

**Pentecostalism and Mission**  
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The centennial year of 2006 provides for Pentecostals worldwide an opportunity to rejoice, reflect and resolve:

- Rejoice at the goodness of God whose transforming power still rearranges the fabric of human beings, setting them free to live under Kingdom rule
- Reflect on a pathway of mission that has been at times circuitous and even counterproductive; at times triumphalistic, yet largely effective throughout its first century of existence
- Resolve not to be frustrated at the larger Christian world that, all too often, still wavers between patronization and mere curiosity about Pentecostalism, though the DNA of the Christianity in the majority world and the 21<sup>st</sup> century is dominated by Pentecostal/Charismatic qualities.<sup>1</sup>

### **From Whence We Came**

One cannot speak of Pentecostalism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century without giving some attention to the roots of the movement. The centennial has certainly highlighted varying opinions about the fountainheads of the Pentecostal movements. Historiographical perspectives are varied with Charles Parham and William Seymour as examples of key figures for dialogue. Azusa Street as a primary source for Pentecostalism versus a perspective that there were contemporaneous but disconnected sets of sources is discussed with great passion.<sup>2</sup> Ample room exists for further research.

Most pertinent to the development of Pentecostals is the seedbed of spiritual influences that are at work from the middle part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century throughout the remainder of the century. This confluence of spiritual “winds” is necessary to understand how the

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Shaull and Waldo Cesar, *Pentecostalism and the Future of the Christian Churches*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publisher, 2000). See also Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1995), and Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> Sources for the Parham Seymour comparison would be James Goff, *White Unto Harvest: Charles Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism*, (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas, 1988) and Cecil Robeck, *Azusa Street: Mission and Revival* (Nashville: Nelson 2006). The Azusa Street versus multiple fountainhead discussion can be seen in Edith Blumhofer’s “Revisiting Azusa Street: A Centennial Retrospect” in *International Bulletin of Missions Research*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 59-69. Allan Anderson also deals with the multiple fountainhead discussion in an *Introduction to Global Pentecostalism*. A much earlier discussion of the multiple fountainhead perspective is seen in *Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*. Karla Poewe, ed. *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994).

spirituality and theology of *Pentecostals* emerges at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Several streams of influence would include the following:

- The Wesleyan–Holiness influence roots itself in the Christian perfection emphasis. In this particular stream of influence on the Pentecostal movement, *the power of the Holy Spirit takes control of a person’s life to bring about entire sanctification: a vessel fit for God’s using.*<sup>3</sup>
- The Keswick influence with a root in J. N. Darby’s emphasis on the second coming of Christ, provides a significant link between Spirit Baptism and urgent evangelistic effort. This “baptism of the Holy Spirit” is a crisis experience not to sanctify, but *to empower people for service so that all may hear the Gospel before Christ’s return.*<sup>4</sup>
- The Millennial influence yielded a focus on the imminent return of Christ as the only solution to the world’s dilemmas. It was those socially marginalized people of the day who understood clearly the call *for a people radically committed to the cause of Christ, where the eternal purposes of God have already defeated the powers of this world.*<sup>5</sup>
- Restorationist primitivist influences anticipated the emergence of a New Testament church—the true Church restored. Expectancy was the watchword of a people who felt that their destiny was to serve *the “restored” church during the final thrust in the harvest field before Christ’s return.*<sup>6</sup>
- The multi-cultural dimension of Pentecostal beginnings critiques attempts to purport that the white Pentecostal movement is normative for incipient Pentecostalism. William Seymour preached a message which highlighted the empowerment of Spirit Baptism as the necessary force by which a new type of community where race, gender and ethnicity would not be categories for division. This multicultural perspective can be summarized as *focusing on a new community of justice and equity, a foretaste of “glory divine” for ethnic minorities living in Jim Crow America.* The anticipation and participation in this new community as a full member certainly could be viewed as a liberating experience by any definition.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> William Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Theology* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 85-90, 96-114.

<sup>4</sup> Douglas Petersen, *Not by Might Nor by Power* (Irvine: Regnum Books, 1996), 19-21.

<sup>5</sup> Robert M. Anderson provides an apologetic for the Second Coming as the most significant of Pentecostal themes in the *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). See also Donald Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Francis and Taylor, 1987) and William Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Theology* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> See Grant Wacker, “Playing for Keeps” in R. T. Hughes ed. *The American Quest for the Primitive Church*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 196-219.

<sup>7</sup> See David Daniel’s “Dialogue Between Black and Hispanic Pentecostal Scholars: A Report and Some Personal Reflections,” *Pnuema* 17 (Fall 1995), 219-228. A vigorous proponent of the African roots of Pentecost is Walter Hollenweger, see *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 46-48.

Christian history is filled with the ebb and flow of emphasis on the Holy Spirit. A clear picture of Pentecostal identity is most obvious when we consider the streams of spiritual renewal that influence the incipient stage of the Pentecostal movement's emergence. The very short summary above, of theological and social forces influencing the emergence of the Pentecostal Movement, provides an initial rationale for why early Pentecostals forge a very close relationship between the Baptism of the Holy Spirit as empowerment for service (Acts 1:8), a keen hope in the soon return of Christ (I Thess. 4:1-16) and Christ's command to evangelize to the uttermost (Mt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-20). Most significant to consideration of Pentecostal missiology is the contribution that each of these described streams of influence make to a Pentecostal "pathos" of urgency and emphasis on supernatural empowerment for world evangelization. The common thread in this stream of influence is the sovereign gift of power that God is using in a significant new chapter in this stage of redemptive history. A sense of participation in a story of eschatological significance, supported by the supernatural Spirit empowerment(s) creates a strong sense of destiny in the Pentecostal identity. Only the divine intrusion of the Spirit of God is viewed as adequate for the eternal resource for end time harvest (Zechariah 4:6).<sup>8</sup>

