



## freedom *the holy spirit life*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

*an excerpt from the Nicene Creed*



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A focus on the church related Holy Spirit life.



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A focus on the individuals Holy Spirit life.



**en.mind 24**

A focus on the theology of Holy Spirit life.

# enrich

THE LEADERSHIP MAGAZINE OF THE  
PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF CANADA

Enrich is published by The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada  
2450 Milltower Court, Mississauga, ON L5N 5Z6

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Publication Mail Registration No. 09922  
ISSN 1703-8669 Customer No. 4022009  
Agreement No. 40065147



## en. this issue

David Hazzard: Assistant Superintendent for  
Fellowship Services & Enrich Editor

“So who are the Pentecostals and what do you believe and do?” asked the interested travel companion sitting in the adjacent seat on a recent flight. This question followed a cordial greeting and my response to his previous question in which he wondered who I “worked with.” Often tempted to simply answer this question with “God,” I settled for “A vibrant and culturally diverse group of a quarter of a million Canadians who attend churches coast to coast known as The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.”

When we consider what the Lord has accomplished globally as a result of a century which recaptured an emphasis on the Holy Spirit, an engaging and inspiring story emerges. A story worth telling and retelling. My travel companion was intrigued.

If we could distill the essence of being Pentecostal down to one word, I would suggest that freedom could be that word...freedom from and freedom for. “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (2 Corinthians 3:17).



In the cover photo, a Second World War soldier/photographer captured one personal result of freedom on the faces of the Polish (non-Jewish) former residents of Dachau concentration camp. Joy! Dachau, a never-to-be forgotten visit in the mid 70s, was also a chief location for detainees from the Christian resistance movement, mainly Catholic clergy. Christians were imprisoned for their unwillingness to support the Nazi agenda. Then came liberation on April 29, 1945. The exuberant joy on faces is both remarkable and contagious.

As Pentecostals, we are people enjoying the liberty of God from every spiritual prison, to overcome, to rejoice, to live, to engage in significant relationships with others, to glorify God and enjoy Him forever and to serve Him joyfully.

**THIS EDITION OF ENRICH** is an invitation to review the story of Pentecost from a fresh perspective.

**Matt Tapley** explores what freedom in the Spirit looks like in an entire congregation that intentionally seeks the presence of the Lord, and then seeks to freely share His presence in the surrounding community.

It goes without saying that we affirm and anticipate the Spirit being poured out on men and women, enabling sons and daughters to prophesy. **Kimberlee Moran** provides valuable reflection on contemporary ministry as a woman.

**Tim Enloe** has shared in numerous PAOC conferences and offers valuable insight into experiencing Pentecost personally. In essence, Pentecost is a movement of modern day individuals who have been filled with the Spirit, as the disciples were in Acts 2.

And of course, authentic spirituality is always rooted in good theology, so **Robert P. Menzies** discusses the hermeneutical/theological foundations of Pentecost in his article Pentecost: This is Our Story. As well, **William Griffin** offers a thoughtful response to the recent conference sponsored by John MacArthur entitled "Strange Fire."

Being set free from the prisons of life, the point of spiritual freedom is to become everything God intended us to become (Christ-like) and accomplish everything He established in our destiny.

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# THE PRESENCE-DEPENDENT CHURCH

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*by Matt Tapley, Lead Pastor of Lakemount Worship Centre , Grimsby, ON*

*“Matt, would you please write an article about leading a local congregation toward becoming a Centre where the Holy Spirit is present and is obvious to the community?”*

While this subject is a driving force in my life and ministry, I feel that a caveat to this article is necessary. I do not consider myself to be an expert, nor would I assume to be further ahead than any of my colleagues who take the time to read this. I hope that I do not sound presumptuous or as though I think that I have all the answers. I know that I do not.

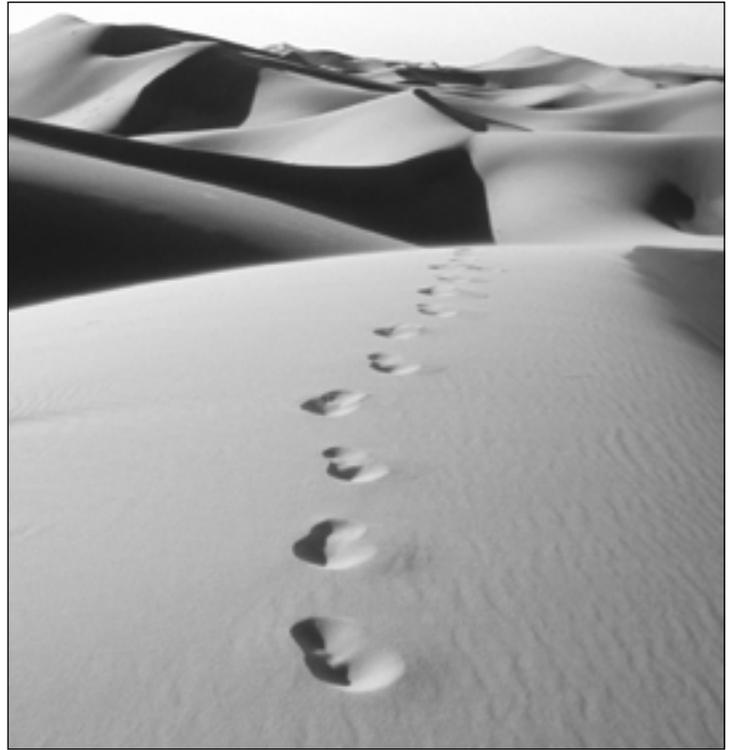
Please forgive me in advance for any offence my straightforwardness may cause. My intention in writing this is to hopefully stir passion and stimulate thinking toward the corporate pursuit of God's Manifest Presence at a local church level. I am convinced that we must love His Presence more than we love people. I am convinced that a priority for His Manifest Presence ought to be the unapologetically highest priority of those called by The Name.



## OMNIPRESENCE VS MANIFEST PRESENCE

In the book of Revelation, compelling imagery is used to lead the reader into sober consideration of the health of the local church. Jesus is depicted as the Perfect One walking among the Church He has established, inspecting and assessing local congregations with careful attentiveness and concern. He renders His Divine assessment of each congregation and offers less than glowing reviews. He even threatens to remove certain candlesticks from their place if improvements are not made to His liking.

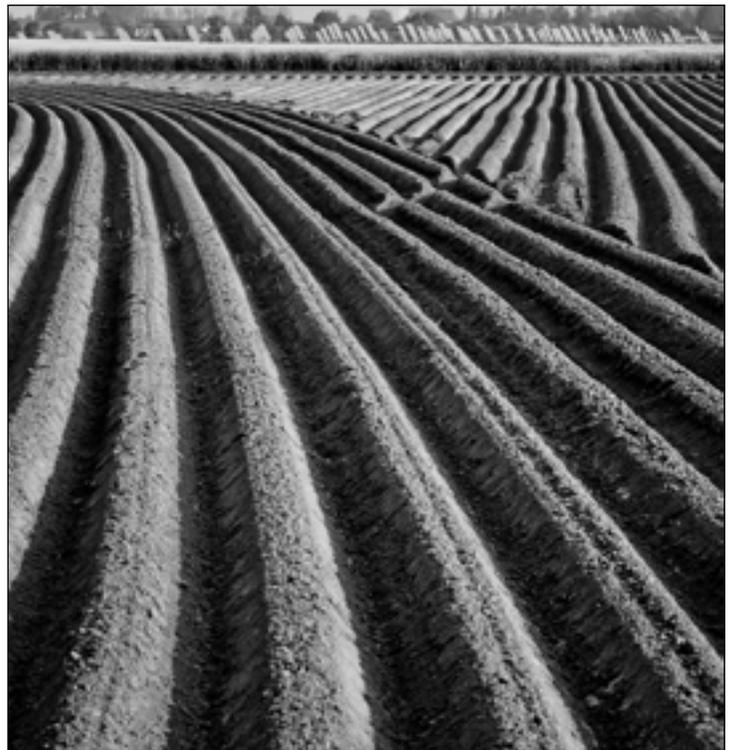
To the Church of Laodicea He says that He is standing at the door, knocking, waiting to come in (Revelation 3:20). Picture that—Jesus standing outside His Church wanting to come inside, but no one has opened the door. This sad picture is one that we Pentecostals refuse to wrestle with because of the assumption of His Presence with us. The inability to rightly distinguish Omnipresence from Manifest Presence will beset the Church from bringing the world into an encounter with the Living Christ.



## GOD IS EVERYWHERE ALL THE TIME, BUT NOT EQUALLY SO.

While it is true that God is everywhere, it is also true that God is the only One who can be more in a place than He already is. Any exaggerated emphasis on His Omnipresence will come at the expense of pursuing of His Manifest Presence. When we fail to honour and pursue His Manifest Presence among us, lines blur that ought not be blurred, passion is traded for polish and the latest trend becomes our dogma.

I believe a master key to our relating to God rightly has to do with our response to His Manifest Presence. There can be no true reverence without it. No lasting conviction. No genuine repentance. No holy fear.



## FOUNDATIONS FOR PRESENCE-DEPENDENT LIVING

1 Corinthians 10:11 tells us that the things that happened to the Israelites in the wilderness serve as a warning for us, on whom “the culmination of the ages has come.” Therefore, it is important for us as leaders to learn what we need to learn from their journey as well as to glean from Moses’ friendship with God, so that the “culmination of the ages” might be realized in our lifetime.

