

# **IMPLICATIONS OF GLOBALIZATION ON PENTECOSTAL LEADERSHIP AND MISSION**

Byron D. Klaus  
President, Assemblies of God Theological Seminary

## **Some Initial Thoughts**

The Era of Globalization is fast becoming a preferred term for describing the current times. Just as the Cold War Era or the Space Age might be used to describe particular periods of history; globalization describes the political, economic and cultural atmosphere of today. People around the globe are more connected to each other than ever before. Information and money flow with great ease across the planet. Goods and services from one region of the world are increasingly available across the globe. International travel and, more importantly, communication is commonplace and has taken on the description of globalization. Limiting globalization to describing economics worldwide would certainly impede the long reach of this phenomenon. As with many issues in the earlier parts of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, coming up with an agreed upon definition for globalization is a challenge. However, the larger challenge is evaluating whether globalization is a good thing or actually a problem.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Ivan Satyavrata observes that globalization is not about some new economic theory discussed in developed nations, but a new form of culture that knows no boundaries and is spread globally. It involves multi-national interconnectedness in the transfer of ideas and products and includes the trans-national corporations and western governments that ride the economics globalization wave; as well as the global anti-capitalism movements that oppose it. Satyavrata says that when ideas get to their new destination they are not imbibed as they are; rather, they are adapted to fit the local situation. This interaction between global and local is

---

<sup>1</sup>Porter, "Globalization: What is it?" See also, Peter Berger, "Religion in a Globalizing World."

sometimes referred to as *glocalization*. Thus, rather than eliminating cultural differences, globalization includes localization as an essential feature.<sup>2</sup>

In a very real sense, postmodernism and globalization are linked together. Western discussions of post-modern theory tend to reframe it for the safe domain of epistemology, when a more realistic understanding sees it as synonymous with the flattery of the world by globalization. This movement, by any description, is a global movement. The “globopomo” turn is not about whether we will offer fair-trade coffee at our image-driven worship event aimed at the “creative” class of slick urbanites. It is not merely the domain of the educated “chattering class” adept at the intricacies of continental philosophy. It is a broader theme, with global conflicts like the world of mass migration, persistent genocides, increased gaps in global wealth distribution and the growth of global Islam.<sup>3</sup>

This twenty-first century experience of emerging realities has created a growing challenge for Pentecostals. Our tradition has only one century of history. Inadequate historiography sometimes leaps over the 1900 years between the Day of Pentecost and early twentieth century Holy Spirit outpourings as if God did nothing in the intervening time. Moreover, contemporary Pentecostal-Charismatics often demonstrate a similar disconnect with the historicity of Christianity, by acting as if their current “version” of Christianity has no antecedent; God has spoken directly to them and they have “mysteries” revealed akin to St. Paul’s revelation of mysteries in his letter to the Ephesians (Eph 3:3-6).

---

<sup>2</sup>Ivan Satyavrata is pastor of the Buntain Memorial Church in Kolkata, India. He also is president of the Mission of Mercy ministry started by Canadian Pentecostal, Mark Buntain. His remarks were delivered at Oxford World Missions Briefing, May 2004 sponsored by the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies in Oxford, England.

<sup>3</sup>Raschke, *GloboChrist*, 12.

Meanwhile, the last fifteen years has seen a growing awareness of what has been going on for several decades. In the era of globalization (however it is described and defined), Christianity has been growing vigorously. Fifteen years ago, Harvey Cox predicted the shape of Pentecostal spirituality fit the twenty-first century. He foresaw that this “religion made to travel” would contextualize itself globally and be the primary texture of Christianity in this century<sup>4</sup>

Sociologists like David Martin and David Stoll began applying new lenses to the massive Pentecostal growth in Latin America asking such unthinkable questions as: “Is Latin America turning Protestant?”<sup>5</sup> Liberation theologians adjusted their interpretive lenses and even dared to see Pentecostals as the future of the Christian Church.<sup>6</sup> Philip Jenkins has confirmed what evangelical missiologists had been saying for years, namely, Christianity has a new center and it is geographically in the Southern Hemisphere. Jenkins goes so far as to say that Pentecostals might be the most successful social movement of the twentieth century. We are only beginning to understand the significance of a single century of Pentecostal history on this planet.<sup>7</sup>

This significant growth and its global occurrence requires reflection on how the current context, replete with globalized realities, affects the fabric of Pentecost worldwide. While acknowledging the particularity of local “Pentecostalism”<sup>8</sup> and avoiding the temptation to generalize about Pentecostals based on personal experience, we must acknowledge that the historical holiness DNA of many Pentecostals has left us vulnerable to the serious and uncritiqued impact of culture on Pentecostals globally. We can laud our growth worldwide, but

---

<sup>4</sup>Cox, *Fire From Heaven*.