### **The First Century: A Moment of Reflection**

As we look at an initial reflection on mission throughout Pentecostals' first century of existence, we can view recurring and overlapping themes that gain refinement and clarity. Grant McClung suggests that an initial Pentecostal missiological formulation was from William J. Seymour, the leader at the Azusa Street Mission. The revealing exhortation by Seymour simply says, "Now, do not go from this meeting and talk about tongues, but try to get people saved." McClung posits that at the heart of early Pentecostals' understanding of mission was their personal experience with the Holy Spirit found around an altar of prayer. This profound encounter was integrated with an eschatological urgency and a passion and empowerment for the evangelism of humankind. This confluence of dynamic themes reveals mission as understood by early Pentecostals.<sup>9</sup>

Building on this basic formulation by William J. Seymour, McClung has further described the nature of Pentecostals and missions by describing it as follows. Pentecostal mission is:

- **Biblical**—marked by an exactness in affirming a literal interpretation of the Bible. Such a perspective can be seen in William Seymour's statement that "We're measuring everything by the Word, every experience must measure up with the Bible. Some say this is going too far, but if we have lived too

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<sup>8</sup> More complete description is available in my recent publication of "The Holy Spirit and Mission in Eschatological Perspective: A Pentecostal Perspective" in *PNEUMA*, Vol. 27 No. 7, 325-328.

<sup>9</sup> First published in *Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*. ed. Murray Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1999). (Republished in *Azusa Street & Beyond*, edited by Grant McClung, (Gainesville, Florida: Bridge-Logos, 2006), 1-22.

- close to the Word, we will settle that with the Lord when we meet Him in the air.”<sup>10</sup>
- Passionate—The experience certified notion of Pentecostal spirituality is a hallmark of Pentecostalism. Passive spirituality is neither acceptable nor normative. Participation in God’s end-time harvest is an experience we have been liberated to participate in.<sup>11</sup>
  - In the power of the Holy Spirit—The Holy Spirit is personally and powerfully present to orchestrate the continuing redemptive ministry of Jesus Christ to the uttermost parts of the earth: This is typified in legendary Pentecostal missions executive J. Philip Hogan’s affirmation of reliance on the Holy Spirit in all aspects of missions as he says, “It is the Holy Spirit that calls, it is the Holy Spirit that inspires, it is the Holy Spirit that reveals and the Holy Spirit that administers.”<sup>12</sup>
  - Christo-centric—Less than thorough evaluation of the Pentecostal Movement will sometimes yield a moniker of Spirit-centeredness. Even cursory investigation will conclude the opposite. Early Pentecostal leader Frank Bartleman noted: “We may not hold a doctrine or seek an experience except in Christ. Any work that exalts the holy as gifts above Jesus will land up in fanaticism. Whatever causes us to exalt and love Jesus is well and safe. The Holy Ghost is a great gift, but focused on Jesus always for his revealing.”<sup>13</sup>
  - Urgent—Eschatological urgency is at the heart of understanding the missionary fervor of Pentecostals. Early Pentecostal J. Roswell Flower typified this urgency by testifying that, “we were impressed that the time was so short that the heathen in the neglected parts of the earth would scarcely have time to hear before Jesus should come.”<sup>14</sup>

These descriptions are helpful to give texture to a theology of mission, which was certainly more “acted out” than “codified.” The nexus of Holy Spirit empowerment of worldwide evangelism with eschatological urgency occurs at a unique juncture in mission history. The 19<sup>th</sup> century had just been completed and it was being described as the “Great Century” for mission efforts. Early Pentecostal missionaries are those who, in many cases, had already served the *civilizing as Christianizing* mission strategy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The newfound urgency that came with Pentecostal experience caused many to question the necessity of the structures that had accompanied 19<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Apostolic Faith*, June to Sept 1907 (Vol. I, No. 9), 1.

<sup>11</sup> Paul N. Van Der Laan, “Dynamics in Pentecostal Mission: A Dutch Perspective,” *International Review of Mission* 75, No. 298 (1986), 47-50.

<sup>12</sup> Everett Wilson, *Strategy of the Spirit: J. Philip Hogan and the Growth of the Assemblies of God Worldwide 1959-1990* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 1998), 127.

<sup>13</sup> William Menzies, *Anointed to Serve* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1971), 55.

<sup>14</sup> J. Roswell Flower, *The Pentecost*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (August 1908), 4.

century mission efforts. The building of schools and hospitals did not seem prudent when Jesus' return was imminent.

Alice Luce, an early Pentecostal writer on mission strategy, summarized the perspective of many of these early missions participants when she said, "When we go forth to preach the Full Gospel, are we going to expect an experience like that of denominational missionaries or shall we look for signs to follow?"<sup>15</sup> Luce is quite succinct in her statement. The urgency of the hour requires nothing less than the preaching of the Gospel and an accompanying belief in the necessity of signs and wonders along with that proclamation. (Another reason why the Mark 16:15-20 Great Commission passage is quoted as much as the Matthew 28:19-20 passage, regardless of the critical issues surrounding verses 9-20 in the earliest of manuscripts.)