Moses was called to lead God’s people out of the bondage of Egypt and then, to lead them through a refining journey of 40 years wandering the wilderness. Delivering the Jewish nation from slavery, and then leading over a million people through the vulnerable landscape of the wilderness would be a daunting task for any leader. The salvation of the Jews from Egypt was only the first step in a long journey of God demonstrating His care and His dream for this nation. God’s heart in parting the sea, leading them by Fire and Cloud, feeding them with manna and quail was not to try to impress His people. He wanted to show them how near He was, and how much He cared for them in every little detail.

## CHOOSING HIS MANIFEST PRESENCE

Despite all of the miracles and provision, God’s people were constantly moaning about how He never did anything good for them. (It’s amazing how much we can take for granted without a heart of gratitude). God became frustrated with the people and their whining. God told Moses that he could lead the people into the Promised Land, but that God Himself would not go with them.

Full stop.

Think on that....

God gave Moses the opportunity to have incredible ministerial success—to lead the people into the Promised Land and skip the wandering season—but that He, the Lord, would not come along with them. Moses had the wisdom to refuse. Moses declared: “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?” (vs. 15-16).

Moses’ statement, “We will not go anywhere without You,” ought to continue to set the standard for how we value the Manifest Presence of the Lord. Our true value for the Presence of God is measured in our unwillingness to “do” ministry without Him. Not only that, but Moses’ questions for the Lord remain great questions for us to ponder as we minister today: What on earth distinguishes us from any other religious organization? Our message and our methods are not enough. We must have the Manifest Presence of the Lord.

## THERE’S MORE

Moses was living in the midst of miracles. The people were free from Egyptian bondage because of the Hand of God on Moses as he led them. There was supernatural evidence all around them, and yet Moses knew there was more. More than miracles. More than provision. More than success as a leader. More than people following you wherever you go. The Manifest Presence of the Lord was what he craved more than all of that other (good) stuff.

In fact, Moses died without entering the Promised Land, despite having been offered to enter there without the Lord. That should stir something in our hearts about how Heaven measures success in this life. Moses chose the Face of the Lord over the praise of people.

Lord, help us do the same.

## PURSuing, NOT PRESUMING HIS PRESENCE

How can we as leaders prioritize and value the Manifest Presence of the Lord in practical ways? While the following list is not exhaustive, I do believe these are a good launching point:

### ONE: HAVE A HIGH PRIORITY FOR WORSHIP

“God is enthroned in the praises of His people” (Psalm 22:3). The word for “praise” in this verse is “tehillah,” which is defined as “praise that is demanded by qualities or attributes.” In other words, this praise is like cheering for God in response to His works. We must do more than sing great songs with Jesus as the main subject. That does not engage the heart, nor is that the “spirit and truth” worship that the Father seeks (John 4:23).

At the dedication of Solomon’s Temple, the priests had prepared many songs and ceremonial activities for worship, but when they simply lifted their voices in heartfelt thanksgiving to God, the Manifest Presence of God fell and knocked them all over (2 Chronicles 5:13-14). Clearly what God values in worship has less to do with our best efforts and polish, and more to do with the sincerity of our hearts toward Him. He wants to saturate time and space with Himself. Sincere worship welcomes Him to do that.

### TWO: UNAPOLOGETICALLY EMBRACE THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

I believe that one of the sneakiest strategies of the enemy for reducing our effectiveness as the Church, is the hijacking of our evangelistic passion. Many leaders in the church today seem to think that the Holy Spirit’s gifts in operation will scare away unbelievers, so they sacrifice charisma in the name of caring for the lost. However, biblical evangelism is done primarily through encounter and explanation.

Acts chapter 2 describes the outpouring of the Spirit at the inauguration of the Church age. Those hungry believers waited for the

Holy Spirit rather than going ahead in ministry based on their first-hand encounters with the resurrected Christ. When the Holy Spirit came upon them, those upper room participants staggered into the streets with flames on their heads as they worshipped God in various languages. The response of the unbelievers who observed this was that they were “amazed and perplexed” (Acts 2:12).

The words: “amazed and perplexed” are not exactly what we Pastors want to see on our visitor comment cards! Why? Because if we’re honest, we can often be more concerned about making people feel comfortable when they worship with us. While it is good to be hospitable, it is not good to be fearful. We cannot be embarrassed by the Holy Spirit and expect from Him at the same time.

If we try to “calm down” the charisma in our gatherings, we might actually think that we care about people more than the Holy Spirit does. There’s no way that is good theology! When we trust Him without trying to “tame” Him, we discover the Holy Spirit is a genius at leading people to Jesus. We do have the prerogative to design our gatherings however we like, but we are not guaranteed that what we enjoy is pleasing to God.

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul is laying apostolic foundation for a very diverse congregation. Having gone over the need for love to rule the gifts of the Spirit and how order is to look in a local church, Paul describes the impact of Presence-dependent congregations on unbelievers. He says: “But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you” (vs. 24-25).

I’ve read that the highest determining factor for many people on deciding whether they will return to a church is the quality of the



women's restroom. Help me out! More than loving the programs, the facilities or even the people or the message, I want people to come in and say: "God is here!" This cannot remain a wish or merely a compliment. This must be the pursuit of how we structure and organize our gatherings.

God loves people more than we do. When we unapologetically pursue Him, His Manifest Presence will bring unbelievers into a "taste and see" experience of His Glory and goodness (Psalm 34:8).

### THREE: VALUE CHILD-LIKENESS OVER PROFESSIONALISM

Jesus said that the kingdom of God belongs to kids (Matthew 19:14). This does not mean that our faith is for people with lower or undeveloped intellect. "Child-likeness" means that we approach the kingdom of God with genuine wonder and willing receptivity. Without these attributes, leaders sometimes complicate simple things and restrict the flowing of the Spirit in an attempt to follow a preset program.

Throughout Scripture, the way that people responded to the Presence of the Lord is often what we might consider disruptive. I mean—few of us would scarcely know what to do if a few guys decided to rip a hole in the ceiling during one of our sermons. And yet, when this happened to Jesus, He honoured the faith of these bold ones and healed their paralyzed friend (Mark 2:4-5).

Some churches develop an unwritten culture-code of social norming that renders their gatherings boring and predictable. This mostly happens because as leaders, we want to look like we know what we are doing, and to assure people that someone is "behind the wheel," so to speak. We don't need to have it all figured out. In fact, I would question anyone who claims to have it all figured out!

Creating a culture where it is unsafe to ask questions or be remotely emotional in worship crushes child-likeness and values appearances more than obedience and experiential learning. Kids are inherently curious and wanting to learn. "Are we there yet?" "Where does the sun go when it's nighttime?" "Where do babies come from?" (You handle that last one, okay? – ha!). Pretending to have the answers when you don't actually know is a surefire way to remain ignorant. Ironically, it seems to me that the only Christian leader who never wrestled with a "Messiah-complex" was actually the Messiah.

### MAKE ROOM

God's Manifest Presence has always been the distinguishing characteristic of His people. Churches that are more concerned with hosting the Presence of the Lord than they are with making people comfortable develop people who really love Jesus. I believe that when we love God in worship, make room for Him to do what He wants, and remain curious and child-like in response to Him, we will see more of the Manifest Presence in our churches. He accompanies His Word with signs and wonders and this becomes a calling card to people everywhere who don't know Jesus yet. Then, when those seeking unbelievers walk in to our gathering—even if they are "amazed and perplexed"—will say: "God, is really here!"

I pray that this happens more and more wherever we are gathered in Jesus' Name.

..... en.

*Matt Tapley is the lead pastor of Lakemount Worship Centre, in Grimsby Ontario. He and his wife, Lisa have three wonderful kids, Abby, 15, Joey, 14, and Sarah, 2001-2012. For more information, check out [www.lakemount.ca](http://www.lakemount.ca).*





