RESPONSE TO DEERE’S SURPRISED BY THE VOICE OF GOD

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There is perhaps no other issue in evangelical Christianity today that is more controversial, except for perhaps that of worship styles, than the issue of does God truly speak today outside of the written word of God. This paper will respond to a major book written on this subject, *Surprised By the Voice of God*, written by an American charismatic pastor by the name of Jack Deere. Deere, a former professor at Dallas Theological Seminary considers himself liberated from the chains of his past life as what he calls a Bible Deist, that is, one who believes that God who is simply not present outside of the written pages of the Bible. The author of this paper is himself a student at Dallas Theological Seminary and will examine this work in light of the strength of Deere’s arguments, both logically and biblically.

To accomplish this goal, this paper will first present the author’s view of the topic, then will present Deere’s view of revelation, analyze several points of his argumentation, and finally analyze several points of his biblical support. The author would like to stress that this is a very difficult topic and that the pages below are the author’s best effort to make a clear distinction between the two philosophies, but is by no means considered the final word on the subject.

Section 1 – The Author’s Perspective

*What is the Problem?*

The problem is that not only do we read about God speaking to our favorite characters in the Bible in powerful ways, there are those among us who claim to have heard God in powerful ways. The last thing we want to do is to stifle an earnest believer when they believe that God is speaking to them, and we would not want to quench the Spirit’s work in their hearts. At the same time, many times believers have conflicting views and emotions, and it would seem
that an accurate word from God is the exception rather than the rule. In fact, one of the more recent cases that this author has come into contact with was speaking that he had heard God give him direction on where he should work, but at the same time, he is also hearing voices that tell him that he should drive his car off the road into the lake.

How can we hope to distinguish between these often confusing and conflicting voices? We all have very different thoughts and impressions running around in our heads constantly, and how are we to know which ones are worthy of being listened to? We believe that we are “filled with the Holy Spirit”, so why shouldn’t we feel his promptings and impressions? What is wrong with us? To answer this question, it is critical to understand the nature of revelation and the means by which the scriptures suggest that we obtain it.

What is Revelation?

In his book Models of Revelation Cardinal Avery Dulles describes five models of revelation. In other words, Cardinal Dulles has boiled down the various ways that Christians and non-Christians alike have claimed that God has spoken to them into five elemental models. Most belief systems can be expressed using some amalgamation of these 5 models.

The first model is the “Revelation as Doctrine” model. This model is based upon “propositional revelation”. That is, revelation that is verbal and recorded in a truth statement. Therefore, truth is revealed in a systematized delivery of doctrines and premises. Carl Henry notes “Christian theology is the systematization of the truth-content explicit and implicit in the inspired writings”\(^1\). For this reason, this view is often referred to as the “propositional model”, because the theology is based on a series of propositions.

The second model is the “Revelation as History” model. Fundamentally, this model asserts that God has primarily revealed himself in the history of salvation. That is the movement of God in the salvation of mankind. Described by G. Ernest White, “It is the task of biblical

\(^{1}\) Avery Dulles, Models of Revelation, (New York: Orbis), 47
theology to bring the Church constantly back to the simple recital of the acts of God as set forth in the biblical narrative.”

The third model is the “Revelation as Inner Experience” model. This model is held by those that would promote the idea that God is to be experienced in the bowels of religious experience. Much of this model promotes mysticism and private religious experience and expression and is a common experience shared by many world religions, not just Christianity, which Dulles asserts is a positive attribute of this model.

The fourth model is the “Revelation as a Dialectical Presence” model. This model promotes the idea that the written scripture is a means to the revelation of the person of Christ within the soul of a man or woman. Therefore, the revelation truly takes place when the words from scripture are united with the real presence of God, the truth is understood, and the hearer is transformed.

The fifth model is the “Revelation as a New Awareness”. This final model is essentially a perspective where “Revelation is a reflection of God in human consciousness” as described by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. In other words, God is more or less revealed as an individual ascends higher and higher in “consciousness” or “awareness” and through the movement of the individual through the world, God’s nature is then revealed in their responses to society. Karl Rahner said “revelation is the self-transcending movement of greater, of created reality toward ever greater freedom and self-possession”.