<sup>5</sup>Stoll, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?*; Martin, *Tongues of Fire*.

<sup>6</sup>Shaul and Cesar, *Pentecostalism and the Future of the Christian Churches*.

<sup>7</sup>Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 8. Also, see Jenkins, “Reading the Bible in the Global South” in *IBMR*, 67-73.

<sup>8</sup>Bueno, “Changing Paradigms.”

triumphalism is a haughty response to the grace of God. The incipient vitality experienced by spiritual movement needs serious reflection to remain effective. Experience is not self-interpreting and globalization's insistence on reducing people to mere consumers impacted by a marketplace, does separate us from a reflective nature as the addiction to consumption of goods and experiences creates an ahistorical "funk" that permeates our minds.

### **Influences on the Dawn of the Pentecostal Century**

Pentecostals initially framed their understanding of mission in a particular era. Regardless of where in the world the wellsprings of Pentecostals express themselves, some dimensions of the following emphases were present. This confluence of spiritual "winds" is necessary to understand how the spirituality and theology of *Pentecostals* emerges at the beginning of the twentieth 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>9</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>10</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>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup>Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel*, 85-90, 96-114.

<sup>10</sup>Petersen, *Not by Might Nor by Power*, 19-21.

<sup>11</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*. See also Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* and Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel*.

- 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>12</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 (racist) 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>13</sup>

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 (1 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

---

<sup>12</sup>Wacker, “Playing for Keeps,” 196-219.

<sup>13</sup>Daniel, “Dialogue Between Black and Hispanic Pentecostal Scholars,” 219-228. A vigorous proponent of the African roots of Pentecost is Hollenweger, see *Pentecostalism*, 46-48.

intrusion of the Spirit of God is viewed as adequate for the eternal resource for end time harvest (Zechariah 4:6).<sup>14</sup>

### **Early Pentecostal Reflection on Mission**

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 nineteenth 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 nineteenth century. The newfound urgency that came with Pentecostal experience caused many to question the necessity of the structures that had accompanied nineteenth 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.)

---

<sup>14</sup>More complete description is available in my publication of “The Holy Spirit and Mission in Eschatological Perspective” *PNEUMA*, 325-28.

<sup>15</sup>Wilson and Wilson, “Alice E. Luce,” 159-76.

Early Pentecostals do look for ways to conceptualize their experience surrounding mission. A critic of nineteenth 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 became the centerpiece of Pentecostal mission priorities throughout most of the twentieth 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

---

<sup>16</sup>Allen's published books that had significant early impact on Pentecostals included *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours, Essential Missionary Principles*, and *Pentecost and the World: The Revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles*.

<sup>17</sup>Hodges, *The Indigenous Church*. For a more complete insight into the significance of Hodges as a Pentecostal missiologist, see McGee, "The Legacy of Melvin Hodges," *IBMR*.

Holy Spirit's movement.<sup>18</sup> Pomerville says, "As a renewal movement 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 nineteenth century mission strategy and the "radical strategy" expected in early Pentecostal efforts focused on the *kerygmatic* aspect of mission. The nineteenth 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 nineteenth 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 nineteenth 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 nineteenth century and decry the slow pace of missions. The alliance of spiritual empowerment and world

---

<sup>18</sup>Pomerville, *The Third Force in Mission*, 63-78.

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

<sup>20</sup>McGee, "The Radical Strategy in Modern Missions," 69-95. Also, see McGee, "Miracles and Mission Revisited" *IBMR*, 146-149.

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

evangelization is championed by Pentecostals who view this as a renewal of apostolic priorities dependent on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

We might summarize early 20<sup>th</sup> century Pentecostal reflection on a theology of mission as follows:

- Eschatological urgency about evangelism
- The *kerygmatic* dimension of the Gospel as central to Pentecostal mission priorities
- An Affirmation of the immediacy of the miraculous (a radical strategy)
- A propensity toward strategies with quick impact
- A suspicion about complex structures
- An unwillingness to evaluate long-term implications of strategies and structures.