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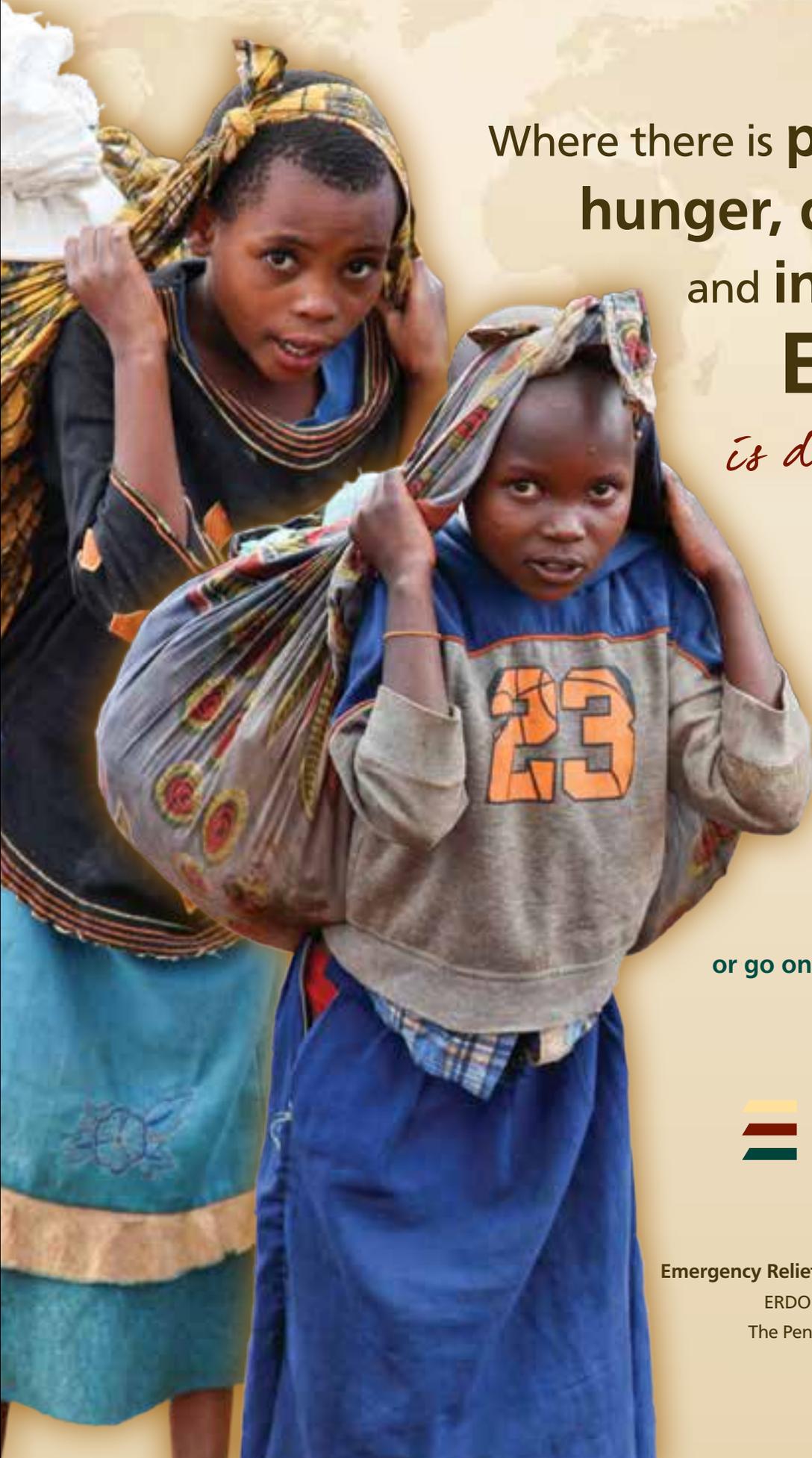
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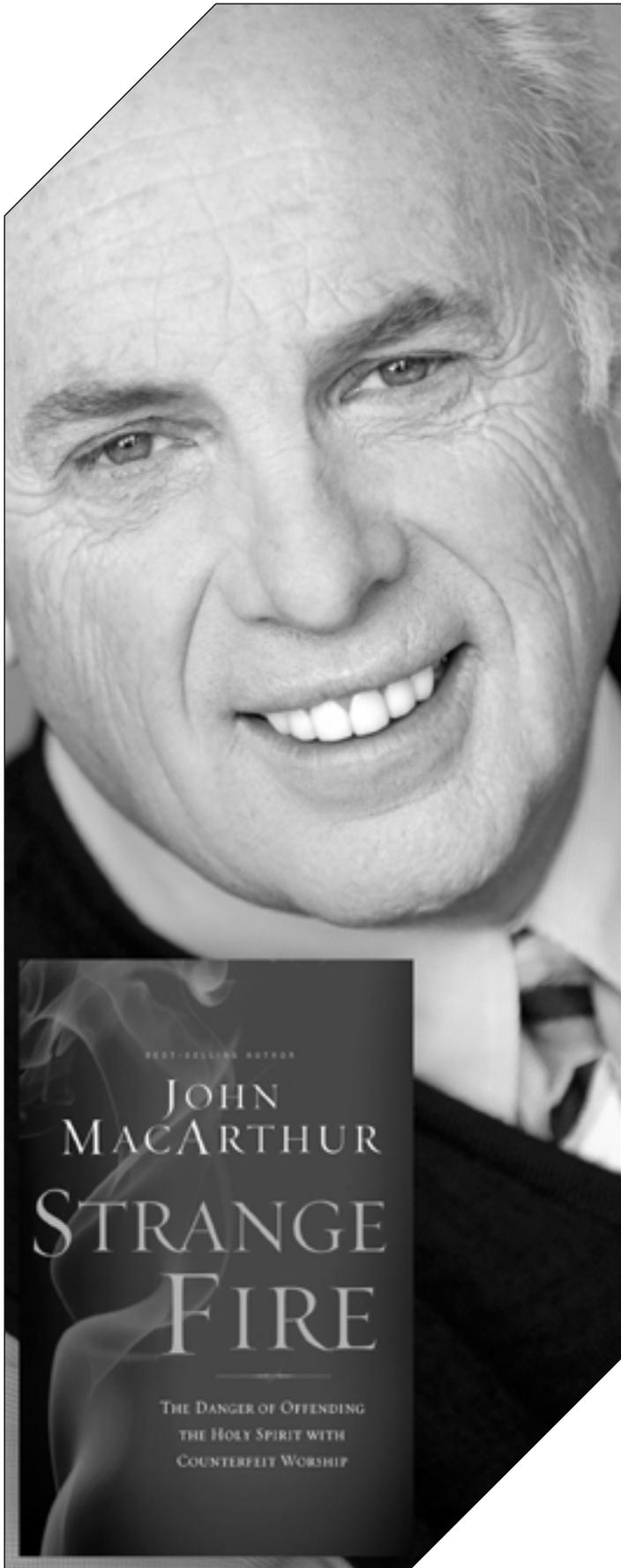
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# BOOK REVIEW OF JOHN MACARTHUR'S **STRANGE FIRE**

*Reviewed by William A. Griffin*

So it's John MacArthur versus more than half a billion Pentecostals/Charismatics (his estimate). MacArthur's obsession with the charismatic movement first came to light in written form with the publication of *The Charismatics: A Doctrinal Perspective* in 1978<sup>1</sup>. Fourteen years later, he launched another assault with an updated version titled, *Charismatic Chaos*<sup>2</sup>—using his wellworn gavel on a number of Johnny-comelately charismatics such as the Kansas City Prophets.

In his introduction to the 1992 *Charismatic Chaos*, MacArthur declared that literally thousands of people had written to him lauding his earlier attempt to biblically and doctrinally expose the fallacies of the burgeoning charismatic movement, including “countless pastors and other Christian leaders who were grateful for a biblical treatment of an issue they were afraid to touch (*italics mine*).”<sup>3</sup> Basically, MacArthur has taken on the role of anticharismatic crusader with an attitude that resembles the familiar colloquialism, “It’s a dirty job but somebody has to do it.”

Undaunted by the statistics that show, in spite of his onslaught, the ranks of Pentecostals/Charismatics have grown by hundreds of millions since he launched his religious vendetta, MacArthur recently rallied some of his evangelical friends for an alleged exposé of the charismatic movement in the Strange Fire Conference (October 16-18, 2013). More gas on the fire!

The conference coincided with the release of MacArthur's latest book, *Strange Fire: The Danger of ending the Holy Spirit with Counterfeit Worship*<sup>4</sup>. MacArthur's “Grace to You” staff published a statement

saying, “Strange Fire was a response to a tidal wave of dangerous, damning lies that are leading hundreds of millions of people to hell.”<sup>5</sup>

Prior to the Strange Fire Conference, MacArthur directed a personal message on his Canadian website especially for Pentecostals<sup>6</sup>. The caption over the promo video inviting Pentecostals to attend the conference which would deal with renegade charismatics reads, “John MacArthur’s Encouragement to Faithful Pentecostals.” He addressed the many traditional Pentecostals, who, he says “love Christ” as well as the faithful pastors who are “serving the Lord the best they know how.” MacArthur appeals to a “great force” of these Pentecostals to partner with him in addressing the aberrations of the charismatic movement, especially the “fake healers and prosperity preachers.”

Strangely, the conference offered little or no grace to Pentecostals. One of the speakers, Phil Johnson, who has a bachelor of theology from Moody and serves as an associate to MacArthur, delivered a paper titled, “Is There a Baby in the Charismatic Bathwater?” One might hope, in view of MacArthur’s joinus pitch, that there might be a few undernourished Pentecostals in the murky Waters. But no—Johnson closes his address with some advice for his listeners, “Go ahead and throw out the bathwater that’s a century’s worth of sludge in the bottom, it’s not a baby—it’s time to clean the sink.” Thanks a lot!

MacArthur delivers a paper on the last day of his conference titled, “An Appeal to Charismatic Friends.” The title sounds promising but the language is decidedly not friendly.

Fending off criticism before the conference had even ended, MacArthur declared:

*Another accusation has been that we are talking about something that is only true of the extreme, lunatic, fringe of the movement. That is patently not true. There is error in this movement that sweeps through the entire movement.... [N]inety percent of the people around the world connected to the Charismatic Movement take ownership of the Prosperity gospel. Twenty-four or twenty-five million of them deny the Trinity. A hundred million of them are Roman Catholics ... Do the math. This is not some fringe. This is the movement. And it is growing at a rapid rate....*

There are others who criticize by saying, and this came pretty early in this conference, you’re attacking brothers ... you’re attacking brothers. I wish I could affirm that. We said this one way or another already this week, this is a movement made up largely of non-Christians.<sup>7</sup>

Oops, there goes the partnership! In fairness, it should be noted that MacArthur does allow a few Pentecostals into Heaven but even as he does this he can’t resist tossing a few barbs:

*I do believe there are sincere people within the Charismatic Movement who, in spite of the systemic corruption and confusion, have come to understand the necessary truths of the gospel ... They recognize that salvation is not about health and wealth, and they genuinely desire to be rescued from sin, spiritual death, and everlasting hell.<sup>8</sup>*

Not satisfied with denying brotherhood with Pentecostals, MacArthur devotes the last chapter of his book, *Strange Fire*, to a scolding for some of his Reformed friends like John Piper who, he claims, are too tolerant of Pentecostals. He calls the chapter, “Open Letter To My Continuationist<sup>9</sup> Friends.” Of course, he does not question their salvation (good Calvinists don’t do that to one another) but thinks they are doing a disservice to Christianity by providing “an illusion of legitimacy to the broader Charismatic Movement.”<sup>10</sup>

In measured language, Piper acknowledges his sincere appreciation for MacArthur’s reverence of the Scriptures and his effective exegetical preaching but defends his own view that the spiritual gifts are for today. Coming from Piper, the Scriptures advocating the gifts are perhaps more convincing than if a Pentecostal were defending his position:

I advocate obedience to 1 Corinthians 12:31, “earnestly desire the higher gifts.”

