

SOME BABIES NEVER GIVE UP THEIR BOTTLE

By Glenn I. Hitchcock

A popular billboard once read: “Some kids never give up their bottle.” The implication served as a reminder to those who engaged in the consumption of alcohol of the tragic consequences of their choice. The billboard depicted a gruesome automobile accident where a *bottle* of beer was discovered in the grasped hand of its young victim. It seems so paradoxical that some will ignore all of the warnings concerning the mocking menace of alcohol and drugs (Proverbs 20:1), and would attempt to conduct their lives as mature and controlled citizens. Some are more overt in displaying their immaturity as they would rather “fight than switch.” The fact is so very apparent: “*Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*” There are consequences to our actions. In Galatians 6:7-8, “*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*”

Immaturity in the spiritual also can plague our generation. Christians are commanded to grow and mature (Eph. 4:15; 2 Pet. 3:9; 2 Tim. 2:15). Paul reminds us of the same tragedy of “*babies never giving up their bottles*” in Hebrews 5:12-14 “*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*” Just as Satan seeks to convince man that he can control the mocker of alcohol and an auto, the Devil (1 Pet. 5:8) persuades man to hold to a bottle of stunted growth that will lead to the destruction of the soul (Matt. 16:26).

An example of spiritual immaturity in doctrinal matters concerns the concept of miraculous spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:11-14; 1 Cor. 13:9-11). The New Testament give the purpose of miraculous gifts:

1. To guide in converting first century sinners (Acts 6:3-5; 8:26-39).
2. Edification of the saints (Eph. 4:2).
3. Confirmation of the written Word of God (Mk 16:16-20; Heb. 2:3-4).
4. To support growth of the church until maturity (1 Cor. 13: 8-10; Eph. 4: 8 15).

It is a mark of spiritual immaturity to alleged that miraculous spiritual gifts of the first century are still applicable today in view of the fully revealed Word of God. The billboard of Truth proves that the miraculous gifts were temporary and limited to the period of the apostles (since only through the laying on of the hands of an apostle these gift could be administered Acts 8:18). These gifts were to last “till we come to the unity of faith” (Eph. 4:11).

There is *one faith* that was *once for all delivered* (Eph. 4:5; Rom 3:27b; Jude 3). The word *till* implies and imposes limitation. Paul wrote that these temporary gifts were to be *done away*, (1 Cor. 13:8). In the place of these limited gifts would abide the permanent; faith, hope, and love. Read the passages in context and determine the limited, temporary, and immature from the permanent, abiding and mature:

Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part,

and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

If the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were intended for all believers throughout time, then all should be able to demonstrate a miracle. If not, why not? It certainly would not be a matter of my unbelief or belief in tempting God or proving my claim to unbelievers. If the miraculous measure of these gifts still abide, in the absence of full revelation, then the adherents of this doctrine should be able to demonstrate this power just as the apostles and disciples of the first century did (Mark.16: 17-20). If they are unable to do this, either one of two things are true. Either there are no true believers today and partial revelation and miraculous gifts exist. Or true believers are present and full revelation exist in the absence of miraculous gifts.

Modern claims of miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit simply are not supported by the Bible. It is not a matter of argumentation, it is a matter of demonstration! Let those who claim the gifts of the Spirit prove their allegations as the first century saints! Some babies will never give up their bottles. How about you? (John 8:32) ***"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."***