

Editorial: People of the Spirit



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Nearly ninety-three years ago, Elmer and Clara Fisher, leaders in the Azusa Street Revival, welcomed their grandson, Stanley M. Horton, into the world. That boy would grow to become the premier theologian of the AG, a professor for nearly five decades, a prolific writer, and world lecturer—his scholarly contributions impacting the larger Pentecostal world in ways beyond measure.

Perhaps even more profound than the wisdom evident in his academic insights, however, is the Spirit-empowered graciousness that has marked Dr. Horton's character. His personal faith in a God with a plan for His people and the world—and his belief in Spirit-empowerment to see that plan fulfilled—stands as an important example for Pentecostal leaders in these uncertain days of economic and political upheaval. In times such as these, those engaged in Kingdom expansion around the world will do well to look to the wisdom of our Pentecostal elders—those “people of the spirit” (to use Gary McGee's phrase)¹—who have weathered numerous storms and continued steadfast in the faith.

Most of the contributors to this issue have been impacted in one way or another by the life and work of this man.

It seemed fitting, then, as AGTS prepares to honor Dr. Horton with an endowment initiative in 2009,² to present one aspect of his multi-faceted theology as our feature article. Originally written as a chapter for Horton's upcoming biography,³ Dr. Ray Gannon's article portrays Horton's longstanding commitment to Israel and clear understanding of the important relationship between Israel and the Church.

Additionally, this issue of *Encounter* offers an award-winning student paper and six inaugural lectures. Each year, The Stanley Horton Award for the Outstanding Theological Studies Seminar Paper is presented to a worthy AGTS M.A.T.S. graduate. Jeff Green, winner of the 2008 award, wrote on “Torah and the Disciple of Jesus.” Addressing such oversimplifications as “law” vs. “grace” and the misrepresentation of “the law” as negative, Jeff presents a refreshing look at the beauty of Torah, its universality and permanence, and its meaning in the life of the believer.

With Azusa as a backdrop and an example of a revival that provided the impetus for world mission and evangelism in the twentieth century, it is

fitting that the inaugural lectures in this issue all sound the clarion call to continue in the twenty-first century to carry out the Church's mission with Spirit empowerment. Three of the lectures are by Dr. Mark Hausfeld, who served as the Seminary's second J. Philip Hogan Chair of World Missions, during the 2007-2008 academic year. His "Islam in America" series presents a strategy for the local church to "meet America's Muslims in their own theological, historical, and cultural contexts so that we can strategically bless them with the gospel."⁴ Mark's words are not just academic theory. He has lived those words here in America and across the 10/40 window—seeing many Muslims come to faith in Christ.

The fall 2008 semester marked the beginning of Dr. Stephen Lim's tenure as Academic Dean at AGTS. His inaugural lecture, "Mission in a Rapidly Changing World" calls a "stalled" American Church to become servant

leaders "with knowledge, skills, and passion"⁵ who can live out their mission of revitalizing the Church and evangelizing the world in the power of the Spirit.

"Fulfilling the Apostolic Mandate in Apostolic Power" was the theme of Dr. DeLonn Rance's three-part inaugural lectures as he became the seminary's third J. Philip Hogan Chair of World Missions in the fall of 2008. The first two lectures, "Seeking a Spirit-Driven Missiology and Praxis" and "Apostolic Leadership in a Spirit-Driven Missiology and Praxis" are presented here; the third is forthcoming in *Encounter's* Summer 2009 issue. Dr. Rance concluded his first lecture with a moving illustration of a church of homeless people in San Francisco doing just that—carrying out the apostolic mandate in apostolic power. Listen for yourself: http://www.agts.edu/news/news_archive/s/2008_10rance_lecture.html and prepare to set your excuses aside.



As 2008 comes to a close, the Seminary community acutely feels the loss of our colleague and friend, [Dr. Gary McGee](#), who went to be with the Lord on December 10. Gary lived life well as a person of the Spirit. Devoted to making church history come alive for the present generation, he reminded everyone around him—family, friends, students, and colleagues—to look to the past to better understand ourselves and to appreciate the spiritual resources available for facing the present. As Stanley Horton's life story and the articles in this issue will confirm, what is necessary to carry out our mission in the twenty-first century is no different from the first or twentieth centuries. If we are to do this, we must be people of the Spirit.

¹Gary B. McGee, *People of the Spirit: The Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2004).

²See <http://www.agts.edu/more/horton> after January 8, 2009.

³*Stanley M. Horton: Shaper of Pentecostal Theology* by Lois E. Olena, to be released by Gospel Publishing House in April 2009. Gannon's version of this piece for the biography will be on a more popular level and will also focus on Horton's pneumatology and eschatology.

⁴Mark Hausfeld, "Islam in America: Developing Strategy to Reach Diaspora Muslims through the Local Church Part I," (Second J. Philip Hogan Chair Address, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, MO, November 14, 2007), 7. Due to the sensitive nature of his topic, these lectures are available by [direct request](#) only.

⁵Stephen Lim, "Mission in a Rapidly Changing World," (Convocation Address, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, MO, August 28, 2008), 7.