And I advocate obedience to 1 Corinthians 14:1, “earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you might prophesy.” And I advocate obedience to 1 Corinthians 14:39, “earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.” I want Christians today to obey those texts.<sup>11</sup>

And in reference to MacArthur’s singling out Charismatics as being doctrinally deprived and emotionally out of order, Piper has a few incisive observations:

*Think of all the doctrinal errors in the history of the Church. Those weren’t charismatics, by and large. Think of all the dying mainline churches today with all their moral and doctrinal aberrations. These aren’t charismatics. And think of the emotional deadness in thousands of noncharismatic evangelical and mainline churches. Those are deadly emotional abuses.<sup>12</sup>*



Space doesn't permit a detailed discussion of MacArthur's book, but suffice it to say, MacArthur doesn't really know Pentecostals/Charismatics nor what they believe. Pentecostals are quite agreeable to recognize the back cover on the canon of Scriptures. We believe that God has said all there is to be said about His provisions of redemption. But that does not mean that God has stopped revealing things to believers. MacArthur does not seem to know the difference between having contempt for prophecies that do not pass the test and having contempt for prophets. The Apostle Paul's directions are quite clear, "Do not put out the Spirit's fire do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22).

We do not deny that the latitude that is created by openness to the moving of the Spirit carries an inherent risk for Pentecostals. Followers are sometimes quite vulnerable to misguided and exploitative leaders. Occasionally, we offer some directions to Charismatics who have strayed, as illustrated in Gordon Fee's *The Disease of the Health & Wealth Gospels* or D.R. McConnell's *A Different Gospel*, but we do not consider judging other believers our main pursuit in working on the Great Commission. The sideroads of church history are littered with the bodies and damaged fragments of movements conducted by heretics, false teachers, and manipulators. Christ is building His Church.

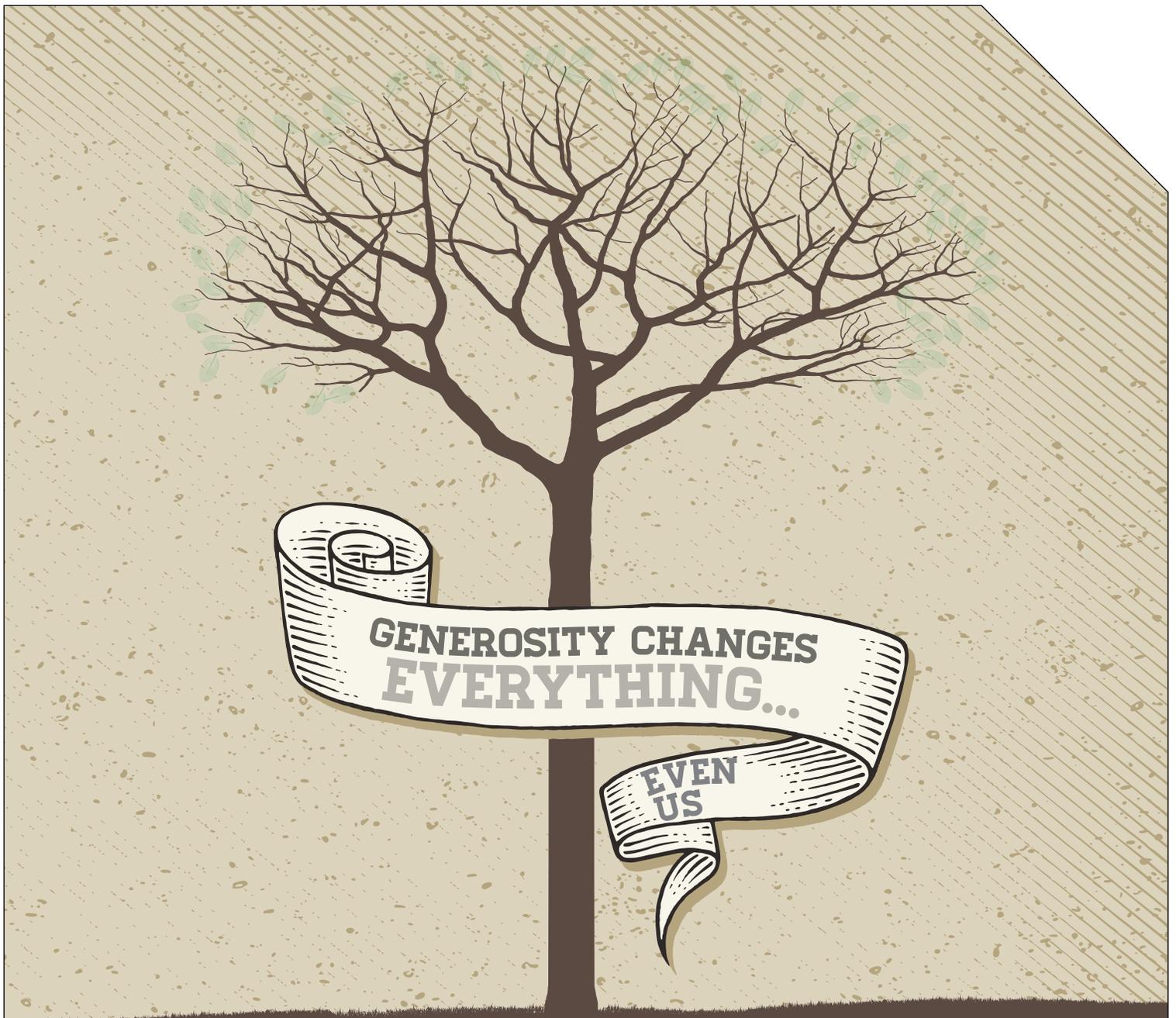
Perhaps the Pharisee Gamaliel was not far off the mark when he said, "Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men. You will only find yourselves fighting against God" (Acts 5:38-39).

God is the Judge.  
..... en.

*William Griffin serves in the National Office of the PAOC  
as Advisor to the Officers*

## ENDNOTES

1. John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The Charismatics: A Doctrinal Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978).
2. \_\_\_\_\_, *Charismatic Chaos* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992).
3. Ibid., 13.
4. John F. MacArthur, *Strange Fire: The Danger of offending the Holy Spirit with Counterfeit Worship* (Nashville, TN: Nelson Books, 2013).
5. <http://www.gtycanada.org/blog/B131023>
- 6.
7. <http://www.gty.org/resources/sermons/TM1318/anappealtocharismaticfriendsjohnmacarthur>
8. *Strange Fire: The Danger of offending the Holy Spirit with Counterfeit Worship*, 81.
9. The term "continuationist" has become a popular term to refer to Christian scholars who make room for the spiritual gifts of New Testament times to be exercised in the church today.
10. *Strange Fire: The Danger of offending the Holy Spirit with Counterfeit Worship*, 234.
11. <http://www.desiringgod.org/blog/posts/piperaddressesstrangefireandcharismaticchaos>
12. Ibid.



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# A FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO **A SOMETIMES** **TOUCHY** **SUBJECT**

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by *Tim Enloe*

In his classic book, *They Speak With Other Tongues*, John Sherrill observes, “*Tongues make people fight.*”<sup>1</sup>

Even those who first heard the 120 speaking in tongues on the Day of Pentecost formed divided opinions. Some were amazed and perplexed while others suggested a 12-step program for the apparent outbreak of early-morning alcoholism.

Throughout history people have both ridiculed and venerated tongues speakers. In the first three centuries of church history, the Montanist group, theologian Tertullian, Bishop Irenaeus, Elder Novation, and historian Eusebius either experienced or mentioned the practice of this supernatural gift. Even 300 years after Pentecost, tongues were still controversial.<sup>2</sup>

Though St. Augustine and Origen seem to be the earliest cessationists, the phenomenon of tongues continued. From 1100–1500 more notable tongues speakers entered the scene: Abbess Hildegard, who transcribed some 900 of her unknown words in *Lingua Ignota*, while Franciscan, Dominican, and Jesuit monks all wrote about their spiritual language.<sup>3</sup> The tongues-speaking French Camisards influenced John Wesley in the 1700s, stirring him to make favorable comments about the Montanists.<sup>4</sup> Notable in the 1800s, British Presbyterian Pastor Edward Irving revived public interest in this gift with his tongues as the “standing sign” doctrine.<sup>5</sup>

Though history displays a consistent expression of miraculous spiritual gifts through the ensuing centuries (including tongues speaking), many look to one man as the father of the modern Pentecostal movement: Charles F. Parham. Historically speaking, Parham’s lasting doctrinal contribution was his connection of tongues speech as the sign — or as he coined it the “Bible evidence”<sup>6</sup> of Spirit baptism. He did not have any problem with the modern expression of tongues; he was trying to fit the phenomenon into a theological framework by asking, “What function do tongues serve?”

Parham believed he had rediscovered the apostolic doctrine of tongues speech as the confirming sign of Spirit baptism. Though Parham’s leadership influence in the Pentecostal revival was brief, and many of his unique doctrines forgotten,<sup>7</sup> his “Bible evidence” doctrine left an indelible mark on the burgeoning movement’s theology and practice.<sup>8</sup>

Today, tongues still seem to be controversial. Modern critics of the Pentecostal movement typically do not have problems with our evangelism efforts, open worship style, or missions programs; the problem lies with our seemingly pesky initial evidence doctrine. Perhaps it is the only thing standing in the way of our being identical twins to our evangelical brothers. Is it really worth the potential misunderstanding to cling to such a historically hot-button belief?