### **A Haunting Question**

In 1998, missiologist Ralph Winter queried whether or not the Christian world still takes seriously the maintenance of intentional evangelistic effort across geographical and cultural barriers.<sup>22</sup> A related question does loom on the horizon as to what eschatological motivation may be present in this continuing zealous cross-cultural witness. Will the “this worldly” empowerment of the Pentecostal identity actually disconnect the “eternal perspective” from eschatological rootings?<sup>23</sup>

As we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, globalization impacts all aspects of our planet. Robert Webber raises the haunting question, in his latest volume, *Who Gets to Narrate the World?*<sup>24</sup>—the world in which a theology of mission is developed must navigate a new set of realities while discerning what of its incipient character is truly transferable to this new century. The well of thematic resources as we begin this new endeavor will need to include drawing from themes that include:

---

<sup>22</sup>Winter, “The Meaning of Mission,” 15.

<sup>23</sup>A most persuasive argument for the influence of eschatology on Pentecostal mission identity and strategy is made by Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel*.

<sup>24</sup> Webber, *Who Gets to Narrate the World?*

- **Apostolic**—Twenty-first century mission must still be a core in proclamation of the Gospel to places and people who are most resistant and have the least opportunity to hear the Gospel. Alan Johnson summarizes apostolic ministry well when he states that a new sense of missionary identity “should be formed around the notion of apostolic function. By this term, I mean that cross-cultural work should be framed around the understanding that apostles had of their work and the actual kind of work that they did. After reviewing the biblical material on apostleship, I argue that apostolic function must focus on the apostolic task of preaching the Gospel where it has not been heard, planting the church where it does not exist, and leading people to the obedience of faith so that they will express Jesus Christ in their social worlds and participate in God’s global mission”<sup>25</sup>
- **Gospel and Culture**—The exclusive focus on the *kerigmatic* dimension of mission may still be defended by some 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>26</sup> The exploration of the Kingdom motif will face fresh understanding of the *diakonic* and *koinonic* dimensions of Kingdom life that is to be perpetuated in the planting of local church bodies.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup>Johnson, *Apostolic Function*, 50-51. (Forthcoming—March 2009, a book length development of this theme—available through William Carey Library Publisher, 1-800-MISSION or [www.missionbooks.org](http://www.missionbooks.org)).

<sup>26</sup>Fee, “The Kingdom of God and The Church’s Global Mission,” 7-21.

<sup>27</sup>Dempster, “Evangelism, Social Concern and the Kingdom of God” 9-38.

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.

- **Pentecost and eschatology**—The guarantee that God's redemptive mission, fully actualized and fulfilled in Jesus Christ, continues today intact with urgency and destiny as motivational factors. 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 factor in the Third

World; 4) It confronts the whole of Christianity with the basic question of what theology really is.<sup>28</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

---

<sup>28</sup>Hollenweger, “From Azusa Street to the Toronto Phenomenon,” 12.

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>29</sup>

- **Church as the Hermeneutic of the Gospel**—Lesslie Newbigin focused on the congregation "as hermeneutic of the gospel ... How is it possible that the gospel should be credible, that people should come to believe that the power which has the last word in human affairs is represented by a man hanging on a cross? I am suggesting that the only answer, the only hermeneutic of the gospel, is a congregation of men and women who believe it and live by it."<sup>30</sup>

Newbigin's clear picture of the church as a functional hermeneutic is placed into an even larger framework by the haunting question of Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?* Sanneh 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>31</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

---

<sup>29</sup>Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*, xv.

<sup>30</sup>Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 227-232.

<sup>31</sup>Sanneh, *Whose Religion is Christianity?* See also Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*.

the development of a world Pentecostalism that is along the way: i.e. a pneumatological theology of gusto.<sup>32</sup>

### **The Impact of Pentecostal Theology of Mission on Pentecostal Leadership**

Leadership studies and the publications that ensue are a huge industry in North America. One only needs to access *amazon.com* to see that approximately 282,000 entries are available if you do a search for books under the keyword leadership. Additionally, 800,000 more entries are offered by *amazon.com* if you search under the keyword management. Allowing for significant overlap doesn't diminish the fact that leadership related books and resources are readily available. As with much in North American life, topical fads are evident and church leaders strain to keep up with the latest angle on leadership so as to make sure they are deemed "current" and their effectiveness can be in tune with the latest measurements. Titles such as *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader*, *Leadership Jazz*, *Leadership Self-Deception: Getting out of the Box*, *Monday Morning Leadership*, *Good to Great*, *The Leadership Secrets of Santa Claus* all demonstrate the wide variety of resources available.