Early Pentecostals do look for ways to conceptualize their experience surrounding mission. A critic of 19<sup>th</sup> century mission theology and strategy, Roland Allen, becomes a guiding light of early Pentecostal mission efforts. Allen's emphasis on the Pauline pattern of church planting as seen in the Book of Acts is a template for Pentecostal action. The work by Roland Allen is a welcome framework for these early Pentecostals who affirm that God had restored signs and wonders for an end time harvest worldwide.<sup>16</sup>

An exclusive focus on the *kerygmatic* dimension of the Gospel becomes the centerpiece of Pentecostal mission priorities throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The most concise book written by a Pentecostal that brings together this particular pathos of urgent evangelistic effort empowered by the Holy Spirit and focused on the planting of church as the central task of mission effort is the classic volume *The Indigenous Church* by Melvin Hodges, published in 1953. Taking the influence of Henry Venn, John Nevius and particularly Roland Allen, Hodges clarifies why Pentecostals so intentionally mold the priorities of planting churches and the establishment of the churches to be indigenous in the three-self models.<sup>17</sup> The personification of Pentecostal missiology seen in Hodges' *Indigenous Church* is given further credence in the 1985 publishing of the *Third Force in Missions* by Paul Pomerville. Pomerville is quite direct in his affirmation that the historical emphasis on the Holy Spirit in mission had necessitated Pentecostalism's emergence as a renewal movement emphasizing the neglected dimension of the Holy Spirit's movement.<sup>18</sup> Pomerville says, "As a renewal movement

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<sup>15</sup> Everett Wilson and Ruth Marshall Wilson, "Alice E. Luce: A Visionary Victorian" in *Portraits of a Generation: Early Pentecostal Leaders*, James R. Goff, Jr. and Grant Wacker, eds. (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2002), 159-176.

<sup>16</sup> Roland Allen's published books that had significant early impact on Pentecostals included *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours* (London: Robert Scott, 1912), *Essential Missionary Principles* (London: Robert Scott, 1913), and *Pentecost and the World: The Revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles* (London: Oxford University Press, 1917).

<sup>17</sup> Melvin Hodges, *The Indigenous Church* (Springfield, Gospel Publishing House, 1953). For a more complete insight into the significance of Hodges as a Pentecostal missiologist, see Gary McGee, "The Legacy of Melvin Hodges," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 22, No. 1 (January 1998).

<sup>18</sup> Paul Pomerville, *The Third Force in Mission* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985), 63-78.

emphasizing a neglected dimension of the Holy Spirit's ministry, Pentecostals set the subtle influence of post-Reformation Protestant Scholastics in bold relief. It is at this point that Pentecostalism's 'God with us' experience makes its major contribution to contemporary mission.<sup>19</sup>

Gary McGee's work on the history of Pentecostal mission has posited the discontinuity between 19<sup>th</sup> century mission strategy and the "radical strategy" expected in early Pentecostal efforts focused on the *kerygmatic* aspect of mission. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was an era when the fullest implications of the Enlightenment and colonization were evident in mission strategy. For example, the renowned Scottish missionary to India, Alexander Duff, stated clearly in 1839 the "missionaries of the Church of Scotland have been sent forth in the absence of miracles." The secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society from England declared in 1860, "Divest the apostles of miraculous power and you have the modern missionary, a true successor to the apostles."<sup>20</sup> Miraculous power was to be replaced by the blessing of higher civilization. The optimism of post-millennialism in the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century nurtured the hope that conversion and civilizing worked in tandem to lead the heathen out of darkness.<sup>21</sup> The "radical strategy" of Pentecostal mission is actually a critique on the missions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that viewed the missionary of that century as equal to the New Testament apostles, sans miracles. Voices like A.B. Simpson and A.J. Gordon emerge toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and decry the slow pace of missions. The alliance of spiritual empowerment and world evangelization is championed by Pentecostals who view this as a renewal of apostolic priorities dependent on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

A short caveat in this renewed alliance of spiritual empowerment and world evangelization is seen in Charles Parham's alignment of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of "missionary tongues" as "an example of their affirmation of the empowerment for missionary service" dimension of the Holy Spirit and tongues. While this particular alliance is short-lived, it does testify to the focus of Pentecostals and their penchant toward the Pentecostal nexus of Spirit Baptism, empowerment for missionary service and the impending return of Jesus Christ.<sup>22</sup>

While the Pentecostal nexus previously described remained central to any Pentecostal theology of mission during the 20<sup>th</sup> century there are stages of interaction with other issues which certainly impact and flavor that theology. Grant McClung offers the

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 79.

<sup>20</sup> Gary McGee, "The Radical Strategy in Modern Missions: The Linkage of Paranormal Phenomena with Evangelism" in *The Holy Spirit and Mission Dynamics*, C. Douglas McConnell, ed. (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1997), 69-95. Also see Gary McGee, "Miracles and Mission Revisited" in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (October 2001), 146-149.

<sup>21</sup> McGee, "Radical Strategy," 70.

<sup>22</sup> Gary McGee, "Taking the theological 'a little farther': Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Reformers on the Gift of Tongues in Mission-Related Literature and their Influence on Early Pentecostalism," In *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 9 (January 2006), 99-125.

following summary of the movement from the fringes to the participation starting with the decade of the 1940's.

### **Decade of the 1940s**

- *Initial Recognition of Pentecostal Church Growth*
- A 1943 World Missionary Council Study included a study of Brazilian Pentecostals which concludes that Pentecostals were suited to the task of evangelizing the masses of Brazil.

### **The Decade of the 1950s**

- *Formal Pentecostal Missiological Reflection*
- The publishing of *The Indigenous Church* in 1953 by Melvin Hodges.
- In 1954, Leslie Newbigin published *The Knowledge of God* in which he said Pentecostals should be seen as "The Community of the Holy Spirit."
- In 1958, President of Union Seminary, Henry Van Dusen calls Pentecostals the "Third Force in Christendom."