I am a thirty-something Pentecostal minister and I believe it is. Not for the sake of toeing the company line, not for the sake of hanging onto yesterday's archaic traditions, but because I am firmly convinced it is biblical to expect tongues speaking as the outward confirming sign of Spirit baptism, and afterward, as a viable expression of spiritual life.

I often interact with younger ministers and ministry students. Some people may be alarmed at their transparency in honestly questioning initial evidence, but I am encouraged because I have yet to find a questioner who was not sincere in his or her search for biblical accuracy.

This generation of leaders needs to explore and arrive at their own conclusions. They do not blindly accept the position handed down as

unchallengeable *ex cathedra*. The good news is there is a significant weight of biblical data to support the expectation of tongues speaking as the universal sign of Spirit baptism and as a mystically freeing expression of worship and prayer afterward.

In this article I will explore several practical angles for understanding and teaching about expecting tongues as the outward confirming sign of Spirit baptism. I will first look at some terminology, then see how tongues fit into the big picture of Scripture, then move onto a functional, prophetic dimension of tongues — reexamining the reason why we need Spirit baptism. The composite image, I hope, will bring a fresh perspective to the topic and perhaps offer some different, usable teaching angles.

## TERMINOLOGY

We often describe the Pentecostal experience as “the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues.” For simplicity, I will use the title: Spirit baptism. This distills the essence into two biblically defensible words and easily aligns with the other elementary Christian discipleship experience of water baptism.

## TONGUES

Just hearing the word tongues sets some people on edge. We do not have the luxury of assuming that speaking in tongues is a desirable or positive concept for everyone. Because of the confusion, and depending on the audience, I frequently choose to use different terminology when speaking on the subject. For example, I commonly use the term supernatural language with adults or youth.

I am not advocating a bait-and-switch tactic; that would be dishonest. After all, tongues is the biblically accurate word used in all of our possible teaching texts. I am advocating being sensitively creative to help reframe the concept in a fresh way.

## INITIAL PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Although I possess no theological concerns with the term initial physical evidence, I believe it has at least three distinct hurdles to overcome: one for the outsider, one for the insider, and one for the present cultural context.

This terminology carries historic baggage for those outside the Pentecostal tradition. They often think we do not appreciate the authenticity of their spirituality because they reject one of our core beliefs. For those inside, tongues has frequently been a source of spiritual pride and false elitism. Unfortunate for everyone is the potential exclusivist notion we intentionally portray or they unintentionally perceive that separates brothers into categories of the “haves” and the “have-nots.” We need to avoid this division while sensitively enabling others to come into their biblical inheritance of supernatural power. Approach is always critical — both for the outsider and the insider — and once again we must be cautious that we are motivated by love and humility.

Perhaps we should reexamine this terminology in practical settings. To a modern church attendee, initial physical evidence sounds like something a district attorney would present to win a conviction or part of the storyline on a CSI episode. The perceived association with criminal investigation and prosecution cannot be helpful. I am not advocating that theologians rewrite their texts or amend their glossaries to conform to pop culture, but I believe our day-to-day teaching/preaching ministries could benefit from clearer, simpler language that contains a stronger missional connotation.

I have generally preferred outward confirming sign to initial physical evidence, but have chosen to adopt a description — prophetic confirmation — for reasons I will discuss later. Whatever our personal choice, I encourage pastors to revisit and reevaluate the effectiveness of their semantics. What others may hear may not be what we actually mean.

Let us look to some ideas relating to our biblical ideology of the sign of Spirit baptism.



## HOW TONGUES FIT INTO THE BIG PICTURE

Did tongues speaking suddenly show up out of nowhere? Is the Book of Acts our only basis for understanding and teaching on the subject?

A brief survey of the Acts accounts reveals that speaking in tongues is the biblically mentioned sign in the three detailed accounts (Acts 2,10,19) and is the most likely sign in the two nondetailed accounts (Acts 8, 9) as well. The only consistently repeated sign of Spirit baptism in Acts is tongues speaking; any other conclusion is synthetic. But what about the bigger picture?

I have discovered that presenting a broader biblical context than merely presenting the Acts narratives enables people to see the subject in a more personally imperative light. The more Scripture we use, the more hunger we will generate. Along these lines, the following concepts offer some teaching angles to consider.

Two common stages in biblical Spirit-empowering narratives  
Looking at what people experienced in other biblical Spirit-empowering events helps us frame a broader context for Spirit baptism. What happened to people when the Holy Spirit came upon them before the Day of Pentecost?

The overwhelming response to the Spirit's empowering in the Old Testament was spontaneous prophecy in the speaker's native language. In fact, these occurrences frequently displayed a two-stage process:

### THE HOLY SPIRIT CAME UPON THE PERSON AND GAVE WITNESS WITH SUDDEN PROPHETIC SPEECH.

Examples of this common two-stage pattern include: Numbers 11:25; 1 Samuel 10:6,10; 1 Samuel 19:20; 2 Samuel 23:1,2; 1 Chronicles 12:18; 2 Chronicles 15:1-7; 20:14-17; 24:20; Isaiah 59:21; 61:1; Ezekiel 2:1-7; Joel 2:28,29; Matthew 12:18; Luke 1:67-79; 4:14,15; Acts 1:8; 2:4; 10:44,45; 19:6.

These two common stages follow through to the New Testament fulfillment of both Moses' desire (Numbers 11:29) and the direct oracle from God (Joel 2:28,29) that first, the Holy Spirit would one day come upon all of God's people, and second they would give prophetic witness.

Even Jesus reiterated this theme when He prophesied that the Holy Spirit would first come upon believers; and, second, He would empower them as vocal witnesses (Acts 1:8).

### PROPHETIC COMMISSIONING MOTIF

The major Old Testament prophets had distinct moments of prophetic commissioning. Isaiah 6, Jeremiah 1, Ezekiel 1, and Daniel 10 are examples. Four similarities are apparent in these narratives:

Heard divinely inspired sounds,  
Saw divinely inspired sights,  
Felt divinely inspired sensation, and  
Spoke divinely inspired speech.

Isaiah first saw the Lord (6:1), heard angelic speech (verse 3), then felt the hot coal on his lips (verses 6,7), and finally spoke divinely inspired words (verses 9ff). Jeremiah first heard (1:4), then felt the hand of the

Lord touch his lips (verse 9), then saw (verse 11), and began to speak (verse 7). Ezekiel saw the vision (1:1-24), heard the voice (verse 25), felt supernatural sensation (2:2; 3:2), and last spoke Spirit-inspired words (3:11ff). Likewise Daniel first saw (10:5ff), then felt (verses 8-10), then heard (verse 9), then spoke (verse 16).

The Acts 2 account follows this motif point by point. The first Pentecostals first heard a sound of wind from heaven (verse 2), and then saw the appearance of fire (verse 3). They most likely felt the Holy Spirit's presence as this divine fire both physically sat on each one of them, and they were personally filled (verses 3,4). No wonder they proceeded to speak Spirit-inspired words (verse 4). They were experiencing a textbook case of prophetic commissioning; only this time it was not for a unique individual, but a democratization of prophetic experience and power. New phenomena marked this new, universal dimension of prophetic availability: prophecy in an unlearned language.

A practical ministry note: When I teach on the subject of tongues, I often use this functional approach to lay the groundwork for Spirit-inspired speech being the biblically consistent response to the Holy Spirit's empowering. By doing this I frame this expectation in a much broader context and make the personalization of tongues speech easier for many to accept.

## APOSTOLIC RECOGNITION

As a final dimension of the big picture, let us look at how the apostles viewed tongues, not just the accounts of the actual receiving.

In Acts 10, Peter responds to the glossolalia of the Caesarean Gentiles. With his companions, he shares amazement that the Spirit had been poured out on these outsiders in identical fashion to the original Jews at Pentecost (verses 45-47). Peter recognized Spirit baptism by the demonstration of tongues.

Examine the usage of the pronoun "we" in verse 47. It speaks not to the Acts 2 participants only; the "we" also addressed the Jews from Joppa who came with Peter (verses 23,45-47). The Joppa believers had also experienced Spirit baptism, and tongues had attested their Spirit baptism as well.

While relating the Gentile Pentecost to the other apostles in Jerusalem, Peter again used the pronoun "we," but this time he is speaking to his comrades from the original Pentecost: "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit' " (Acts 11:15,16).<sup>9</sup>

Peter used the experience of tongues to confirm that Spirit baptism had occurred for the Gentiles. This was also the sign that convinced the other apostles of the Gentiles' conversion and subsequent Spirit empowering:

"Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way? When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, 'Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life' " (verses 17,18).

It is indisputable. The apostles saw tongues as confirmation of Spirit baptism. In Acts 15:8,9 Peter again recounts this event using the same reasoning.

After circling the terminology and bigger picture, we are left with the issue of implementation.

### A FUNCTIONAL PROPHETIC ASPECT

Since tongues is a form of prophetic speech, we need to reflect on how the expression of this phenomena stirs us with courage to minister. The two-stage pattern mentioned before reminds us that, when the Spirit empowers us, we can do things we cannot normally do by ourselves. How does this sign stir our confidence to action?