The propensity for the creation of popular culture and its accessories is thoroughly personified in the 2001 Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) investigation on the consumerist forces that shape the image consciousness and purchasing predispositions of teenagers in North America. Their significant study entitled, "The Merchants of Cool," posited that the current tendency to want to define generations in distinct groups such as Boomers, Busters, Gen-X, Millenials etc. was not so much the function of cutting edge social science research as it was sophisticated consumer branding. PBS argued that the "tribalization" that seemingly separated generations was merely a highly effective method of defining the market and maximizing the

---

<sup>32</sup>Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out On All Flesh*, 30.

sales to that niche market.<sup>33</sup> The reality is that popular leadership studies in North America have followed suit and the massive availability of leadership/management resources, I referred to at *amazon.com*, testifies to a self-perpetuating attempt to respond to the cultural shifts so deeply impacted by the consumerist predisposition of an increasingly globalized world.

Filipino Pentecostal scholar, Joseph Suico, has observed a shift in Pentecostal leadership from a highly spiritual approach that favored souls over structures to an increasing adoption of more corporate understanding of organizational life with Pentecostal church leaders increasingly comfortable with calling themselves Chief Executive Officers. Suico observes, at least in an Asian context, the following leadership climate in Pentecostal churches:

1. A corporate model of leadership as key to success.
2. Strong spiritual authority that emanates from the position of pastors tends to be “heroic” which focuses on a single magnetic leader at the top of a hierarchy who authoritatively sets policy.
3. Pentecostal leaders are increasingly more inaccessible as their church or denomination becomes large. Like a corporate CEO, the offices of church leaders are by design closed-off from workers.
4. Leaders’ authority comes from symbols like huge church building, large size congregation, rather than spiritual and moral integrity.
5. Leadership models that are being “peddled” in seminars are mostly foreign to local socio-economic and cultural context.
6. Transition in leadership is practiced in terms of popularity and patronage in leadership.<sup>34</sup>

### **Implications for the Majority World**

The juxtaposition between current events in a local culture and its impact on spiritual leadership is nothing new. The Bible is replete with examples of blindness as to how current

---

<sup>33</sup>“The Merchants of Cool.”

<sup>34</sup>Suico, “A Reflection on Evolving Understandings of Christian Leadership” Asia Pacific Theological Association Assembly, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, September 2005.

models of leadership, painfully dominated by contextual realities, cripple the potential of Kingdom leadership. Jesus' dialogue with his disciples in Mark 10:35-45 is a glimpse into a startling level of cluelessness. When Jesus suggests that the disciple's perception of leadership models worth emulating is lacking, He offers to them an alternative connected to His redemptive mission. The dialogue of the disciples in this passage gives clear indication that they are products of the models of leadership which they have observed and are fully committed to actualizing in their own lives on behalf of the "cause." They are participants in a peasant culture that has experienced hundreds of years of conquest by different invaders. They long for freedom and believe that such freedom will be gained by a champion who will defeat an unjust system and the leaders who perpetuate it. Yet the models of leadership with which they have experience predispose them to believing that military might and positional dominance will serve them well. Jesus' simple statement, "Not so with you," (Mark 10:43a) must have seemed as if it were from another planet.

This brief glimpse into Jesus' disciples and their understanding of what it means to be a leader in the Kingdom is a microcosm of what Christian leadership globally faces today. The observation of the Brazilian political and educational activist Paulo Freire further describes this dangerous dilemma when he says, *"If to be is to be like, then to be is to be like the oppressor."*<sup>35</sup> In other words, if you are limited to the models of leadership most observable in your context and uncritically believe them to be the standard worthy of your emulation, you are bound to replicate them in an increasingly counterproductive manner. The initial mental roadmaps of leadership are largely framed by cultural and ecclesial models for better or worse. The position or status we try to achieve, through aspiring to effective mastery of these models, may actually

---

<sup>35</sup>Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

short-circuit our effectiveness from a Kingdom perspective. Alternative leadership models that are formed in reaction to the liabilities found in current models have a long history in being short-sighted and self-serving. Here is where an uncritical absorption of North American church strategies and leadership priorities can be most debilitating for majority world leaders.

