to fake the interpretations. Not long after this, the gift of interpretation began to operate through Brother Goodwin again, and it continued in a steady stream for the rest of his life. God allowed his servant to be tested, and his servant passed the test.

Kenneth Hagin Sr. and many other seasoned ministers said that the interpretations given by Brother Goodwin were the most consistent, biblical, and beautiful interpretations they had ever heard. You can listen to numerous examples of this gift in operation in the Goodwin recordings on my site. There was always a great unction in Brother Goodwin's interpretations that you can still feel. The interpretations always exalted God, always upheld the scriptures, always honored the Lord Jesus Christ, always exhorted men to humble themselves before God and believe God's promises entirely, and anything predicted in the interpretations always came to pass.

I will include here a link to a recording of a couple of outstanding interpretations Brother Goodwin gave at the start of a service. The recording begins with Brother Goodwin explaining how the message in tongues was given by Sister Brandt—a member of the congregation—with him interpreting it. This was followed by another message in tongues given by Sister Knapp, interpreted by Brother Goodwin. As you listen to this, you will hear both women speak out their messages in tongues and become extremely emotional. But Brother Goodwin just calmly interpreted both messages in an unemotional manner.

Although this occurred more than 40 years ago, those who were present on that day still speak of the convicting power of the Holy Spirit that fell on everyone as this was spoken:

<http://brothermel.com/whywebaptize.aspx>

An Additional Component

In addition to Brother and Sister Goodwin flowing together in messages in tongues and interpretation during Brother Goodwin's sermons, there was another characteristic of their gift that seasoned observers had never seen before: they frequently acted out the message in tongues. This was remarkable to witness. Sister Goodwin would speak a message in tongues, accompanied by hand gestures and movements. Then Brother Goodwin—usually without even watching his wife—would interpret the message in tongues repeating the same gestures and movements. Here is a link to a video in which Brother and Sister Goodwin acted out a message in tongues while ministering in 1974 for Kenneth Hagin:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlCeWvXtKFE>

Kenneth Hagin provides an interesting commentary just after the Goodwins acted out this word:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=97-INJdmobs>

Those of us who knew the Goodwins saw them minister in this manner countless times, giving messages in tongues, interpreting them, and acting out the gist of the message. Although both they and Smith Wigglesworth gave out brief messages in tongues and interpretation during their sermons, Wigglesworth did not act out messages in the manner you see in these videos. This was unique to the Goodwins.

In the course of my ministry travels and communications, I have had the opportunity to communicate with Dr. Vinson Synan and Dr. Stanley Horton—two of the foremost Pentecostal historians of our day concerning the ministry of the Goodwins.

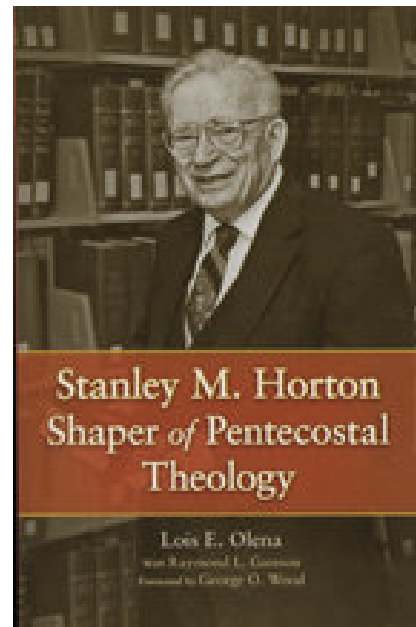
Dr. Vinson Synan [pictured here] is a professor of Pentecostal History at Regent University and prolific author, lecturer, and is probably the most well known authority on Charismatic and Pentecostal history today. He viewed these videos and others I sent him of the Goodwins. He told me he had never seen messages in tongues and interpretation spoken out and acted out in this specific manner, nor had he ever read of any similar account in his historical research. He now uses the videos of the Goodwins in his seminary classes to demonstrate to his students what genuine tongues and interpretation look like.



In 2009, I contacted Dr. Stanley Horton, another outstanding Pentecostal historian. He viewed these video clips. Dr Horton, [pictured here] born in 1916 and thus in his 90's, gave this kind reply to me by e-mail:

I have never seen this before. It reminds me of what some of the Old Testament prophets must have done. (except for the tongues). I like it. I have a faint memory of hearing the Goodwins years ago, but I can't remember when or where.

Thus in my thinking, the Goodwins' claim that they had never seen anyone minister in tongues in this fashion before God began using them this way, seems to be borne out by the fact that two recognized and credentialed experts in Pentecostal history had never known of the Holy Spirit moving in this specific manner either.



It is at this point that the question arises in my thinking: “Is there biblical precedent for this action of speaking out under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, while acting out the gist of the message?” Yes there is.

The Old Testament provides us the following comment from the Lord through the Prophet Hosea:

I have also spoken to [you by] the prophets, and I have multiplied visions [for you] and [have appealed to you] through parables acted out by the prophets. Hosea 12:10.

From the New Testament we have the account of the Prophet Agabus speaking and acting out a word from the Lord to the Apostle Paul:

And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Acts 21:10-12.

