All of us want a closer, more vital union with Christ. When we read in the Bible of God’s special gifts of his Spirit, we naturally yearn for such experiences for ourselves. This appeal to our desire for a visible, evident relation to God powerfully motivates many Christians.

The modern charismatic movement capitalizes on this desire. It promises miracles—healings and other miracles to be done in the plain light of day. Many claim the gift of prophecy and other windows into the unknown. And, of course, all are promised the gift of speaking in tongues. Modern churches that miss out on these gifts, they say, are dry and dying. Christians may stumble along without these gifts, they tell us, but they are missing the joy and blessing and power that should be theirs.

We believe, on the other hand, that these supernatural gifts had particular purposes at the time they were given by God, and that, since the time of the apostles, they have ceased. We do not expect a recurrence of such miraculous signs until the time of Christ’s return. This position has been called “cessationist,” and we accept this designation.

In this issue of the *WRS Journal* Joshua Musyoka begins with an excellent survey of the gifts and graces given by the Spirit that are mentioned in the NT. Then three members of our faculty, Chris Lensch, Len Pine, and I, discuss each of the three major supernatural gifts that are disputed today. Finally, William Kane offers a careful review of a classic book on this subject by B. B. Warfield. We hope that you and we will be strengthened in faith and our Christian lives, not by seeking miraculous gifts, but by the faithful application of the means of grace God has given us—the Word, the sacraments, and prayer. These are the ways the Spirit works today.