Given these elemental models of the nature of revelation, what precisely is the Biblical view of revelation for this age? It is no surprise that since God has blessed us in this age with “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places”, each one of these aspects of revelation

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3 Avery Dulles, *Models of Revelation*, (New York: Orbis), 78
4 G. Krieder, Dallas Theological Seminary, ST101 Class Lecture, Module 6, Video no.25
5 G. Krieder, Dallas Theological Seminary, ST101 Class Lecture, Module 6, Video no.25
plays apart in our Christian experience. Because we have a need for concrete moorings in our confusing world, God has given us doctrines that are found in the scriptures (revelation as doctrine). Because we have a need to understand our place in history, God has given us a beautiful heritage of stories of how he has worked in history to bring about the anticipated glories of the kingdom of his Christ (revelation as history). Because we need strength and comfort in times of trial, he has given us experiential revelation (in comfort, peace, etc) as we mediate upon his Word (revelation as experience). Because words on a page are truly not sufficient to transform our lowly flesh into effective weapons against the kingdom of darkness, he has promised us that the word of God is “living and active” and “sharper than any two edged sword” (revelation as Dialectical Presence). Because we are placed on this earth to be effective, because of the new awareness that has been placed within us, we do appear as “lights in the world” (revelation as New Awareness). So it can be seen to view the modern Christian’s experience with only one, two, or three of these models would be a dismal outlook and an incomplete picture of what we have truly been given in Christ.

So is our experience limited to simple words on the page in print that we intellectualize and argue about to impress people with how much we know (as shown in the doctrinal model)? Certainly not. There is no mistake that God doesn’t intend for us to be simply intellectual giants who can parse every Greek verb. There is a much greater reality that is coursing through our redeemed beings, and that is the power of the Holy Spirit.

What is the Power of the Holy Spirit?

Here is where this author believes that Christians today, including Jack Deere, have made a gross underestimation of the power of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of the triune Godhead, which is the great I AM – that which is the source of all things. It is an indisputable fact that all Christians are under the control of the Holy Spirit; as Romans 8:9 says, “anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him”. This is a strong statement – what this is saying is either you and I have the Holy Spirit living inside of us, or we
do not. This author must admit that there are many things that the Spirit has done through
individuals that are recorded in the pages of scripture – and it can be confusing to understand
exactly how these things are applied to each one of us today, in our context. Therefore, it is this
author’s desire to communicate those clear functions of the Spirit that are indisputable from
scripture.

What did Jesus say about the Spirit? When the disciples were gathered in the upper
room, Jesus was preparing them for his imminent departure. It is critical to remember who these
disciples are – they are those who will carry the very word of our Lord Jesus Christ into the
kingdom of darkness – they must be equipped. Through these men, even this student has
received salvation through their witness. Witness of what? They will be witnesses of the Ps. 2
Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection (see John 20:31). This is precisely what Jesus said in John
17:20 when he said “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me
through their word”. So these disciples must be equipped – God will operate through them by his
Holy Spirit that is unique to their office of apostle. For this reason, Jesus states the following
about the Spirit:

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your [the disciples] advantage that I go away,
for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to
you [the disciples]. And when he comes, he will convict the world [us] concerning sin
and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me;
concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;
concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.”

-John 16:7-11

What this scripture is telling us is that without the Holy Spirit, none of us would
perceive something as simple as our guilt before God and the truth that this world is headed for
the boneyard. It doesn’t take a very astute observer to see that unenlightened perspective of those
around us everyday is just that – an unconsciousness of the magnitude of their detestability
before a pure God and secondly, an eternal optimism about this world and all it has to offer.
Sadly, those of us who are Christians and are not walking with the Spirit can often follow into
this same trap – self righteousness and being lovers of this world. So, from the above paragraph, this author is making the case that when the all consuming fire of God comes upon a person, it creates a radical transformation that can be readily observed by others – this along should be a cause of great joy in the supernatural power of the spirit. What other evidences does the Bible give for those who are filled with the Spirit?

