

Reading Report

The Word and Power Church by Doug Banister

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SF505

Summer 2020

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Date: May 23rd, 2020

Summary

In the book *The Word and Power Church*, by Doug Banister, he examines and addresses the traditions between the Charismatic and the Pentecostal Church and their ideology which separates them. The charismatic church believes that the spiritual gifts referred to in 1 Corinthians 12 still exist today¹. Whereas, the evangelical church believes in “the doctrine of cessation”², which states that the spiritual gifts no longer exist today. In Banister’s quest to find the truth, he must let go of his evangelical ideology and surrender to the authoritative word of God. Through this painful process, he realizes that “he does not just want to know about God, but he wants to intimately know Him”³.

The war that raged between the charismatics and the evangelicals⁴ more than a century ago, is the same battle that was going on inside of Banister. His struggle of staying true to the authority of Scripture (that the evangelicals cling too) and his embracing of this newfound Power (that the charismatics cling too) is now at the forefront of his life. Just as God has adopted the Gentiles into the kingdom, Banister now adopts and believes that the “word”, (the evangelicals) and the “power”, (the charismatics) churches could finally coexist together as one⁵.

Banister was not the only one who believed in the “Word” and the “Power” Churches coming together to advance the church forward. In October 1995, forty-four million Christians united in a corporate prayer called “Praying Through the Windows II,” to start the healing⁶. Without true repentance and forgiveness, the church cannot move forward. The truth of the matter is that both of them needed each other if they were going to do the work of the Lord and advance the kingdom by saving souls⁷.

Interaction and Critique

The Word and Power Church by Doug Banister was a very interesting book that really brings the truth to light; that without the “Word” and “Power” coming together, we would be incomplete. I totally feel the same way. Every Sunday I would learn about Jesus and what He has done for me, but when I had encountered His power, it left me wanting more of Him. I believe Mark, a member of Banister’s church, said it best, “We were longing to worship God in spirit and in truth,” and “when both come together, it’s amazing.”⁸

God has called both the charismatics and evangelicals churches to work together as different members but as one body. Just as a married couple, each person will bring a uniqueness into the relationship where each one will benefit from seeking the same goal. Banister uses Collins’ model from his book, *Built to last*, to demonstrate his point of view he says, “Let’s apply the “genius of the AND” to the organization that truly is built to last, the church.”⁹ Banister is declaring, why settle for being incomplete by choosing the “Word” or the “Power”, when you can truly have the best of both worlds.

Although having the best of both worlds, is the ultimate church experience, however, it is not without its share of problems. For example, Banister agrees that when the gifts of the Spirit are flowing it is a welcoming invitation, however, he also believes that these gifts should be handled (or controlled) in small groups. He says, “A small group is a safe place to make mistakes. If someone errs in mishandling a prophetic word, for example, a few are impacted, not an entire congregation.”¹⁰ I disagree with this notion because for one, can anyone really control the Holy Spirit if he wants to speak? Second, if someone does interfere with the Holy Spirit when speaking (in tongues or prophesying), would they not be quenching the Spirit?

Nevertheless, I agree with Banister that the biggest problem is reaching the “Generation X” or (Xers). They seem to only want God’s presence and not His truth. I believe that the only way to overcome this battle is by seeking God by not only His “Word” but also by His “Power.”

With integrity, I have read this book (circle one):

Thoroughly and Entirely X %

Quickly but Completely _____%

Thoroughly but Not Entirely _____%

Quickly and Not Completely _____%

Not at all

Signed:

David Lee

Notes

1. Douglas Banister, *The Word and Power Church*, (Zondervan Publishing House 1999),

1. Ibid., 17.

2. Ibid., 16.

3. Ibid., 18.

4. Ibid., 27.

5. Ibid., 23.

6. Ibid., 30.

7. Ibid., 30.

8. Ibid., 41.

9. Ibid., 23.

10. Ibid., 89.