### **The Decade of the 1960s**

- *Thinking Strategically about Church Growth*
- The Church Growth Movement began by Donald J. MacGavern included Pentecostals in the first Institute of Church Growth in 1961. Melvin Hodges was a regular participant in early works at Fuller Theological Seminary and the Church Growth Bulletins (March 1965) featured Robert McCasson in a missions executive of the Assemblies of God in an article "Notable Missions Leaders on Church Growth.
- The team of Read, Monterroso and Johnson feature Pentecostals in their 1969 study on Latin American Church Growth

### **The Decade of the 1970s**

- *Evangelicals and Pentecostals join hands on Church Growth Research*
- With the work of MacGavern and Peter Wagner at the School of World Missions at Fuller Seminary numerous studies of Pentecostal church growth are developed by outside observers and Pentecostal insiders.
- *Breaking the Stained Glass Barrier* (Harper and Row, 1973) *Mission Theology* is published with David Womack and Melvin Hodges (encouraged by Donald MacGavern) writes, *A Theology of the Church and Its Missions: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Gospel Publishing House, 1977).

### **Decade of the 1980s**

- *Pentecostal Missiologists Speak for Themselves*
- Vinson Synan calls the 1982 publishing of David Barrett's *World Christian Encyclopedia* as most significant because it documents more non-white Christians than white Christians for the first time in history and that Pentecostals were now the largest Protestant grouping globally.
- Peter Wagner says in 1982 that Pentecostals will go down in history as the most significant religious phenomenon of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

- Significant volumes published
  - *The Third Force in Missions*—Paul Pomerville
  - *This Gospel Shall Be Preached, Vol I* (1986) *Vol II* (1989)—Gary McGee
  - *Azusa Street and Beyond*—Grant McClung (1986)
  - *International Review of Missions* has two issues on Pentecostals and Charismatics—1986
  - *Power Evangelism*—John Wimber (1986)

### **The Decade of the 1990s**

- An expanding missiological paradigm where Pentecostals and Charismatics are not merely defining themselves, but spoke out of their tradition to missiological themes common to all Christians.
- From Charismatic ranks came:
  - Edward Pousson *Spreading the Flame: Charismatic Churches and Missions Today*, 1992 demonstrates the missions fervor of independent Charismatics
  - I was privileged to join my colleagues, Murray Dempster and Doug Peterson, in two volumes that begin to demonstrate Pentecostal interaction with culture and the church's social responsibility. This holistic approach is seen in *Called and Empowered* (1991) and *The Globalization of Pentecostalism* (1999).

While there are certainly nuances to the theology of mission that emerged for Pentecostals throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the character of a theology of mission is still most thoroughly described in narrative. For example, on the northern Great Plains there were Pentecostal type revivals that occurred among Scandinavian immigrants that can be traced all the way back to 1895. One of the leading centers for this small association of churches was the Swedish Free Mission in Moorhead, Minnesota (just across the river from Fargo, North Dakota). From this congregation came two single ladies, Mary Johnson and Ida Anderson, arguably the first Pentecostal missionaries sent from North America. This missionary team arrived in Durban, South Africa on January 16, 1905.<sup>23</sup>

A Pentecostal theology of mission is portrayed in the lives of Johnson and Anderson. They face incredible odds. They are from immigrant farming families with minimal income. They are single and women. They respond to a missionary call without a well-developed strategy or missionary sending agency. One could argue that this story is not unique to Pentecostals. Clearly this story is not unique to the Pentecostal tradition, but it is normative for Pentecostals. The experiential dimension of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit clearly shapes the way in which Johnson and Anderson see the world. The redemptive agenda of Jesus and the possibility of participating in Christ's continuing redemptive ministry, empowered by the Holy Spirit before Christ's return, clearly shapes the lives of Johnson and Anderson and they respond obediently. The human challenges are obvious, but they persist because as Everett Wilson notes, "Crisis, not

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<sup>23</sup> Darrin J. Rodgers. *Northern Harvest: Pentecostals in North Dakota* (Bismarck, North Dakota: District Council of the Assemblies of God, 2003), 12-17.

persuasion, is what has brought men and women to their personal Pentecost, even if that crisis was more a sense of their own spiritual need than some personal or social desperation. Pentecostal experience began, accordingly, at the moment when a seeker, like the procurer of the New Testament “pearl of great price,” determined that what he or she wanted above all else was available only at the devastatingly high cost of relinquishing all consideration to one’s own claims and merits.”<sup>24</sup> Whatever one makes of a Pentecostal theology of mission, it will be ill defined without acknowledging the central and crucial nature of the spiritual encounter present in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

## 100 Years Later

The Azusa Street Centennial recognition for Pentecostalism must be a moment where, having described our first century, we realize that we are “no longer in Kansas.” Several world wars and continuing regional conflicts remind us that demise of colonialism has created a huge discontinuity between the opening of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. Nationalism and revival among historic religions has made our social categories antiquated. Globalization and the urbanization of our world present complexities for the Church and mission that are overwhelming.

This emerging reality, though challenging, is also the context in which the growth of Pentecostalism and the Pentecostalization of Christianity are increasingly obvious. In the mid-1990s, Harvey Cox traced the growth of Pentecostalism globally. He concluded that Pentecostalism represented a spiritual restoration of significance and purpose to masses of people whose daily experience as one of despair, injustice and hopelessness. He predicted the DNA of Pentecostalism would be central to 21<sup>st</sup> century Christianity.<sup>25</sup>

The publishing of the *Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* by Philip Jenkins in 2002 documents, for the academic world, what missiologists had known for a decade: Christianity had a new center and it was geographically in the Southern Hemisphere. Jenkins’ query that Pentecostals might possibly be the most successful social movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century demonstrates the level of change that occurred during the 20<sup>th</sup> century that would have ripple effects in to the fabric of 21<sup>st</sup> century Christianity.<sup>26</sup>

A century of existence for the Pentecostal Movement has certainly not created a Pentecostal theology that looked like the theology of other Christian traditions. While

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<sup>24</sup> Everett Wilson, “They Crossed the Red Sea, Didn’t They?” in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism*, Murray M. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas P. Petersen, eds. (Irvine: Regnum Books, 1999), 87.

