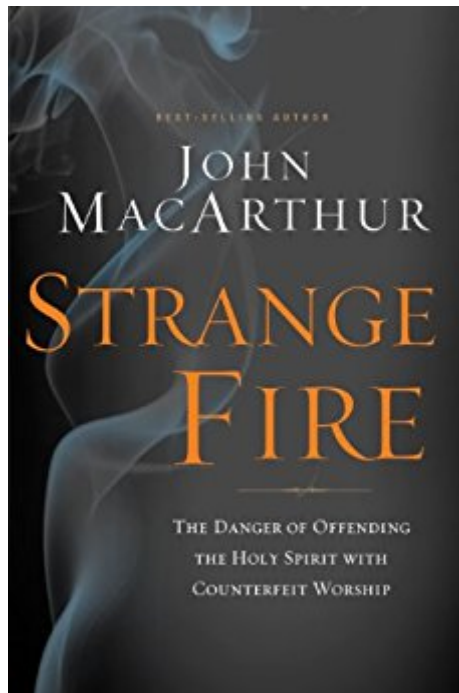




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Strange Fire: The Danger Of Offending The Holy Spirit With Counterfeit Worship



Synopsis

What would God say about those who blatantly misrepresent His Holy Spirit; who exchange true worship for chaotic fits of mindless ecstasy; who replace the biblical gospel with vain illusions of health and wealth; who claim to prophesy in His name yet speak errors; and who sell false hope to desperate people for millions of dollars? The charismatic movement has always been a breeding-ground for scandal, greed, bad doctrine, and all kinds of spiritual chicanery. As a movement, it is clearly headed the wrong direction. And it is growing at an unprecedented rate. From the Word of Faith to the New Apostolic Reformation, the Charismatic movement is being consumed by the empty promises of the prosperity gospel. Too many charismatic celebrities promote a "Christianity" without Christ, a Holy Spirit without holiness. And their teaching is having a disastrous influence on a grand scale, as large television networks broadcast their heresies to every part of the world. In *Strange Fire*, bestselling author and pastor John MacArthur chronicles the unsavory history behind the modern Charismatic movement. He lays out a chilling case for rejecting its false prophets, speaking out against their errors, showing true reverence to the Holy Spirit, and above all clinging to the Bible as the inerrant, authoritative Word of God and the one true standard by which all truth claims must be tested.

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Customer Reviews

I write this not so much as a review on Strange Fire as I do to simply address the counterfeit doctrine found in the WF movement. I speak from experience, being on the inside of this movement for 25 years. I don't claim to be an expert, but a burdened heart. I was a regular at Rhema church (Kenneth Hagin), camp meetings, and many other Word Faith churches in Tulsa. I sat under almost all the preachers/prophets/teachers that are mentioned in this book. I spoke in tongues, but was it a thing just taught by men? (whether it has ceased or not, I take this stand: God is sovereign. God can and will do as He pleases, Psalm 115:3, Psalm 135:6). As a Word Faith adherent, I named-it and claimed-it, "believed" for healing, "spoke it forth", commanded and demanded (read Lamentations 3:37) and stood in "my authority as a believer" (if this teaching were true, then why would you need God?). There was such a wrestling and straining and striving to have "faith" and to "believe". But isn't it about faith IN GOD; NOT faith in your faith as Hagin taught? (which, btw, is the same teaching of the New Age movement only cloaked in biblical terminology). I felt sorry for (and superior to) all the other churches that didn't have the "fullness of the Spirit." The WF teaching erroneously offers a quick and easy short-cut to sanctification and holiness. And in these short-cuts people assume they are very spiritual. The Spirit gives life, the flesh profits nothing. How burdensome this all is! Vanity of vanities. So much of what is called spiritual is really self-serving. Read Jonathan Edwards' 'Religious Affections'. Even back in the 1700's similar lies were deceiving souls. I read the bible, but not really. I read it wanting it to say what I wanted it to say to fit what I wanted to believe (not unlike the Pharisees). God forgive me. But after 25 years, I can only give God the glory for setting me free in this way. I grew tired of trying to read the bible and always falling asleep, so I bought a blank journal and started simply transcribing the bible. Writing it out - copying it word for word. (Deut. 17:18-19) Chapter after chapter. Book after book. After 2 years of continuing this practice, I began to question what I had been taught in the WF movement. Something wasn't right. The culmination of what I was learning by writing out God's Word, didn't fit the WF theology. I began to realize how much of what they taught was out of context and carefully twisted distortions of the true intent of a verse. I continued transcribing the bible, learning and memorizing more scripture. To study His Word became like a burning within, a search for treasure. I devoured the Word, hungry to know God through His Word alone. (1 John 2:27) Then I got John MacArthur's Charismatic