The posture that the church and culture in North America is discontinuous with the majority world is a position I would humbly ask you to reconsider. In addition, for the majority world to merely lament over our long history of western exportation of church toxicity, could be debilitating to the sovereign work of the Spirit of God globally. Philip Jenkins work entitled *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* has confirmed to the academic and journalistic world what missiologists have been saying for a decade. The center of gravity in the Church has moved from North to South.<sup>36</sup> This new and exciting reality must be met by the emerging leadership of the global Church with a pro-active response to its emerging Spirit bestowed responsibility.

### **Challenges For the South to Navigate In Its New Leading Role**

#### **A Global Youth Culture**

MTV has played a huge role in creating a global village and an increasingly homogenous youth culture. Similar brand names are worn and coveted world wide. To view MTV as merely the purveyor of crass North American ideals would be seriously underestimating the power of MTV. Media critic Mark Miller observes that the MTV machine listens to youth very carefully. When corporate revenues depend on being ahead of the curve, you have to listen; you have to know exactly what they want and exactly what they're thinking so that you can give what you want them to have. The task is not to come up with new forms of music. The MTV machine

---

<sup>36</sup>Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*.

tunes in so it can figure out how to pitch what Viacom (MTV/s owner) has to sell to those kids. MTV studies the young, keeps them under very tight surveillance, to figure out what will push their buttons. They take that and blare it back at them relentlessly and everywhere.<sup>37</sup>

Global urbanization only heightens the challenges that the church in the South will face. Rural village life is no longer a place to hide. Where there is a generator there will be electricity that will power a video player that will sell the child in the most rural setting the idea that the acquisition of a certain brand of clothing will bring them respectability and identity. The culprit is not merely the North American pop star's crass sexuality, but the reduction of every viewer into an object of focused marketing. The challenge in the South, as it has been in the North, is how the Church's mission is empowered by the Spirit to create the vibrant community where youth find purpose and destiny beyond the consumerist appeal of MTV's powerful and increasingly global influence. Do not take lightly this growing challenge. Community can no longer depend on tradition, ethnicity, nationality, gender or age. The consumerist impulse, that media can so easily purvey, challenges the church to dig deep into spiritual resources previously unexplored.

### **Traditional Cultures Challenged**

Much of the literature available about organizations and leadership is in English and no small part of that is North American. The translation of North American leadership books into other languages can be only minimally helpful. The primary provision of such literature is a motivation to understand the nature of leadership and church related leadership in particular. As North American church leadership has certainly been found struggling in its efforts to respond to 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges, so will Christian leadership globally. Understanding organizational

---

<sup>37</sup>“Merchants of Cool.”

history and culture is necessary. Critiquing the limitations of preferred local models of leadership is crucial. The venerable Dutch scholar Geert Hofstede has provided seminal research by which common denominators of leadership across cultures can be the foundation for serious Christian critique on preferred local leadership models.<sup>38</sup> Lawrence Harrison and Samuel Huntington's authoring of *Culture Matters* provides invaluable international perspective on the inhibitors and provocateurs of effective leadership globally. Of particular usefulness is the work of Argentine economist Mariano Grandona whose taxonomy of cultural factors shaping leadership is invaluable. While aimed at the business world, his insights are invaluable to understanding culture's tight connection to effective leadership.<sup>39</sup> We cannot legitimize church leadership by merely saying, "This is the way we do it" in Botswana, Malaysia or Uruguay. The stakes are too high and the responsibility of our destiny as God's redemptive community is too crucial for the blunting of Kingdom leadership by non-attention to the barnacles of culture's deterrents to fairly representing Christ.

### **Signs of Organizational Dilemma**

Dilemmas reflective of organizational maturation inevitably impact our attempts to communicate the dynamic of the Gospel across cultures and generations over a protracted period of time and through periods of social change. Sociologist Thomas O'Dea has provided a helpful taxonomy of five organizational dilemmas that are increasingly obvious as a church organization gets older. Such processes are more likely to occur more quickly in majority world contexts as sovereign works of the Spirit emerge quickly within contexts not given to self-critique and acknowledgment of destructive elements within incipient organizational life.