<sup>25</sup> Harvey Cox, *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1995), 102.

<sup>26</sup> Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 8. Also, see Philip Jenkins, “Reading the Bible in the Global South” In *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (April 2006), 67-73.

Pentecostals have matured in their theological expression, they are still often viewed as lacking theological vigor and firmness. When the existence of Pentecostal theology has been acknowledged as opposed to overlooked, it inevitably has been compared to the predominant model of Protestant theology derived from the Reformed tradition and highlighting systematic and philosophically oriented discussion of classic theories of Christian theology. Douglas Jacobsen notes the resistance by Anabaptists to such comparison and posits Pentecostal theology has been submitted to similar comparisons.<sup>27</sup> Jacobsen cites Steve Land as an example of his observations. Steve Land has rigorously argued that Pentecostal theology ought to be more spiritualistic and less rationalized than the “standard” model allows. Land posits that Pentecostal theology properly understood, values right experience (orthopathy) just as much as it values right belief (orthodoxy) and right behavior (orthopraxy).<sup>28</sup>

Jacobsen observes that to understand the process of theology by Pentecostals one needs to acknowledge there exists a different center of gravity. There is not a set Pentecostal theology organized into a class by itself, but a general worldview stressed over systematic comprehension and tightness of logic.<sup>29</sup> As with all theological reflection, context influences the nuances and emphases that are developed on the common foci of the tradition. Spanning wide geographical boundaries and crossing the demarcation lines of ethnicity, class, and gender, the twentieth century has seen the Pentecostal Movement emerge.<sup>30</sup> Clothed in the particular garments of local culture, Pentecostal communities testify to a “lived transcendence” and rejoice and participate in the vitality of the Comforter who has come.<sup>31</sup>

An important attempt to identify the core of Pentecostalism and its process of theologizing is provided by Margaret Poloma, who posits that Pentecostalism represents a case in which its worldview—ideological identity—has been shaped by Weberian “affective action” that has replaced “rational action” in the construction of a worldview. To Pentecostals the affective domain is viewed central to the shaping of reality. To the question of causality crucial to any worldview, divine initiative isn’t only

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<sup>27</sup> Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003), 5-8.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 6

<sup>29</sup> Jacobsen, 7.

<sup>30</sup> See Vinson Synan, *The Spirit Said Grow* (Monrovia: MARC Publications, 1992), 5-11.

<sup>31</sup> “Lived transcendence” is a term coined by Ray Anderson in reference to his work with T.F. Torrance. It is developed in Anderson’s publication *Historical Transcendence and the Reality of God* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1975). The term will be used in this essay to describe encounters with God that elicit a “here and now” relationship with God and an empowerment for Kingdom service.

“ideal” but “real” for Pentecostals.<sup>32</sup> The sacred/secular dichotomy that characterized modernity is rejected and replaced with an affirmation of the immediate availability of God’s power and presence. Pentecostals see the world through an ideology in which God is near at hand and gives abundant evidence of his powerful presence in the Church. This type of experience of Christ that is subject and not just object constitutes genuine expression and is central to a Pentecostal construction of reality.<sup>33</sup> Simply put, when Pentecostals approach biblical texts, theological reflection or ministry activity, it is not so much that they reflect distinctive perspectives or utilize methodologies unique only to them. Rather, Pentecostals enter these activities common to all Christian traditions with a particular religious ideology that does dynamically and directly shape the aforementioned activities.

Jacobsen further cites Harvey Cox who says,

“As a theologian I have grown accustomed to studying religious movements by reading what their theologians wrote and trying to grasp the central ideas and the most salient doctrines. But I soon found out that with Pentecostalism this approach did not help much. As one Pentecostal scholar put it, in his faith, ‘the experience of God has absolute primacy over dogma and doctrine’ Therefore the only theology that can give an account of this experience, he says, is ‘a mature theology where central expression is the testimony.’ I think he is right.”<sup>34</sup>

While an explanation of worldview construction, as central to the way that Pentecostals form theology, is descriptive of what has occurred in the first century of Pentecostal writers, there does come a time when we get beyond the more descriptive theology spoken to our own tradition. We, then, employ rational and systematic arguments in our attempt to explain our faith to others and most thoroughly to our own tradition. It is at this more conceptual, less grass-roots theology process that we Pentecostals have been on a steep learning curve. There are several key scholars and breakthroughs that lend increasing focus to the Pentecostal nexus of Spirit Baptism, eschatological urgency and world evangelism. These scholarly contributions have built confidence in Pentecostals as to the veracity of their biblical and theological positions and challenged other Christian traditions to consider Pentecostal perspectives as an enrichment.

Canadian biblical scholar, Roger Stronstad, who wrote *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* in 1984, makes one such significant contribution. Previous to the publication of Stronstad’s volume, a biblical discussion about the Baptism of the Spirit between

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<sup>32</sup> Margaret Poloma, *The Assemblies of God at the Crossroad* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 5. Poloma uses the work of Luther Gerlach and Virginia Hine extensively in her sociological study of the Assemblies of God, including *People, Power, Change: Movements in Social Transformation* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970); also Luther Gerlach’s work “Pentecostalism: Revolution or Counter Revolution?” In *Religious Movements in Contemporary America*, ed. Irving Zretsky and Mark P. Leone (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 669-699. See also Margaret Poloma, *Main Street Mystics: The Toronto Blessing and Reviving Pentecostalism* (Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press, 2003), 1-15.