*What is the Evidence of the Holy Spirit?*

We have a very clear indication of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22; ”But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law”. And in Ephesians 5:18-19, “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Those who would have sensational signs from the Spirit often overlook the magnitude of what was said in the paragraph above. Those of us who have walked outside the Spirit’s influence know what it is to have our song removed from us – where the things of God no longer sound so rich or taste so sweet in our mouths. This spiritual apathy is an indication that we are not walking by the Spirit, but we have instead turned to self-righteousness (these two ideas are considered diametrically opposed in both Romans and Colossians).

Therefore, it is this author’s desire that the reader would understand that the work of the Spirit is all encompassing, rather than isolated blips on the radar screen, in between which God is “silent”*. Proverbs 20:27 says “The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all his innermost parts”. Each one of us is as a lamp that the power of God in the Holy Spirit desires to light in order to fill that individual with his thoughts, motivations, desires, patience, kindness, wisdom, and yes, even songs of praise upon a tongue that knew not the praise of its redeemer.

*J. Deere, *Surprised by the Voice of God*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan)
What a wonderful work that alone is – and this is the undisputed work of the Spirit in our hearts. This should be our pursuit – the character of God within us – Christ in us, the hope of glory.

But what about the extraordinary works of the Spirit? I would make the case here that those things are indeed extraordinary, and certainly not outside the abilities of the Spirit. But how should these extraordinary things be viewed in the scriptures?

*What about the Extraordinary Works of the Spirit?*

First, the extraordinary works of the Spirit had a purpose. In Hebrews 2:13, the author declares “how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.” The author of Hebrews is making the case that the salvation of God was confirmed by God in that the preaching of this salvation by those who heard (the disciples, or witnesses as discussed above) was accompanied by extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. There was a purpose behind the signs greater than the immediate function of the sign itself. To read otherwise is to understand that the purpose of the story of the book of Acts is to show us how we can raise the dead and heal the sick – for what purpose? So that they can die again? We are in a story, and the story is not over yet. The works done in the book of Acts, according to the author of Hebrews, were done to validate the teaching of the apostles. The dead were raised, not because Eutychus had some great mission to do, but because God desired to validate the word of Paul as the words of God. This pattern is well recognized in that the prophetic period of the Old Testament closed with the closing of the canon (and vice versa) and the apostolic age ended with the closing of the New Testament canon (and vice versa).

Second, the extraordinary works of the Spirit were bestowed often in a very surprising manner. For instance, at the day of Pentecost, the apostles were simply filled with the

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7 G. Kreider, Dallas Theological Seminary, ST101 Class Lecture, Module 9, no. 6
Holy Spirit and then immediately began speaking in tongues. Or, in Acts 10:44, those who heard the word had tongues fall on them immediately while Peter was still speaking. It was as if the fire of God came down upon them surprisingly. And what was the purpose of this interaction? It was to validate the legitimacy of the Gentiles’ inclusion in the family of God. We do not observe the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit in this way, unless of course, there is some abnormal expectation of this happening. These were Gentiles who knew absolutely not enough theology to either deny or confirm the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. Therefore, it seems as though an individual doesn’t necessarily have to ask for such a gift – it often comes completely unexpectedly and uninvited. The author is aware however, that in many cases spiritual gifts do need to be sought after – but, all this author is saying is that this is not necessarily the case.

_How Should We Process Extraordinary Claims?_

Because the Bible does not definitively say that extraordinary gifts of the Spirit cannot occur in this time period, we cannot definitely say that a prophetic word is _not_ from God unless the thing doesn’t come true (cf. Deuteronomy 18:22). If a “prophet” claims that they have a word from God, and the thing doesn’t come true, they have committed blasphemy and they are worthy of death according to the Mosaic law. If we have an impression, it could very well be the Holy Spirit that is working inside of us, rather than our flesh, and we should carefully evaluate the logical basis of this feeling _using normal thought processes_; the work of the Spirit should never be divorced from the mind or the thought process, since the Holy Spirit should work in harmony with these things (1st Corinthians 14:15). So, we should not exclude these things from happening, as we expect our lives to be supernatural if we are filled with the Spirit – we just may not be able to conclusively recognize when a prophetic impression is from God or not – an impression is an impression and needs to be dealt with as such (i.e., given _no_ authoritative voice) regardless of where it comes from.
Conclusion