### A LITTLE GREEK

Luke's usage of the peculiar Greek verb *apophthengomai* — which is translated “utterance” in Acts 2:4, and Palma notes “is used in the Septuagint for supernaturally inspired speech”<sup>10</sup> — sheds light on his anticipation of converting experience into practice. Not only did Luke use this word in Acts 2:4 to describe the Holy Spirit's activity in prompting words in tongues, but he also created a conceptual bridge for the original Greek reader when he used the same verb to describe Peter's speech to the crowd in the known language (verse 14). Luke shows that the same Holy Spirit guided both events of speaking — one in tongues and one in known language. So practically, if we can trust God to guide our speech in the supernatural tongue, how much more should we trust him to guide our English to minister to others.

This is where my preferred terminology comes into play. I believe tongues serve as prophetic confirmation of Spirit baptism. When someone starts to speak in tongues, it confirms he can speak God-directed words; it is a biblical, prophetic commissioning that can be translated into supernatural, verbal ministry in his native tongue.

I value tongues as the first outward sign and also as an ongoing blessing. But in the big picture, I believe tongues lend confidence to minister. Spirit baptism is not a totally new event scripturally, but rather a greater fulfillment and a democratization of previous prophetic empowerings “upon all flesh.”

This fact should affect how we present Spirit baptism to those we lead. If our motivation for teaching on Spirit baptism is counting recipients for our Annual Church Ministries Report, our local ministry context only suffers. When we frame our teaching about Spirit baptism in a missional way, we stir expectancy to minister with this new power. We all have unsaved people in our lives who need to hear a word from the Lord. Spirit baptism and the confirming sign of speaking in tongues lead to active prophetic witnessing.

### CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Having discussed the terminology, big picture, and functional considerations, a few final warnings are in order for modern practitioners of Pentecost.

First, Spirit baptism provides supernatural ministry power. Therefore, the confirmational experience of tongues speaking should inspire spiritual confidence to minister. Unfortunately, we Pentecostals often seem to struggle with spiritual pride and elitism along with our experience; but power, not division, should be the outcome.

To constantly keep the true purpose of Spirit baptism in focus, we need to personally practice Spirit-inspired, prophetic witnessing when we are off the clergy clock. Only then can we authentically inspire our people to freely give away what they have freely received. I believe this is the ultimate solution to the problem of those we lead being filled and then not implementing Spirit-inspired ministry afterward; we must lead them — not only in theory but also in practice.

Second, the fact some have yet to experience the confirming sign of tongues does not invalidate their other spiritual experiences. For a Pentecostal to look down on the real, supernatural encounters of others simply because they have not spoken in tongues is tragic. This demonstrates how much we need to consistently humble ourselves and welcome the fruit of the Spirit to grow in our lives.

Perhaps a fresh read-through of Acts 10 would remind us how blinding our prejudices can be. We must never forget that believers had some level of supernatural ministry prior to Spirit baptism. This is shown in Christ's ministry commissionings, first to the Twelve, and then to the 70 He sent out two by two.

Finally, we must be careful to never view the concept of evidential tongues as a theological argument. I can only wonder why initial evidence is not propositionally stated in Scripture. Perhaps it is to keep us from pursuing the sign over the actual gift. Tongues speaking is not the point of Spirit baptism; prophetic ministry is. Our approach needs to set the expectation beyond the initial sign, setting a fuller context in which people can experience Jesus as their Baptizer in the Holy Spirit and then becoming the Spirit-empowered witnesses He indicated: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

Tongues is indeed the prophetic confirmation, the initial physical evidence, and outward confirming sign of Spirit baptism. But the actual gift is the supernatural, prophetic power of God's Spirit that the world desperately needs. Let us enable others into this amazing experience.

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## ENDNOTES

1. John Sherrill, *They Speak With Other Tongues* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Spire Books, 1964).
2. See Ronald A.N. Kydd's work, *Charismatic Gifts in the Early Church*, (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson) for more discussion and details.
3. Notables include: Antony of Padua who was Franciscan, Vincent Ferrier who was Dominican, and Francis Xavier who was a Jesuit.
4. Leslie Thomas Holdcroft, *The Holy Spirit: A Pentecostal Interpretation*, rev. ed. (Abbotsford, B.C. Canada: CeeTec Publishing, 1999). Holdcroft uses Kydd as a primary source.
5. See David W. Dorrie, "Edward Irving and the 'Standing Sign' of Spirit Baptism" in *Initial Evidence: Historical and Biblical Perspectives on the Pentecostal Doctrine of Spirit Baptism*, ed. Gary McGee, (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf and Stock, 2007).
6. Charles F. Parham, *Kol Kare Bomidbar: A Voice Crying In the Wilderness* (Kansas City: Private, 1902), 25–38.
7. Parham concluded that the specific language of tongues exhibited by a person should be identified as a known, presently spoken language, and this identification would direct the person to his foreign mission field. If he spoke Chinese, God was calling and equipping the person to minister to the Chinese in their native tongue. Several failed experiments quickly proved this conclusion false.
8. Many early leaders in the Pentecostal movement would experience Spirit baptism under Parham's ministry, including: Howard Goss, Marie Burgess Brown, Eli Richey, F.F. Bosworth, and John G. Lake — not to mention the global impact of his independently thinking protégé, William Seymour, and the Azusa Street revival which would carry the rediscovered "Bible evidence" teaching to international prominence.
9. Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission (www.Lockman.org).
10. Anthony D. Palma, *The Holy Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 2001), 141.

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# PENTECOST: THIS IS OUR STORY

by Robert P. Menzies

*“The reluctance to give clear, theological definition to the Pentecostal movement misses the fact the Bible shaped the Movement; it also loses sight of a genuine need of the church. We need to know who we are to pass on this legacy.”*

## INTRODUCTION

A friend asked, “Why do Pentecostals talk so much about baptism in the Holy Spirit?” I suggested he read Acts 2. The Bible, particularly the narrative of Acts, drives and shapes Pentecostal experience and practice. It is impossible to understand Pentecostals apart from this basic, fundamental fact.

Many academics today scoff at the notion that we can identify Pentecostals with any precision. They often ridicule the idea that we can define Pentecostals theologically. If the origins and the central doctrines of the Pentecostal movement are relatively clear, why, then, should it be difficult to define what it means to be a Pentecostal?

The focus on Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity in the largest possible terms is often an extension of researchers’ purposes, which generally focus on illuminating cultural trends, and not directly related to the life of the church.

Also, church leaders are not immune from describing the Movement they associate with in the largest possible terms. Many who stress the ecumenical significance of the Pentecostal movement are reluctant to define the Movement in clear, theological language. While precise definitions bring clarity, they also establish limits. Markers that shape identity also exclude. But if everyone is a Pentecostal, then what does this term mean?

There are many theological descriptions we may use to define other groupings of Christians in relation to Pentecostals. I suggest the

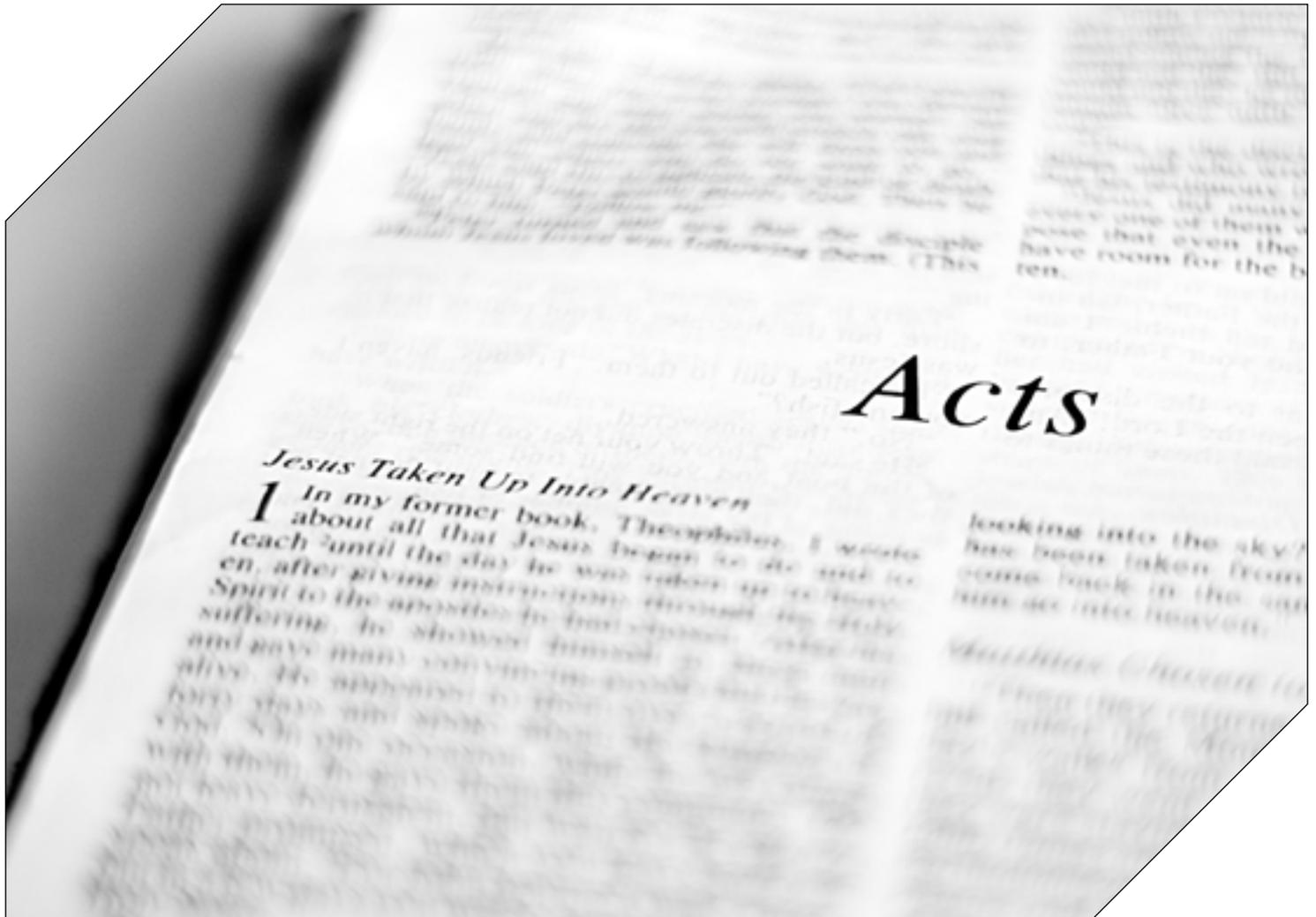
following definitions as both historically accurate and helpful for our present discussion:

**Pentecostal:** A Christian who believes that the Book of Acts provides a model for the contemporary church and, on this basis, encourages every believer to experience a baptism in the Spirit (Acts 2:4), understood as an empowering for mission, distinct from regeneration, that is marked by speaking in tongues, and affirms that “signs and wonders,” including all of the gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10, are to characterize the life of the church today.