<sup>33</sup> Byron D. Klaus, “A Theology of Ministry: Pentecostal Perspectives,” *Paraclete* 23 (Summer 1989), 1-10.

<sup>34</sup> Jacobsen, 6.

Pentecostals and other Christian traditions inevitably ended up in a frustrating conclusion. Stronstad's biblical work in Luke-Acts led him to challenge two standard evangelical principles of hermeneutics. Using textual evidence, Stronstad argued that Luke and Paul's pneumatological lenses were different; that Paul primarily used salvation-initiation language and Luke used subsequent-empowerment language. He argued that the hermeneutical principle was regularly broken by many in their usage of Paul to color all discussions of the Holy Spirit. His challenge was simply to let Luke speak for himself and, if one did, the uniqueness of Luke would be obvious.

The second hermeneutical principle that Stronstad challenged was that the didactic genre of Scripture was the domain of doctrine and the narrative genre was merely for history's sake. Using literary principles of the era in which Luke writes Luke-Acts, Stronstad demonstrates the legitimacy of the narrative genre carrying theological intent. Obviously, such an argument potentially concurs with the accusation by some that Pentecostals can never seem to get beyond Luke-Acts. Stronstad's work on text criticism gives significant legitimacy to the Pentecostal nexus, which shapes Pentecostal mission and mission strategy. Stronstad posits that the Pentecostal narrative is really the story of the transfer of the charismatic Spirit of Jesus to the disciples. In other words, if Jesus is the exclusive bearer of the Holy Spirit at baptism, Jesus becomes the giver of the Spirit at Pentecost. Because of the transfer of the Spirit, the disciples became subsequent participants in the earthly charismatic ministry of Jesus because Jesus has poured out the charismatic Spirit upon them. The "transfer of the Spirit" theme highlights the essential eschatological nature of the mission of the church. The transfer of the Spirit at Pentecost means the transference of call and empowerment to continue Jesus' mission and ministry with this empowerment finally bestowed on the disciples.<sup>35</sup>

Along with the significant work by Roger Stronstad in critical methodology there has been a new theological treatise burst on the scene that promises not only to give further clarity on the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but also proved for all Christians a thorough argument for the legitimization of a theology of subsequence. Frank Macchia's recent publication, *Baptism in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*, proposes a theology of subsequence rooted in a deeper "kingdom" theology of Spirit outpouring and directed to the divine indwelling (and liberating transformation) of all things. Just as Stronstad has spoken and made his argument in "standard professional language" so has Macchia. Acknowledging both Pauline and Lukan pneumatological usage, Macchia says that "Spirit Baptism as an eschatological partnership in the kingdom of God by faith involves Christian initiation *and* a release of the Spirit in life for power in witness. The broad theological framework of Spirit Baptism as a divine act in inaugurating the

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<sup>35</sup> Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1984), 49. The missionary nature of Luke-Acts is further developed by Robert Menzies in *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts* (JSNTSup 54: Sheffield, JSOT Press, 1991). See also John Michael Penney, *The Missionary Emphasis of Lukan Pneumatology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 84.

kingdom of God involves theologically for Luke and the Pentecostals an experience of the Spirit in power for witness.”<sup>36</sup>

Macchia further points that for Pentecostals to seek a definite experience of Spirit Baptism as a renewal of faith and a prophetic anointing for service with or distinct in time from Christian initiation need not be interpreted as taking anything away from Christian initiation as that decisively initial point of identification with Christ as the one in whom all spiritual blessings may be found (Eph. 1:3). Rather, the experience of Spirit Baptism cherished by Pentecostals brings to our awareness theological insights inherent in the meaning of initiation itself.<sup>37</sup>

The richness of the Pentecostal nexus that elicits in our theology of mission has been given a significant enrichment by the work done by Stronstad and Macchia. No longer can the Baptism of the Spirit be categorized as merely a Pentecostal distinctive, it has been an increasingly legitimized pneumatological point of departure for theologizing regardless of the where one is theologically within the Christian tradition.

### **Deeper and Wider**

The exegetical work of Stronstad and the theological work of Macchia (and many others) open a whole new level of accountability. If Spirit Baptism has increasing legitimacy through the work of Stronstad and Macchia, then it also requires Pentecostals to move out of their comfort zone and explore new terrain. Frank Macchia argues that Spirit Baptism gives rise to the global church and renews the very substance of the church’s life in the Spirit, including its charismatic life and mission. In other words, urgency and evangelism must also be concerned about what the churches look like that are produced through the ministry carried out as part of Pentecostal mission.

The primary mission thrust of incipient Pentecostalism on the *kerygmatic* dimension of Christianity will require critique due simply to the success of that effort. If the growth of Pentecostals/charismatics is as dynamic as is being reported, then new questions inevitably will be asked. For example, does the planting of churches include the building of churches with ministries of compassion? Majority world Pentecostals will certainly discern a Gospel of transformation that affirms a call to respond to the needs of the whole person and to all human need.<sup>38</sup>

Listen to the passion of an Indian Pentecostal who says,

“When a person becomes a Christian and receives the Holy Spirit, he also receives the gifts of love, control and a sense of justice. In the power of the Holy

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<sup>36</sup> Frank Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 153.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>38</sup> See “Pentecostal Mission and Social Concern” In TRANSFORMATION Vol. 16, No. 2, (April 1999).

