

## Sharing the Faith Journey in your home

### Spiritual Traditions Part 4: Charismatic Tradition

By Beth Barnett

Richard Foster's book *Streams of Living Water* and the *Renovare Spiritual Traditions Workbook* for small groups encourages us to reflect on the different ways that people have practiced their discipleship in different ways, in different times and places, contexts and challenges over the centuries. Six major 'traditions' or 'spiritual orientations' or 'ways' are identified:

Contemplative  
Incarnational  
Holiness

Evangelical  
Social Justice  
Charismatic

We are invited to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the traditions we have been fostered in, followed or found. And we are resourced to draw on patterns other than our own. Together, all six of the traditions reflect an image of Christ. And we do well to pursue and respect each of them, as well as accept our limitations in them and recognise that we are only part of the body of Christ, and genuinely need others who function differently to us to complete the whole incarnation and presence of Christ in the world.

Pick one or a few of the following activities and try it with your household, and see what happens. Let us know how you go, or if you have a story to share...

You will need:

Music to dance to (eg: Planetshakers)  
Printed passages from the Bible  
Balloons  
Small gift bags/boxes and paper

### Practicing the Charismatic Tradition

The social justice tradition challenges 21st century Western Christians in two dynamic ways. Firstly, in it being SOCIAL justice. That is, it addresses our spirituality

Children can be especially good mentors for the disciplines of the Charismatic Tradition, with their openness to spontaneity and joy, abandonment to the moment and appetite for adventure.

So if you share your living space with children, watch and learn, and encourage.

The Charismatic tradition is especially good for those of us who are highly rule, routine and structure dependent. There is nothing wrong with those things (I hear God even has a few rules!) but they are not the full extent of God's ways. Despite centuries now of Christianity being an official organised religion, the Charismatic tradition continues to remind us that the work of the Spirit in the world is not confined to what happens officially in churches, in structured programs, in things that are even overtly labelled Christian or in those wearing WWJD apparel. The Spirit is not contained by our rules and orders. At times in history it has been the Charismatic tradition that has brought down the walls of structured injustice, as in the Azusa Street Revivals which birthed the modern Pentecostal movement.

### Read together:

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be with us, teaching us, helping and encouraging us, giving us the things we need to help one another and live well together in God's good ways. He could have left us a set of rules and instructions, but instead he's given us the Spirit. So that makes following Jesus a bit unpredictable! Jesus said the Spirit is like a breeze that blows. Who knows what gifts the Spirit will give? Who knows what the Spirit will say to us? We actually don't know, but we know that it will be good, because it comes from God. The Spirit is full of surprises, so strap yourself in and prepare for the rollercoaster ride!

### What are the activities of the charismatic tradition?

Spontaneity and surprise, emotions of joy, conviction and wonder, risk taking and adventure, listening and discerning.



### Some things to do together

#### Crazy Dancing

Get out a Planetshakers, Hillsong United, Snack Music, Johnny Burns or Colin Buchanan CD, crank it up to 11 and have a dance around the living room.

If you need some context, read the story of David dancing in 2 Kings 6.

#### 312 Azusa Street

Find out a bit about the Azusa Street revivals. Develop your understanding of how the Charismatic and Social justice traditions work in harmony. For a basic introduction check out the Wikipedia entry:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Azusa\\_Street\\_Revival](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Azusa_Street_Revival)



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### Gifts of the Spirit

Celebrate the Gifts of the Spirit in your household. Collect some small gift boxes or bags - one for each person in your household.

Tag each one with a name. Gather and read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. Remind yourselves that this is only a list of some of the gifts the Spirit gave to the Corinthians, and there are lots of others. Give each person several small pieces of paper. Each person writes a gift of the spirit they can see in each other person in the household, and places it into the bag tagged with that person's name. After all the bags have been filled with 'gifts' distribute the bags and allow each person to read the gifts that the household has affirmed in them.

### Fruit of the Spirit

Chop up some pieces of fruit on a platter. Stick a toothpick into each piece and add a label of one of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness or self-control to each pick.

At the end of your meal each person in turn takes a piece of fruit, reads out the 'fruit of the spirit' on the label and either tells of a way in which that fruit is evident in your household, or prays for the household to grow in that kind of spirit-fruitiness.



### Bible Balloons

Print out some of the Lectionary passages from the Bible from Bible Gateway. Cut them into 3-5 verse sections, roll them up and put each passage inside a balloon. Blow up the balloons and suspend them in your living space. At any time, a household member may take a balloon down, burst it and read the Bible surprise inside. We wouldn't want this to be the only way we read the Bible, but it does allow the spirit to 'burst' in with joy and serendipity. This might be an individual reading, or perhaps hear the text as something speaking to you collectively as a household.

### Winds of the Spirit Weather Watch

Try tracking the directions of the wind in your area for a week. Keep a weather journal from information from the paper or the web. As you try to track the meteorological winds, think about the intensity, gentleness, effects, directions of the Holy Spirit.



1 Praise the LORD and pray in his name!

Tell everyone what he has done.

2 Sing praises to the LORD! Tell about his miracles.

3 Celebrate and worship his holy name with all your heart.

4 Trust the LORD and his mighty power.

5 Remember his miracles and all his wonders and his fair decisions.

6 You belong to the family of Abraham, his servant; you are his chosen ones, the descendants of Jacob.



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