Tongues then and Now:

When I came to know Sister Goodwin in her final years, she was a widow, but was still anointed of the Holy Spirit. Countless times, I observed her stop in the middle of our spiritual conversation, speak out a brief message in tongues, interpret it, sometimes adding in gestures, pause to praise the Lord and thank Him, and then continue on with whatever she was emphasizing to me. I asked her if she knew why the messages she gave in tongues and interpretation were usually brief. She told me that she did not know the reason and attributed it to the fact that it is the Holy Spirit's prerogative to move however He wanted to. I can't argue with that. God just has His own ways of doing things sometimes.

I used to wonder how Sister Goodwin knew when to give a message in tongues, how long it would be, when and how to interpret it, and it was a particular mystery to me how she knew what gestures and motions to add in and at what point. Little did I realize at the time that I would eventually have these questions answered by first hand experience. In March of 1989, I saw Sister Goodwin in person for the last time. We talked on the phone and exchanged letters regularly afterwards until her passing in 1994, but this was the last time I saw her face to face. At the end of our visit, Sister Goodwin laid her hands on me and prayed for me. She asked the Lord to use me in spiritual gifts, and I took my leave of her.

Approximately four months later on August 1, 1989, the Lord answered her prayer.

I had eaten dinner out at a restaurant. I returned home and parked my car in my garage. As I walked back up to my home, I stepped up onto the sidewalk, and was instantly caught up in a vision. I saw my life up to that point, and I knew God was imparting something to me in that vision. (I tell the account at length elsewhere). A few seconds later when I came out of the vision, I entered my home. The moment I heard the door click

shut behind me, words in other tongues began flowing out of my mouth. I had spoken and prayed in tongues for eight years previous to that day. But this was not my prayer language. I knew this was a message in tongues that was to be interpreted. The second I finished speaking out the message in tongues of about a sentence or two in length, immediately I spoke out the interpretation. Also, within the first three or four messages in tongues, I found my hands wanting to move in certain directions and communicate also through gestures. It was all automatic and flowed smoothly. In the 20 years that have passed since that day, I have given thousands of messages in tongues and interpreted them. Some of the messages had gestures and actions that seemed to naturally flow along with the message. Some had no gestures or movements.

It is hard for me to put into words what this process feels like as the Holy Spirit is flowing through me. It frequently comes very suddenly with me sensing the presence of the message in tongues in my spirit for only a second or two before I yield to the Holy Spirit and give it. I have the ability to give the message, or to withhold it. I usually go ahead and give it, unless my giving of a message in tongues would be disruptive or would interfere with the flow of the service. In such cases, I hold the message in tongues until an appropriate opportunity presents itself. If no such opportunity comes, the message in tongues seems to fade from my spirit within an hour or so.

Here is an example of a message in tongues that came upon me while we were recording a podcast with Sister Elizabeth at one of her Holy Spirit meetings. As you will hear, I was giving the introductory comments and about 70 seconds into my comments, a message in tongues arose within me, and I spoke it out and immediately interpreted it:

http://www.brothermel.net/12-12-2009_Tongues.mp3

It began as a short message in tongues, but once I interpreted the first 2 or 3 sentences, for the sake of time, I just switched over to prophecy and spoke out the rest of it by prophecy. This word blessed and instructed all of us. A number of ministers who learned from the Goodwins developed into being used by the Spirit in this manner. However, the Goodwins frequently acted out the message in tongues and interpretation. As far as I know, I am the only one who learned from the Goodwins who acts out the message. One of the most dramatic examples of acting out a word from the Lord occurred to me when I was in Chicago in 2007:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLV6Wr32jpY>

I did not know this was being videotaped. I am glad though that it was so that the Lord might be honored, and that people might learn and be edified. The anointing was on me so strong that morning that I look like a man moving in slow motion. Now please understand me, I did not choose to act this out for a dramatic effect. I did it this way because I was specifically led of the Lord to do so. The night before this service, just as I got into bed in my hotel room, I saw a vision of a woman making a meal for her husband. The husband took the meal, and walked off and left her standing there. The Lord asked me, "If you saw this, would you praise it? Would this be right in your eyes?" And I replied, "No, Lord! This would be an awful thing." He answered back to me, "This is exactly what My people are doing to Me. They take My spiritual gifts, go off by themselves, and think they can operate My gifts without Me." Grief came into my spirit. I knew the Lord was showing me this because He wanted to give it out as a prophetic parable through me the next morning in the service.

When Pastor Kelvin Easter picked me up and was driving me to the service that morning I said to him, "I can't talk with you now. The Spirit of Prophecy is upon me." We rode to the service in silence. I knew that I needed to stay focused on what the Lord wanted to do in the service so that I didn't lose the anointing. We got to the service, and I met his staff members. Wonderful people. They were all very gracious and kind to me.

The service began. Praise and worship was very well done, but I did not enter into it very much, again, because I needed to stay focused on what the Lord wanted me to do. After praise and worship, Pastor Easter whispered to me that if I had a word of prophecy, that now was the time to give it. I stepped forward and gave it as you see in the video.