Ghost, man becomes confident of building for himself a just society, that is humane, peaceful and righteous; a society that is anticipating the Kingdom of God...If we want to win India for Christ, we have to girdle ourselves and get ready for the struggle in solidarity with the oppressed and exploited. Let us take the battle to the streets. Let us fight for the marginalized, the ostracized, the *dalit* (untouchable), the prostitute and her customer, the child whose childhood has been robbed. Let us lift the banner of love. Love that will help us to realize the true worth of every citizen of our beloved country. The need of the day is socially active Christians who are willing to spare no effort, leave no stone unturned, who will accept the challenge of the gauntlet thrown by the forces of this world.”<sup>39</sup>

The exclusive focus on the *kerygmatic* dimension of mission may still be defended by some Anglo Pentecostals as foundational, but the reality of the majority world will certainly require fresh and critical theologizing on mission that takes the biblical theme of the Kingdom of God with greater seriousness. Gordon Fee has long been the Pentecostal voice “preaching” the message of the Kingdom. It is our effective evangelism to date that will force us to enrich our understanding of the breath of our theological mission.<sup>40</sup> The exploration of the Kingdom motif will face fresh understanding of the *diakonic* and *koinonaic* dimensions of Kingdom life that is to be perpetuated in the planting of local church bodies.<sup>41</sup>

The success of our efforts in mission will also require Pentecostals to explore even further the tension-filled terrain of Gospel and culture. While some might historically view Pentecostals stuck in Niebuhr’s category of “Christ against culture,” it might be more truthful to say that much of Pentecostalism has been characterized as “Christ oblivious to culture.” Whatever the past may be described as, the complexities of social change, the revival of historic world religions, and the desperation of national and state politics requires a new awareness of Gospel and culture, if only to strengthen the growth of the Church in those spots of the world where Christianity is least tolerated. While Western Pentecostals may be entering new understandings of the Gospel and church through innovative missiology that takes seriously the social sciences, it will be those followers of Christ in the oppressive places in the world who will read the book of Acts and identify with their brothers and sisters of the early church and obediently follow Jesus empowered by the Spirit and oblivious to the price to trust God in a faith-filled way.

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<sup>39</sup> Gary McGee, “Assemblies of God Missiology in the 1990s” In The Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, April 1991, 15.

<sup>40</sup> Gordon Fee, “The Kingdom of God and The Church’s Global Mission” in *Called and Empowered: Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective*, Murray A. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus and Douglas Petersen, eds. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 7-21.

<sup>41</sup> Murray Dempster, “Evangelism, Social Concern and the Kingdom of God” in *Called and Empowered, Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective*, Murray A. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus and Douglas Petersen, eds. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 29-38.

If the Kingdom of God is a biblical theme that will enrich a Pentecostal theology of mission and if Pentecostal growth among the majority world will face increased tension between Gospel and culture, what will continue to compel a Pentecostal theology of mission to be continually urgent?

The context of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century is much different than what we experience this centennial year. Let me suggest that the urgency of 100 years ago, which focused on “end times,” can develop into a fervent and living hope that is the medium for which all of kingdom life is lived.<sup>42</sup> Again the Baptism of the Spirit provides the participant with a “close encounter” with Jesus Christ. So powerful is this encounter that the redemptive mission of Christ is embedded in the very being of the person “baptized.” So powerful is this compelling mission that the “baptized” is overwhelmed that their life has been graced by a destiny to participate in this “end-time” harvest. Spirit Baptism and thus, a Pentecostal theology of mission, can retain an eschatological fabric regardless of the century we find ourselves.

### **A Pentecostal Missiology?**

Where is the comprehensive Pentecostal effort at a 21<sup>st</sup> century theology of mission? I would suggest that the best current effort at a comprehensive theology of mission is Andrew Lord’s *Spirit-Shaped Mission: A Holistic Charismatic Missiology*.<sup>43</sup> This British attempt at a comprehensive missiology tracks both Pentecostal and Charismatic considerations. Acknowledging the need to explore the Kingdom and gospel-culture themes I have suggested, Lord raises the issues of religious experiences as a legitimate category for theologizing about mission and as a doorway for epistemological purposes. Unencumbered by the Gospel vs. social action history of the United States, Lord is able to weave spirituality, contextualization, issues of holistic mission and community, along with theological themes that emanate from both classic Pentecostal and charismatic sources. Most significant to the “Pentecostal” dynamic of his new volume is Lord’s insistence on understanding first the “mission of the Spirit.” It is clear that spirituality is as much part of the formal emphasis as the process of developing holistic ministry or the community in which the Holy Spirit may dwell.

### **Poignant New Edges**

Perhaps Walter Hollenweger’s summary of the significance of Pentecostalism worldwide demonstrates succinctly a challenge to non-Pentecostal and to Pentecostals as the paradigm shift he describes emerges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Hollenweger suggests: 1) Pentecostalism is a church *of* the poor *for* the poor and is not (in the best examples) dependent on the power centers of the West; 2) It is a church/tradition that cannot be grasped through confessional evaluation; 3) It is a decidedly theological and social

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<sup>42</sup> Macchia, 271.