**Neo-Pentecostal:** A Christian who agrees and acts in accordance with all of the tenets listed above except the affirmation that speaking in tongues serves as a normative sign for Spirit baptism.

**Charismatic:** A Christian who believes that all of the gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10, including prophecy, tongues, and healing, are available for the church today; but rejects the affirmation that baptism in the Spirit (Acts 2:4) is an empowering for mission distinct from regeneration.

**Non-Charismatic:** A Christian who rejects the affirmation that baptism in the Spirit (Acts 2:4) is an empowering for mission distinct from regeneration, and who also rejects the validity of at least one or more of the gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10 for the church today.



All of these categories are compatible with the term Evangelical. Evangelicals are Christians who affirm: the authority of the Bible; that salvation is found only in Christ; and that evangelism is an important part of the Christian's mission in the world.

The global Pentecostal movement is firmly rooted in Evangelical soil. At its heart, the Pentecostal movement is Christ-centered. The work of the Spirit, as Pentecostals understand it, centers on exalting and bearing witness to the lordship of Christ. Jesus is the One who baptizes in the Spirit. Pentecostal faith and practice flow from the Bible. Although Pentecostals encourage spiritual experience, they do so with a constant eye to Scripture. The Bible, and particularly the Book of Acts, fosters and shapes Pentecostal experience.

Many scholars studying the Movement are generally not practicing Pentecostals. They define the Pentecostal movement largely or exclusively in sociological terms. They identify Pentecostals not by what they believe, but rather by the nature of their experience

(e.g., Do they exercise spiritual gifts?) or their behavior (e.g., What differences can we observe in the lives of Pentecostal believers?) While sociological analysis can provide helpful insights, on its own it cannot fully comprehend or adequately describe this profoundly Christ-centered and Bible-based movement. The picture they present of Pentecostals is often a caricature, an image that, while partially true, contains many exaggerations and distortions.

In this article I explain why I am a Pentecostal. My definitions are unapologetically theological. My approach is thoroughly biblical. I show how key passages in the Bible support my Pentecostal convictions. As Pentecostals, we need to reexamine and clarify the rich theological legacy early Pentecostal pioneers have passed on to us. The reluctance to give clear, theological definition to the Pentecostal movement misses the fact the Bible shaped the Movement; and, it also loses sight of a genuine need of the church. We need to know who we are to pass on this legacy.

So, what do we mean when we say, “I am a Pentecostal”? An accurate answer includes three elements. First, Pentecostals read the Book of Acts as a model for their lives. Second, Pentecostals emphasize that we should not confuse the baptism in the Spirit promised to every believer in Acts 1,2 with regeneration or conversion. Third, the Pentecostal movement from its inception (Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6), linked speaking in tongues with the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The early Pentecostals thus described tongues as a unique marker, a sign, or evidence of baptism in the Spirit. Many historians insist that without this connection between tongues and Spirit baptism, there would be no Pentecostal movement.

### WHY WE READ DIFFERENTLY

Pentecostals have always read Acts, and particularly the account of the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), as a model for their lives. The stories of Acts are our stories. Pentecostals identify with these stories. This sense of connection with the text encourages us to allow the narrative to shape our lives, our hopes and dreams, and our imagination. We read them with expectation and eagerness: stories of the Holy Spirit’s power, enabling ordinary disciples to do extraordinary things for God.

Pentecostals have never viewed the gulf that separates their world from that of the text as large. Western theologians and scholars of the past two centuries, however, have exerted great energy wrestling with how to interpret biblical texts that speak of God’s miraculous activity. As Evangelical theologians sought to explain why we should accept the reality of the miracles recorded in the New Testament but not expect them today, Pentecostals were (at least in our eyes) witnessing Jesus perform contemporary “signs and wonders” as He established His church.

The hermeneutic of the typical Pentecostal believer is straightforward and simple: the stories in Acts serve as models for shaping lives and experiences. This simple, narrative approach to the Book of Acts is one of the great strengths of the Pentecostal movement. The simplicity of reading the text as a model for our lives, without angst about the miraculous or how it all fits into complex theological systems, clearly enables people to readily grasp the message.

This suggests that Pentecostals have a distinctive hermeneutic in that they read the Bible, particularly Luke–Acts, in a manner different from non-Pentecostal Evangelicals. I do acknowledge the close link that binds Pentecostals and Evangelicals together. Indeed, Pentecostals generally identify themselves as Evangelicals; yet, they are distinct groups. I use terms here simply to denote Pentecostal Evangelicals on the one hand and non-Pentecostal Evangelicals on the other.

Pentecostals reject two assumptions that shape Evangelical approaches to Luke–Acts. The first assumption is associated with the Evangelical tendency to reject the Acts narrative and the apostolic church it describes as a model for the church today. Evangelicals assume that Luke wrote to provide a historical account of the beginnings of the Church so subsequent readers might have an accurate account of the gospel and be assured of the historical basis on which it stands. Evangelicals also insist that Luke did not present the events he describes as models for the missionary praxis of subsequent generations of Christians.

The second assumption is an outgrowth of the Evangelical tendency to reduce New Testament theology to Pauline theology. In other words, Luke is a historian and Paul is a theologian. Evangelicals assume that Luke’s references to the reception and work of the Spirit have essentially the same meaning as similar terms used by Paul and thus we should understand them in the light of these Pauline texts. Evangelicals insist that Pentecost represents the disciples’ entrance into the new age, their initiation into the life of the new covenant.1 Pentecost, they explain, is the birthday of the Church.2

Evangelical scholars, with one voice, constantly tell us that Pentecost is a unique and unrepeatably event. In what sense is Pentecost unique? We cannot repeat any event in history, but Luke clearly presents many events in Acts as models for Luke’s church. Luke recorded them so they will be repeated in the lives of his readers.

I critique these two assumptions, and particularly the notion that Pentecost is “unique and unrepeatably,” by examining various aspects of Luke’s narrative.

### THE STRUCTURE OF LUKE-ACTS

Jesus’ sermon at Nazareth (Luke 4:16–30) is paradigmatic for Luke’s gospel. This passage foreshadows all of the major themes that appear in the Gospel: the work of the Spirit; the universality of the gospel; the grace of God; and the rejection of Jesus. This is the one significant point where the chronology of Luke’s Gospel differs from Mark’s Gospel. Luke takes an event from the middle of Jesus’ ministry and brings it up front to inaugurate the ministry of Jesus. Luke does this because he understands that Jesus’ recitation of Isaiah 61:1,2, and His declaration that He is fulfilling this prophecy in His ministry provide important insights into the nature of Jesus and His mission. This passage, then, provides us with a model for Jesus’ subsequent ministry.



Luke provides a similar paradigmatic introduction for the Book of Acts. After the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, Peter delivers a sermon (Acts 2:14–41) that, in many ways, parallels that of Jesus in Luke 4. In his sermon, Peter also refers to an Old Testament prophecy concerning the coming of the Spirit (Joel 2:28–32), and declares that the events on Pentecost fulfilled this prophecy (Acts 2:17–21). The message is clear: Just as the Spirit anointed Jesus to fulfil His prophetic vocation, so also the Spirit anointed Jesus’ disciples as end-time prophets to proclaim the Word of God. The text of Joel 2:28–32, like the paradigmatic passage in Luke 4, also shows signs of careful editing on the part of Luke.<sup>3</sup>

One change is especially instructive. In Acts 2:18, Luke inserts the phrase, “and they will prophesy,” into the quotation from Joel. This insertion emphasizes what is already present in the text of Joel. The previous verse has already reminded us that this end-time outpouring of the Spirit of which Joel prophesies is nothing less than a fulfillment of Moses’ wish “that all the Lord’s people were prophets” (Numbers 11:29). Acts 2:17 quotes Joel 2:28 verbatim: “‘I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy.’” In Acts 2:18, Luke echoes this refrain. Luke highlights the fact the Spirit comes as the source of prophetic inspiration. The church in “these last days,” Luke declares, is to be a community of prophets whom God called to bring the message of “salvation to the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 49:6; Acts 1:8). Luke reminds his readers that Jesus also promised them power to fulfill this calling. The Spirit will come and enable His church — Luke’s and ours — to bear bold witness for Jesus.