---

<sup>38</sup>Hofstede, *Cultures and Organizations*.

<sup>39</sup>Harrison and Huntington, *Culture Matters*, 44-45.

This is most notable in five specific organizational dilemmas that become increasingly obvious with the age of an organization:

- The dilemma of mixed motivation—As focus changes through the years, single-mindedness of purpose characteristic of early devotees is replaced by professionalism.
- The dilemma of administrative order— The tendency of a structure to over elaborate itself and the organization becomes an unwieldy machine. Once purposeful structures solidify and refuse to change.
- The dilemma of power—The struggle for religious leaders to avail themselves of close relation between religion and general cultural values in order to reinforce the position of religion itself.
- The dilemma of delimitation—The inevitability of growing older as a movement and running the gauntlet between "translating" the original message and holding a rigid position that kills the spirit of the movement.
- The dilemma of symbolism—The problem of trying to objectify the original charismatic moment in stable forms and procedures with routinization. How does spontaneity rule when we've moved beyond the incipient stage first generation experience.<sup>40</sup>

### **Charismatic Leadership: A Pentecostal Default Position**

A clue to understanding contemporary church leaders, including those in the Pentecostal/charismatic tradition, is found in charismatic leadership theory, usually connected to German sociologist, Max Weber and contemporary leadership theorists. *Charisma* used in two letters of the Apostle Paul—Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12—is a “gift of grace” used to describe the participation of people in the body of Christ. Such gifts were determined as from God; they were not prescribed roles determined by other humans. Max Weber expanded this theological term into a leadership concept that described its authority not from rules, traditions or position, but from the extraordinary characteristics of an individual person. In 1947, Weber defined charisma as follows:

---

<sup>40</sup>O’Dea, “Five Dilemmas of the Institutionalization of Religion,” 30-41.

...a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader. ... What alone is important is how the individual is actually regarded by those subject to charismatic authority, by his 'followers' or 'disciples.'<sup>41</sup>

Historians have kept records of leaders in all sectors of society who, with committed followers at the fitting time, accomplished extraordinary feats. They communicated a compelling image of the future that tapped into rising hopes and dreams of followers in an existing social order, took risks at a severe cost of personal sacrifice and together with followers, pulled it off.<sup>42</sup> But what happens when such influence for mutual benefit goes bad—when the leader's power goes uncontrolled and values become skewed? The triumph of successful charismatic leaders is heady stuff, and the dangers and temptations that daily confront leaders are insidious and powerful. There is a potentially dark side to leaders who employ leadership charisma. Thomas Oden insightfully points out that "The leader whose mission and task is to care for others...must not be a slave to one's own unexamined passions. Otherwise the souls entrusted to one's care may be subject to manipulation by the supposed care-giver, whose passions are projected on to the relationship."<sup>43</sup>

Regardless of the context, an ideology that powerfully connects a liberating belief system and its practice for a people of destiny will be attractive to those who perceive themselves as trapped. However liberating such an ideology might be, it also yields a potential opportunity for abusive leaders to thrive.

---

<sup>41</sup>Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, 358-259.

<sup>42</sup> Some have questioned the legitimacy of emphasis placed upon leadership to the neglect of followers' role in significant change and accomplishments. For an insightful challenge to the exaggerated importance of leadership, see Kelley, *The Power of Followership*. See also, Klaus and Heuser, "Charismatic Leadership: A Shadow-side Revealed."

<sup>43</sup>Oden, *Becoming a Minister*, 12.

In other words, charismatic leadership is very likely to emerge as the model of choice in the context where a supernaturalistic religious ideology is present. That reality offers the powerful presence of a self-sacrificing, pioneering leadership that forges new frontiers under the “fire and cloud” of an eschatological identity. Simultaneously, it yields the possibility of non-accountable dynamic leaders who fashion a following with the “sound-bites” of God-like utterances in the context of manipulative phenomenology, thus creating an image of powerful ministry leadership. This scenario becomes increasingly possible globally with the increased reliance upon mass media to further the cause of Christ evangelistically.