<sup>43</sup> Andrew Lord, *Spirit-Shaped Mission: A Holistic Charismatic Missiology* (Bletchley, Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2005).

factor in the Third World; 4) It confronts the whole of Christianity with the basic question of what theology really is.<sup>44</sup>

Within such a 21<sup>st</sup> century reality, Puerto Rican Eldin Villafane poignantly describes what will energize the continuing significance of Pentecostalism. He says,

“The baptism of the Spirit in Pentecostalism is rightfully seen as empowerment for service impacting the believer deeply by giving him/her a tremendous boldness, a heightened sense of personal holiness and a new sense of self worth and personal power. Yet, the narrow individualistic focus and purpose implies the dissipation...of so much energy and spiritual power that can and should be ‘tapped’ for the broader missional objective of the church. The Pentecostal church has the spiritual resources to face the spiritual power encounters of our social struggles. If the new object of the baptism of the spirit is the ongoing mission of the Messiah...then the challenge which remains for Pentecostals is to catch the vision of the broader prophetic and vocational role of the baptism of the Spirit.”

Villafane’s challenge to a broader pneumatological vision will necessitate a renewed emphasis on community. The uniqueness of the Day of Pentecost is that it serves as a guarantee that the mission of Jesus continues intact to this very day by the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit. The empowerment provided at Pentecost was not merely a story of individuals chosen and anointed with extraordinary capabilities for the purposes of Christian mission. What was created at Pentecost was a community that is described in its most incipient form in Acts 2:42-47. Even this earliest of pictures presents a glimpse of the Church that focuses on the interdependence between people who were followers of Christ. The existence of this newly created “eschatological community” centered in the reliance on the Spirit’s empowerment to bear witness, in word, deed, and power that the reality of the Kingdom of God was visible among them. Gordon Fee describes this Holy Spirit dynamic through Pauline eyes as the “experienced, empowering return of God’s own personal presence in and among us, who enables us to live as a radically eschatological people in the present world while we await the consummation.”<sup>45</sup>

When the “community” dimension of the Church is relegated to mere programmatic expressions, the seedbed in which the continuing redemptive mission of Christ is to be nurtured can be short-circuited. The early church saw itself as a community initiated and sustained by the Holy Spirit: as a “charismatic community.” Howard Snyder describes the church as a community where the pure light of God’s “manifold grace” (I Peter 4:10) is refracted as it shines through the Church much as light through a prism. What is subsequently produced is the varied and multi-colored “charismata”. The intense yet

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<sup>44</sup> Walter Hollenweger, “From Azusa Street to the Toronto Phenomenon” in *CONCILIUM* 1996/3 Jurgen Moltmann and Karl-Josef Kuschel, eds. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books), 1996, 12.

<sup>45</sup> Gordon Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), xv.

invisible light of God's glorious grace is made visible in the diversity of spiritual gifts in the Christian community.<sup>46</sup>

Paul's understanding of the necessity and purpose of this community is exemplified in Romans 12. Paul is surfacing his understanding of what has replaced the significance of the Jewish temple. God now lives in His people rather than an edifice constructed from stones cut from a quarry. These followers of Christ now become the sacrifices that are alive and active. Their function is as temple servants and ministers. Because the whole person is the dwelling place of God, giftedness and ministry are not ethereal or mystical things. God is living among the people He has redeemed by His grace. Paul is clearly describing the fact that the gifts of the Spirit should more appropriately be thought of as ministry that flows out of one's being part of the temple of God. Those gifts/ministries are part of the fabric of the community, not individual desires or abilities nor personality driven strategies for ministry that put the spotlight on individuals rather than the eternal redemptive mission of God most clearly seen in Jesus Christ.<sup>47</sup>

The haunting question of Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?* poignantly paints another horizon that Pentecostals in both the majority world and the western world will have to face. My guess is that it will be handled with greater dexterity by the majority world simply because they intuitively understand the Good News in pre-modern terms and rejoice at the transformation of their lives by a Savior who has the power to abundantly pardon and save to the uttermost.<sup>48</sup> Yet as Amos Yong points out, Pentecostals of the 21<sup>st</sup> century can build on our current scholastic efforts, move ahead and come of age by engaging the broad spectrum of dialogue partners. He views that the future is wide open for the development of a world Pentecostalism that is along the way: i.e. a pneumatological theology of gusto.<sup>49</sup>

Amos Yong is charting new territory as he posits the work of the Holy Spirit outside "the church." He says,

"As a Christian theologian, I proceed with some optimism that pneumatology, concerned as it is with explicating divine presence and agency in the world, provides the broadest framework for reflection, discussion, and debate about theological matters. The kind of universality I envision is therefore *a posteriori* in

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<sup>46</sup> Howard Snyder, *The Community of the King* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1977), 81. For a most insightful focus on the nature of spiritual gifts, particularly their "naturalness" or "supernaturalness" see David Lim, *Spiritual Gifts: A Fresh Look* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1991), 19-50.

<sup>47</sup> Ben Aker, "Charismata: Gifts, Enablements, or Ministries" In *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 11.1 (October, 2002), 53-69. See also Anthony Palma, *The Holy Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Springfield, MO: Logion Press, 2001), 191-19.

<sup>48</sup> Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2003). See also David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2002).

<sup>49</sup> Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out On All Flesh: Pentecostals and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 30.

nature, building on the empirical finding of our engagement with the world and the convergences that emerge out of the ongoing theological dialogue. It is ultimately eschatological in realization, but such an orientation is not alien to the Pentecostal/charismatic orientation.”<sup>50</sup>

As we enter a second century of Pentecostal history we must realize that the effectiveness of our tradition finds its root in the Spirit that “bloweth where it listeth.” Our continued effectiveness will rest on affirming a 21<sup>st</sup> century understanding of the historic Pentecostal nexus and a vigorous engagement with the cultural and religious challenges we face 100 years after our emergence. My hope is that with confidence we will continue to sing with the Reformer Martin Luther, “the Spirit and the Gifts are ours, through Him who with us sideth.”

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<sup>50</sup> Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 81.