In conclusion, the means by which God reveals himself is exceedingly broad and complex. Just as the scriptures are complex in their delivery (e.g., they are not simply a catalog of theological propositions), so is the means by which God reveals himself in the world. The work of the Spirit in a life is a total possession, not just random interventions of miraculous power, but is rather an all consuming fire, a two edged sword that pierces the heart when combined with the written Word of God. Can the Spirit lead and guide me? Most certainly – he lives inside me and consumes me – hopefully every thought, every action, every motivation, every action that we perform during the day is completely under his control – this makes my life as a whole a supernatural thing of eternal value. We can rest in this assurance when we employ the words of Psalm 37:5, “Commit your way to the LORD, trust in him, and he will act.” During the apostolic age, the going forth of the word of God was accompanied by extraordinary demonstrations of the Spirit’s power that were “distributed according to His will” for the purpose of validating this spread and distribution of the word of God. Yet while Paul says to “earnestly desire the higher gifts”, he says “I will show you a still more excellent way (1st Corinthians 12:31). That more excellent way is love, and that is the fruit of the Spirit.

Section 2 - The Position of Jack Deere

In this section, we will examine the position of Jack Deere in reference to his model of revelation, the validity of his specific arguments, and finally we will evaluate his specific usage of scripture.

Jack Deere’s Model of Revelation

Given the models of revelation previously discussed in the section above, Jack Deere’s model is unsurprisingly a hybrid, though his main motivation for writing the book Surprised by the Voice of God was to emphasize the “Revelation as an Inner Experience” model, and the “Revelation as a Dialectical Presence” models described in the section above. This is evidenced in such statements as “[the bible deist] doesn’t realize it, but it is more important to
him to know the Bible than to experience its truth” (representing the Inner Experience model), or this statement (representing the Dialectical Presence model):

Again and again the words of Jesus to the best biblical scholars of his day keep ringing in my ears. These people studied the Bible more than 99 percent of the people in the church today will ever study the Bible. They had more of the Bible memorized than 99 percent of the people in the church today will ever have memorized. Yet Jesus said to them: “And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life” (John 5:37-40)\(^8\)

In the quote above, Jack Deere is effectively saying that reading and studying the Bible is not enough, since this is effectively what the Pharisees did; in all that studying and reading, they missed the main point – the relationship with the person of Christ. So, the thesis of this paper is that Dr. Deere is advocating a renewed focus upon the Inner Experience and the Dialectical Models of revelation.

*Jack Deere’s Arguments*

In terms of dissecting the various arguments presented in this paper, we will specifically review three issues – Dr. Deere’s treatment of so called “Bible Deism”, his view of what is considered “normative” in the book of Acts, and finally, the issue of authority that is died to revelation.

First we will examine the treatment of the so-called “Bible Deist”. The Bible Deist is characterized by Deere as one who leans on intellectual prowess in order to understand the character of God, while denying the workings of the Holy Spirit actively in and among believers today. He writes “The deists of the eighteenth century worshiped human reason. The Bible deists of today worship the Bible. Bible deists have great difficulty separating Christ and the Bible.

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\(^8\) J. Deere, *Surprised by the Voice of God*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan)
Unconsciously in their minds the Bible and Christ merge into one entity. Christ cannot speak or be known apart from the Bible.”