### **Final Observations**

My observations have obvious limitations. I am the president of the only seminary the Assemblies of God has in the USA. The Assemblies of God is a 95-year-old organization that has growing edges (in the USA) primarily among immigrant communities. We are aging and there are significant challenges that leadership is facing that are rooted in obviously different generational perspectives about church and mission and what models of leadership can keep us on mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The redemptive process that restores the life-giving nature to church organizations/structures gains empowerment through a fullest understanding of the power of Pentecost. Pentecost is central to the unfolding of the fullest revealing of the mission of God in Jesus Christ. It is at Pentecost that we are oriented to the inner logic of God's incarnational manifestation in the world through Jesus Christ. At Pentecost we experientially encounter the eschatological vision of redemption for the world through Christ's presence and coming. That indwelling power of the Spirit of Christ is the source of the church's life and ministry. The Holy Spirit reveals the fullest redemptive purpose of the mission of God by commissioning us into His

ongoing redemptive ministry.<sup>44</sup> "The church *that is* the empowering return of God's presence creates an eschatological people that *does what God is* through participation in the redemptive mission of God and *organizes what it does* by allowing spiritual empowerment to define its mission strategies.

Leadership and the structures through which they work may have a culturally informed fabric, but connectedness to Christ's redemptive missions must take prominence. The 21<sup>st</sup> century dawns with a significantly different world Christianity than the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To steward Kingdom ministry for the 21<sup>st</sup> century the new center of balance in the South will be faced with contemporary, but recurring challenges. Karl Barth has suggested three guidelines by which leaders (in any culture) might evaluate the pathways/structure by which they facilitate ministry in Christ's name. Barth suggested leaders needed to be continually validating structures around three tests. Structures are valid so long as they (1) facilitate ministry based on divine gifts and endowments, not arbitrariness and self will: (2) build up not disrupt the work of the Holy Ghost to build community and (3) facilitate witness to the world in need of redemptive mission. The continuing effectiveness of any church is only possible as we intentionally participate in the release of the Gospel's fullest power.<sup>45</sup> In conclusion, I would suggest that 21<sup>st</sup> century Pentecostal leaders need to exhibit leaderships qualities for effectiveness that minimally include the following:

- Knowing who we are and what factors shape us to be who we are.
- Knowing the impact we have on others
- Knowing the values that we exhibit in ministry practice

---

<sup>44</sup> First presented as an address "Unless the Lord Build the House: Eschatology Pentecostal Mission and Life-Giving Organizations" at the Lewis Wilson Institute to Pentecostal Studies at Vanguard University of Southern California, February 2001.

<sup>45</sup>Guder, *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*, 184.

- Valuing integrity and knowing what truly drives us to serve
- A commitment to the greater good/health of the communities you serve
- An ability to use power/influence constructively and ethically
- A deep commitment to growth toward Christ-likeness with that process merely being the cost we pay for recognition as a successful leader.
- The growing capability to know the difference between humanly devised ministry strategies and divine initiated redemptive mission.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup>Cheung-Judge, “Primal Leadership.”

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, Roland. *Essential Missionary Principles*. London: Robert Scott, 1913.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours*. London: Robert Scott, 1912.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Pentecost and the World: The Revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles*. London: Oxford University Press, 1917.
- Anderson, Robert M. *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.
- Berger, Peter. "Religion in a Globalizing World." Accessed September 5, 2008. Online: [http://pewforum.org /events/?EventID=136](http://pewforum.org/events/?EventID=136).
- Bueno, Ronald N. "Listening to the Margins: Re-historicizing Pentecostal Experiences and Identities." In *Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, 268-288. Edited by Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, Douglas Petersen. Oxford, UK; Irvine, CA: Regnum Books, 1999.
- Cheung-Judge, L. Mee-Yan. "Primal Leadership: The Power of Positive Emotions in Shaping Optimal Organizational Functioning." Oxford Centre for Missions, May 2004.
- Cox, Harvey. *Fire From Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*. Reading: MA: Addison Wesley, 1995.
- Daniel, David. "Dialogue Between Black and Hispanic Pentecostal Scholars: A Report and Some Personal Reflections." *Pnuema* 17 (Fall 1995), 219-28.
- Dayton, Donald. *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*. Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1987.
- Dempster, Murray. "Evangelism, Social Concern and the Kingdom of God." In *Called and Empowered, Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective*, 29-38. Murray A. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus and Douglas Petersen, eds. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991.
- Faupel, William. *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Theology*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996.
- Fee, Gordon. *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Kingdom of God and The Church's Global Mission." In *Called and Empowered: Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective*, 7-21. Murray A. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus and Douglas Petersen, eds. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991.

- Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: The Seabury Press, 1970.
- Guder, Darrel. *The Continuing Conversion of the Church*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmanns Publishing, 2000.
- Harrison, Lawrence, and Samuel Huntington, eds. *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Processes*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.
- Hodges, Melvin. *The Indigenous Church*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1953.
- Hofstede, Geert. *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, 1997.
- Hollenweger, Walter. "From Azusa Street to the Toronto Phenomenon" in *CONCILIUM* 1996/3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.
- Jenkins, Philip. "Reading the Bible in the Global South." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 30, No. 2 (April 2006), 67-73.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- Johnson, Alan. *Apostolic Function: The Paradigm of Missionary Identity J. Philip Hogan World Missions Series Monograph*, Vol. 1. Springfield, MO: Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, 2007.
- Kelley, Robert. *The Power of Followership*. New York: Doubleday Currency, 1992.
- Klaus, Byron. "The Holy Spirit and Mission in Eschatological Perspective: A Pentecostal Perspective" *PNEUMA*, 27, no. 7, (Fall 2005), 325-328.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Unless the Lord Build the House: Eschatology Pentecostal Mission and Life-Giving Organizations" Lecture, Lewis Wilson Institute to Pentecostal Studies at Vanguard University of Southern California, February 2001.
- Klaus, Byron, and Roger Heuser. "Charismatic Leadership: A Shadow-side Revealed" *PNEUMA*, 20, no. 2 (Fall 1998).
- Martin, David. *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America*. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1990.

- McGee, Gary. "Miracles and Mission Revisited." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 25, no. 4 (October 2001), 146-49.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Legacy of Melvin Hodges." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 22, No. 1 (January 1998).
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Radical Strategy in Modern Missions: The Linkage of Paranormal Phenomena with Evangelism." In *The Holy Spirit and Mission Dynamics*, 69-95. Edited by C. Douglas McConnell. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1997.
- Newbigin, J. E. Lesslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.
- O'Dea, Thomas F. "Five Dilemmas of the Institutionalization of Religion." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* I, no.1 (Oct 1961): 30-41.
- Oden, Thomas. *Becoming a Minister*. New York: Crossroad, 1987.
- Petersen, Douglas. *Not by Might Nor by Power*. Irvine: Regnum Books, 1996.
- Pomerville, Paul. *The Third Force in Mission*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985.
- Porter, Keith. "Globalization: What is it?" Accessed August 6, 2008. Online: <http://usforeignpolicy.about.com/od/trade/a/whatisgz.htm?p=1>.
- Raschke, Carl. *GloboChrist: The Great Commission Takes a Post-modern Turn*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academics, 2008.
- Sanneh, Lamin. *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2003.
- Satyavrata, Ivan. Lecture. Oxford World Missions Briefing, May 2004 sponsored by the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies in Oxford, England.
- Shaul Richard, and Waldo Cesar. *Pentecostalism and the Future of the Christian Churches*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publisher, 2000.
- Stoll, David. *Is Latin America Turning Protestant?* Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990.
- Suico, Joseph. "A Reflection on Evolving Understandings of Christian Leadership: A Filipino Pentecostal Perspective." Lecture, Asia Pacific Theological Association Assembly, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, September 2005.

“The Merchants of Cool,” PBS, Accessed May 10, 2007. Online: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool>.

Wacker, Grant. “Playing for Keeps: The Primitivist Impulse in Early Pentecostalism.” In *The American Quest for the Primitive Church*, 196-219. Edited by R. T. Hughes. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988.

Webber, Robert. *Who Gets to Narrate the World?: Contending for the Christian Story in an Age of Rivals*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2008.

Weber, Max. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. Translated by Talcott Parsons. New York: The Free Press, 1947.

Wilson, Everett, and Ruth Marshall Wilson. “Alice E. Luce: A Visionary Victorian.” In *Portraits of a Generation: Early Pentecostal Leaders*, 159-176. James R. Goff, Jr. and Grant Wacker, eds. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2002.

Winter, Ralph. “The Meaning of Mission: Understanding this Term is Crucial to Completion of the Missionary Task.” *Mission Frontiers*, 20, no 3-4, (March-April 1998), 15.

Yong, Amos. *The Spirit Poured Out On All Flesh: Pentecostals and the Possibility of Global Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.