Chaos. I was afraid to read it, I set it aside for a few months... but was compelled to pick it up again. Why are we afraid to question what we've been taught by men? We can learn from one man and unlearn from another, but when the Holy Spirit teaches you, it is confirmed in the Word, sealed in your heart and borne out in the experience of time. (Isaiah 29;13) Indeed, if it is God's truth, it will hold up under scrutiny (1 Peter 1:20) Are you so deceived to think you can't be deceived? Can you read His Word without an agenda and prejudice and admit you have been wrong? (Psalm 95:10 and Hebrews 3:10) Isn't the Word profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness? After reading Charismatic Chaos, it led to an extensive study including books by H. Hanegraaff, M. Horton, Warren B. Smith, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, A.W. Tozer, Spurgeon, Jonathan Edwards, A.W. Pink. Indeed it is hard to admit you've been wrong. It means tearing down your assumptions, your pride (Obadiah 1:3). It's an unlearning down to the foundation so that God may build it up again in truth. Do I agree with everything in this book? No. But I appreciate MacArthur's boldness in standing up to error - a clarion call for discernment for ONE OF MANY deceptions facing the church today. The WF movement is rife with error.. I saw, heard, and was taught all this stuff; the waters of truth have been so muddled by their extraneous philosophies, the gospel is faintly recognizable in it. Where is the teaching on sin, repentance, humility, the plague of the heart (1 Kings 8:38)? Study the origins of the movement! It is filled with New Age/New Thought/Christian Science/Gnosticism/Metaphysical slants and superstition bordering on pagan religions of old. Nothing is new under the sun. A form of divination has been repackaged as an enlightened modern Christian movement. They have deified man and humanized God leading to self-glorification rather than God-glorification. Unfortunately, in this movement, "experiences" reign supreme over reason and careful study of the word. In men's desire to be "little gods", they have fallen once again for Satan's old lie. Take heed! Be discerning! Be watchful! D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones has a very balanced and excellent exposition in his book The Sovereign Spirit. Or you can listen to his sermons on mljtrust.org. Even so, my heart breaks for the many people in this movement that don't see the error of it. The Lord knows those that are His (2 Timothy 2:19) and those that are His will love the truth (2 Thess. 2:9-11)

It is a shame that an otherwise godly, and well-respected evangelical leader fails to grasp the Scriptural teaching that the Holy Spirit has not changed since Apostolic days. This book teaches cessationism - the concept, contrary to Scripture, that the Gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased. Cessationism, ironically, is an argument from experience, rather than from the Bible.

A good book on an important topic. As he usually does MacArthur does a good job showing what the Bible teaches and show how some well known preachers ignore the clear teaching of Scripture for monetary gain.

I'll leave the in-depth theological reviews of this book to those who are more expert on this than myself. I did appreciate this book for a few things:-It is clearly written for laymen. You won't need a masters in divinity to understand MacArthur's points.-Although critical, it is done with an undertone of respect. I think theological discussions too often degenerate into an "I'm right and you're an idiot" undertone. MacArthur is respectful in much of his critique.-It is useful in discussion of small groups. Agree-or-not, this book is thought provoking.

A fascinating book on fire

5stars

Well written, informative and interesting. I will search for other writings by this author.

right on target. grateful for a man who has the courage to tell it like it is.

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