Dr. Deere was formerly in the camp of Bible Deism, and he describes a major realization of this that he had while in a prayer meeting with his elders. They started to realize that no one was being helped by the fellowship of their church – no marriages saved, no depressed people getting off their medications, etc…in fact, they concluded that they themselves would likely not attend their own church. They concluded, however, that their main strength was that they were “the best Bible teachers in the city”. Dr. Deere uses this conclusion to show the shortcomings of Bible study, without the power of the Spirit. The flaw in this argument is that it is fundamentally a “straw-man”. While it is true that many churches believe that their understanding of the scriptures is superior, I would contend that it truly isn’t a superior understanding of the scriptures at all – based on Dr. Deere’s own words, how can you understand the scriptures without the Spirit? For, when one understands the scriptures, one understands the very heart of God – the all-excelling love of our Creator – Godly wisdom. Can you have wisdom and not have God? Impossible. Dr. Deere is defining the Bible deists as those that effectively only exercise the “Revelation as Doctrine”, which excludes the power of the Spirit and its role in the correct interpretation of the scriptures by a fleshly mind. This topic will be revisited in the biblical accuracy section of this paper.

The next issue is the issue of normative behavior in the book of Acts. Deere’s position is that the extraordinary experiences found in the book of Acts in the New Testament are to be considered as examples of the way that life should be conducted now. To bolster this opinion, he quotes Dr. Gerald Hawthorne, Professor of Greek and New Testament Exegesis at Wheaton College saying “There is no reason whatsoever to believe that what was true of those earliest Christians is any less true of Christians in this century”. This author would submit that one primary reason is that, as noted previously, the author of Hebrews provides the reason for these extraordinary signs (cf. Hebrews 2:4) and that reason was for God to bear witness to the salvation that was being revealed in the last time. The purpose of the raising of the dead and the
speaking in tongues and the prophetic words were in conjunction with the expansion of the gospel in connection with Acts 1:8. So, the book of Acts is a narrative about the apostolic message going forth, validated by extraordinary signs and miracles. If this is the case (and it appears to be), would we expect to see similar signs today? Under this argumentation, Dr. Hawthorne’s conclusion does not hold up. There is no question that God can do the extraordinary – the question is why is God or why would God be doing the extraordinary. The author would add a third question to this – why isn’t God doing the extraordinary in this age as he did in Acts. This leads us to another fallacious argument in the book – the assertion that the reason the extraordinary doesn’t happen surprisingly because of unbelief. The question of belief in the Bible was never over if Jesus would do a miracle, it was over whether or not he could do a miracle. The author’s position before Jesus is “Lord, if you will, you can make me clean”. This is not a statement of unbelief – it is a statement of belief with submission to the will of God.

Finally, we will examine Dr. Deere’s view of authority and revelation. Revelation is exactly that – God concretely revealing something about himself. If God has revealed himself, then the prophesy is true. The idea of truth carries the understanding that the prophesy “measures up” to a certain standard – in this case, the standard is the reality of God’s natures and his desires.

If a prophecy is true, then that revelation comes with unmatched authority. The dictionary defines authority as follows: “the right to determine, adjudicate, or otherwise settle issues or disputes; the right to control, command, or determine”\(^9\). Any statement or idea that carries authority is one that must be acted upon or suffer consequences for failing to do so.

If then, under the Inner Experience Model of revelation, one has a certain feeling in their gut that they should stop and talk to such and such a person on the side of the road, then

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\(^9\) N. Wolterstorff. “True Words” in But is it All True?: The Bible and the Question of Truth, edited by Alan G. Padgett, Patrick R. Keifert (Grand Rapids/Cambridge, Eerdmans Publishing Co.), 42

\(^{10}\) C.L. Barnhart, J. Stein, The American College Dictionary, (New York: Random House, Inc), 84
God has revealed this to them, and they should immediately stop and talk to that person, lest they be found in disobedience. That is the level of authority that comes from conclusive revelation from God – because it is from God it must carry the highest level of authority.

It would seem in this book that Dr. Deere is ambivalent about whether or not these prophetic words have authority. In one setting, he says that a word came to a woman with great authority in saying “my time is wise”. Dr. Deere writes “...those four little words – “My time is wise” came with such authority that it dispelled the mother’s anguish and brought great comfort to her.” In another place, he writes “Please don’t misunderstand me. I am not saying that we should make our experience a higher standard of truth than Scripture. Nor am I saying that experience and Scripture are equal standards of authority for us…” Indeed, the very definition of the canon of scripture is, by definition, writings with divine authority.