Conclusion:

As I updated this article and added in additional information, I wrestled with myself for days. I wondered if I should include this aspect of my own ministry in an article about Smith Wigglesworth and the Goodwins. You see, too often when I share the accounts of the Goodwins, Wigglesworth, Bosworth and others, Christians tend to see such accounts as belonging only in the past. So I thought if I included the description of me being used similarly in tongues to that of the Goodwins, and included links so that you can hear and view these spiritual operations, you would be encouraged in your faith to press in with the Lord, until He begins doing these wonderful things in your midst also.

I am concerned now as I complete this document that readers might think I see myself on the level with Mom and Dad Goodwin and Smith Wigglesworth. I do not. The anointing is similar only because we all have the same Holy Spirit.

Another concern of mine is the fact that Christians have a tendency to see a minister move in a particular anointing or gift, and then try to copy it in the flesh—and that never works. It dishonors God, and it grieves the Holy Spirit. We need to keep our eyes on Jesus Christ and seek to emulate him in the beauty of all of his character and not to copy some man. Would to God more people understood this fact.

Not too long ago, a Charismatic minister read that Smith Wigglesworth had from time to time been led of the Holy Spirit to strike individuals in whatever area their medical condition was. Every time he did this, the person was instantly healed. But he did not minister to everyone in this way—only to those he felt specifically led to. This minister tried to copy Wigglesworth and began punching, slapping, and kicking people in the prayer line at his meetings. Of course, no one was healed, and the minister kicked one man's tooth out. Eventually, that revival ended in sin and disgrace.

My brethren, these things are *HOLY*. They are precious. They are not to be played with. If you have a message in tongues in a service, don't try to copy me and act something out simply because the Lord uses me in this from time to time. I don't act out these parables because I saw Sister Goodwin move similarly. I don't act out every message in tongues. But when the Holy Spirit presents this to me, with the impression that I am to act it out, I obey Him—and He always shows up and moves deeply in the service. Follow the directions of the Scriptures, and obey the prompting the Lord *gives you*. Everything He ever leads you to do in spiritual gifts will always produce good fruit. If something does not bear good fruit, then it was not inspired of the Holy Spirit. Make sure you have the leading of the Lord.

Smith Wigglesworth and the Goodwins were used in giving messages in tongues during their sermons. Additionally, the Goodwins were led to act out some of these messages with gestures and actions. The Goodwins stressed repeatedly that they did not believe the Lord had given them a “special anointing.” They believed that what they operated in was *normal*, and would come into manifestation in any church or ministry to a certain extent if that ministry would obey the Bible, stay in faith, seek God for these gifts, and give God the praise when they came.

Go and do thou likewise.

© 2009 Mel C. Montgomery. All rights reserved. Article may be copied and shared with others as long as this is done without charge, in entirety, and attribution is given. Original Source: www.brothermel.com and “Voices of the Faith Giants” at <http://brothermel.podbean.com>. Information about the author, Mel Montgomery, follows on the next page.

About the Author

The ministry of author, reformer, revivalist, and broadcaster Rev. Mel C. Montgomery is the fulfillment of a prophecy given by Sister Goodwin.

She and her late husband, the Rev. J.R. Goodwin, attended meetings held by Smith Wigglesworth in the 1930's. Then the Goodwins mentored Kenneth Hagin, John Osteen, Billye Brim, Elizabeth Pruitt-Sloan, Brother Mel, and other leaders. Kenneth Hagin and Mel Montgomery developed into balanced prophetic ministries under the Goodwins.

Sister Goodwin laid her hands on Mel and prophesied that Mel would have “an anointed ministry, like *some of the men of old.*” Years after Sister Goodwin's passing, the prophecy began to be fulfilled as Mel was appointed Copyright Agent for the Goodwin audios, videos, and books, and people around the world began sending him other rare recordings by “the men of old.”



Mel's message changed as he listened to the recordings of the “men of old” like Howard Carter, Stanley Frodsham, F.F. Bosworth, the Goodwins, and others. Rev. Montgomery now travels everywhere preaching the Cross, the power of Pentecost, and the message of Reformation. He calls for fellow Charismatics and Word of Faith ministers to separate themselves from extreme teachings, unethical ministry practices, and to return to the sound doctrine and integrity exemplified in the rare recordings. These recordings and his writings are available for free at: www.brothermel.com.

Mel's program “Voices of the Faith Giants,” in which he discusses the recordings and the moving of the Holy Spirit with major Charismatic leaders, is broadcast over internet Christian radio, and at: <http://brothermel.podbean.com>. His free monthly e-mail newsletter, “The Voice of Reformation” can be subscribed to at www.brothermel.com/guestbook.aspx.

Seeing the need for emerging ministers to receive legitimate ministry credentials, mentoring, and opportunities for ministry fellowship, Mel Montgomery has joined and enthusiastically supports Rev. Elizabeth Pruitt-Sloan's ministry association, Helping Inspire Ministries (H.I.M.) Information about this organization can be obtained at www.brothermel.com.