The question is not whether prophetic words have the same level of authority as the scriptures; the question is whether prophetic words (as they are defined in this book) have any authority at all! To this author’s knowledge, there is no instance in this book where an example of a prophesy is given where Dr. Deere connected disobedience to the prophesy with disobedience to God. Because we are dealing with the words of God, if God said it, it has all and unmatched authority. If God did not say it, then it has no authority. So the subtle fact that Dr. Deere never cautions against disobedience from a prophetic word means that there is no way to validate that any “prophetic word” comes from God. In Old Testament times, the word of the prophet carried the authority of God. This was because the prophets were 100% accurate; otherwise they would be dead (cf. Duet 18).

Jack Deere’s Biblical Accuracy

In the remaining section of this paper, we will examine three scripture passages that Dr. Deere utilizes to make his points – John 5:37-40, Acts 1:8, and Joel 2:28-32.

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First John 5:37-40 - this is the primary verse that Dr. Deere utilizes to make his case against Bible Deism. In this passage, Jesus is accusing the Pharisees of searching the scriptures because they think that in them they find life, when in reality, the scriptures testify of Jesus who is standing right before them, who is life himself. Dr. Deere reminds us that the Pharisees studied the scriptures all the time, and they missed Jesus. The author would content that the point of the passage is not that the scriptures are not sufficient to lead someone to Christ, but rather it is an illustration that the Pharisees did not understand the meaning of the scriptures. The contrary example of this is Simeon, who both knew the scriptures and then subsequently recognized the person of Jesus as being the consolation of Israel, the fulfillment of the scriptures.

Second, Acts 1:8 – this scripture is used by Jack Deere to infer that the apostles were the “first witnesses”. This appears to be an unintentional sleight of hand, given that Jesus in this passage does not say “and you shall be my first witnesses”; rather Jesus says, “you shall be my witnesses”. What are they witnesses of? They are witnesses of the death, burial, and the resurrection of the Christ. The average believer today is not equipped to be a witness of the death, burial, and the resurrection of Jesus. This makes the apostles (or, the “sent ones”) unique in the program of God, and truly the apostolic age is a unique age that follows the time that Jesus physically walked this earth.

Finally, Joel 2:28-32 – this passage, quoted by the apostle Peter in Acts 2:17-21, prescribes in one statement the program for the last days – the day of the Lord, the great and magnificent day. Jack Deere makes the point that this ushered in new age of revelation – that is that all people would be given the ability to prophesy and to see visions and dream dreams and make interpretation of such. He uses this example: “I have talked to a number of prophetically gifted people who began to have supernatural experiences at very early age. In the last days this will become a very common experience according to the prophet Joel. He foresaw a time when “your sons and daughters will prophesy”. Truly, the apostles were a partial fulfillment of this truth, but this in no way conveys that the fullness of this prophesy was to happen immediately or throughout the entire age. It just simply means that the experience of the apostles was a partial
fulfillment or even a sign of the prophesy. It is for this reason that we do not see “wonders in the heavens above” or “blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke” or “the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood”. While there are certain elements of this prophesy that are true unilateraly, many of these things are yet to occur and not demonstrably not a normative characterization of the entire age.

**Conclusion**

While Dr. Deere writes a well-developed and compelling defense for charismatic thought, this author concludes and demonstrated above that there are several arguments and biblical references that are not accurately characterized in the text of *Surprised by the Voice of God*.

The author’s view of the inner experience of a Christian is one that is certainly under the control of the Holy Spirit, but the outworkings of this are highly mysterious, can be astounding, but cannot conclusively be acted upon with authority, as the scriptures provide no means for us to verify their veracity and that they truly have God as their source.

Therefore, it is considered that the primary departure point between this author and Dr. Deere is the issue of authority. One can have wide variety of experiences, but the questions remain – are these experiences truly “revelation”? If they are truly revelation, then they are without question, on the level of the authority with scripture.

This author would encourage believers to learn that which is the more excellent way, which is love. We become more loving and more Christlike as we become more and more under the control of the Spirit, who transforms us from one state of glory to the next as we behold the glory of the LORD in his Word (cf. 2*Corinthians* 3:18).
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