Luke’s Gospel anticipates this theme of bold, prophetic witness. The Spirit anointed Jesus so He might “‘preach good news to the poor, . . . proclaim freedom for the prisoners,’” and “‘proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor’” (Luke 4:18,19). The parallels between Jesus’ experience

at the Jordan and the disciples’ experience at Pentecost are striking and clearly intentional. Both occur at the beginning of the respective missions of Jesus and the Church, both center on the coming of the Spirit, and Luke describes both as a prophetic anointing in the context of a sermon that cites Old Testament prophecy. Through his careful shaping of the narrative, Luke presents Jesus, the ultimate prophet, as a model for all of His followers, from Pentecost onward.<sup>4</sup>

Luke also highlighted this motif of bold, Spirit-inspired witness in the teaching of Jesus. Luke foreshadows events that will follow in his second volume by relating the important promise of Jesus recorded in Luke 12:11,12. Immediately after Pentecost, we see how relevant and important this promise of Jesus is for the mission of the Church (Acts 4:19,20).

In presenting Peter, John, Stephen, and Paul as models of Spirit-inspired ministry, Luke highlights the reliability of the apostolic witness to the resurrection of Jesus. And he wants to be sure we are clear about their message, which we are to hand down until it reaches “the ends of the earth.” Yet Luke also sees these end-time prophets as important models of missionary praxis his church needs to emulate. As they face opposition by relying on the Holy Spirit, these end-time prophets call Luke’s church to courageously follow the path first traveled by our Lord.

Luke structures his narrative to highlight the fact just as Jesus’ experience of the Spirit at the Jordan River serves as a model for the experience of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, so also the disciples experience at Pentecost serves as a model for subsequent Christians. This is supported by Peter’s words in Acts 10:47, “Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.”



## THE SENDING OF THE SEVENTY (LUKE 10:1-16)

The account of the sending of the Seventy (Luke 10:1–16) is unique to Luke’s Gospel. In Luke 10:1 we read, “After this the Lord appointed seventy–two [some mss. read, ‘seventy’] others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.”

A central question centers on the number of disciples Jesus sent out and its significance. Some manuscripts read “seventy,” while others “seventy-two.” Although we cannot determine the number with confidence, it is important to keep the divided nature of the manuscript evidence in mind as we wrestle with the significance of this text.

Most scholars agree that the number has symbolic significance. Many suggest that the number 70 is rooted in the Old Testament narrative and has symbolic significance. I argue that we find the background for the reference to the “seventy” in Numbers 11:24–30. The Lord “took of the Spirit that was on [Moses] and put the Spirit on the Seventy elders” (verse 25). This resulted in the 70 elders, who had gathered around the Tent, prophesying. However, two other elders, Eldad and Medad, did not go to the Tent; they remained in the camp. But the Spirit also fell on them and they, too, began to prophesy. Joshua urged Moses to stop them. Moses replied, “‘Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the Lord’s people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!’ ” (Numbers 11:29).

The Numbers 11 proposal has a number of significant advantages over other explanations: (1) it accounts for the two textual traditions underlying Luke 10:1 (How many actually prophesied in Numbers 11?); (2) it finds explicit fulfillment in the narrative of Acts; (3) it ties into one of the great themes of Luke–Acts, the work of the Holy Spirit; and (4) numerous allusions to Moses and his actions in Luke’s narrative support our suggestion that we find symbolism for Luke’s reference to the Seventy in Numbers 11.

The reference to the Seventy evokes memories of Moses’ wish that “‘all the Lord’s people were prophets,’ ” and, in this way, points to Pentecost (Acts 2), where the events dramatically fulfilled this wish. This wish continues to be fulfilled throughout Acts as Luke describes the coming of the empowering Spirit of prophecy to other new centers of missionary activity (Acts 8:14–17; 10:44–48; 19:1–7). The reference to the Seventy, then, foreshadows the outpouring of the Spirit on all the servants of the Lord and their universal participation in the mission of God (Acts 2:17,18; cf. 4:31).

God has called (Isaiah 49:6; Luke 24:45–49; Acts 1:4–8) and empowered (Acts 2:17–21; cf. 4:31) every member of the Church to be a prophet. Luke emphasizes that the prophetic enabling experienced by the disciples at Pentecost is available to all of God’s people.

## ACTS 2:17–21 AND SALVATION HISTORY

We have already noted the important role Luke’s edited version of Joel’s prophecy (Acts 2:17–21) plays in Luke’s narrative. One additional modification of the text from Joel is also important. Joel’s text only refers to “wonders in the heavens and on the earth” (Joel 2:30). Yet



Luke's skillful editorial work enables him to produce the collocation of "signs and wonders" (Acts 2:19). By adding a few words, Luke transforms Joel's text so it reads: "I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below" (Acts 2:19, emphasis added). The significance of this editorial work becomes apparent when we read the verses that immediately follow the Joel quotation. Peter declares, "Jesus ... was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs" (Acts 2:22). The significance of Luke's editorial work is magnified further when Luke also associates "signs and wonders" with the ministry of the Early Church. Nine of the 16 occurrences of "signs and wonders" (σημεία καὶ τέρατα) in the New Testament appear in the Book of Acts. In Acts 4:30, the disciples ask the Lord to stretch out His "hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders" through the name of Jesus. A few verses later we read, "The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people" (Acts 5:12). Similarly, Luke describes how Stephen, "did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people" (Acts 6:8). The Lord also enabled Paul and Barnabas "to do miraculous signs and wonders" (Acts 14:3; cf. 15:12).

By skillfully reshaping Joel's prophecy, Luke links the miracles of Jesus and those of the Early Church with Joel's cosmic signs (Acts 2:19,20). These miraculous events are "signs and wonders" that mark these "last days." Luke, then, is not only conscious of the significant role that miracles played in the growth of the Early Church, he also anticipates that these "signs and wonders" will continue to characterize the ministry of the Church in our day. We, too, live in the "last days," that epoch bracketed by the first and second comings of Jesus. According to Luke, it is an era that is to be marked by signs and wonders.

Luke does not rigidly segment the salvation history presented in his narrative into discrete periods. The kingdom of God (or the new age when God's covenant promises begin to find fulfillment) is inaugurated with the miraculous birth of Jesus (or, with Jesus' public ministry, which was marked by miracles) and continues to be progressively realized until His second coming and the consummation of God's redemptive plan. Pentecost is a significant eschatological event, but it does not represent the disciples' entrance into the new age. Rather, Pentecost is the fulfillment of Moses' wish that "all the Lord's people were prophets" (Numbers 11:29; cf. Joel 2:28,29; Acts 2:17,18) and, as such, represents an equipping of the Church for its divinely appointed mission. In short, Luke stresses the continuity that unites the story of Jesus and the story of the Early Church. Luke's two-volume work represents the "one history of Jesus Christ,"<sup>5</sup> a fact implied by the opening words in Acts 1:1.

One other significant implication flows from this insight: we cannot date the birthday of the Church to Pentecost. Graham Twelftree argues that, for Luke, we must trace the beginning of the Church back to Jesus' selection of the Twelve. Twelftree declares, "Luke would not call Pentecost the birth of the Church. For him the origins of the Church [are] in the call and community of followers of Jesus during His ministry."<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Twelftree asserts that "the ministry of the Church is not seen as distinct from but continues the ministry of Jesus."<sup>7</sup> These conclusions, drawn largely from Luke's portrait of the apostles, are supported by Luke's citation of Joel's prophecy.

## CONCLUSION

One of the great strengths of the Pentecostal movement is that it has read the promise of Pentecost contained in Peter's quotation of Joel as a model for the mission of the Church. This approach to the text, although it runs counter to many Evangelical interpretations and assumptions, captures well Luke's intent. Although Luke is concerned to stress the reliability of the apostolic witness, his purposes go beyond this. Luke's narrative also provides us with much more than merely a summary of apostolic preaching. Through his two-volume work, Luke declares that the Church, by virtue of its reception of the Pentecostal gift, is nothing less than a community of prophets. The Spirit of Pentecost comes to enable every member of the Church to fulfill his or her prophetic call to be a light to the nations.

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*Robert Menzies, Ph.D.*

*This article is abridged from Pentecost ... This Story Is Our Story (Springfield, Missouri: My Healthy Church, 2013).*

## ENDNOTES

1. James D.G. Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (London: SCM Press, 1970), 43.
2. Joel B. Green, *How to Read the Gospels and Acts* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1987), 113.
3. When I refer to Luke's editorial activity, I do not in any way wish to imply that Luke's narrative is historically inaccurate. Rather, I merely wish to point out that while Luke writes accurate history he does so with a theological purpose in view. Luke clearly, on occasion, summarizes the speeches or dialogues, and in so doing, utilizes his own vocabulary and style as he presents this material. He also paraphrases Old Testament quotations to highlight important themes that run throughout his narrative. While it is my assumption that Luke's editorial work accurately reflects and emphasizes dominical and apostolic themes, the essential question that I seek to answer centers on the content of Luke's message. It is this message that I believe to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and authoritative for the Church.
4. Luke 11:9–13 also indicates that Luke views the prophetic vocation of Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy (Luke 10:1) as applicable to His church.
5. Martin Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity*, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1979), 59.
6. Graham H. Twelftree, *People of the Spirit: Exploring Luke's View of the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 28.
7. *Ibid.*



# KNOWING

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## YOU'RE CALLED

by Rev. Kim Moran

Since I was a pre-teen I wanted to be a pastor. I loved Jesus with everything within me, and I desperately wanted to see people know and love Him more. I was smart, passionate, driven, and knew without a doubt in my mind that I was called. There was nothing that could convince me otherwise.

It wasn't until I was in Bible college that I first heard someone say that it was unbiblical for women to be in leadership over a man. I heard rumors that some people believed that women couldn't pastor, and I remember one professor even commenting that they would be uncomfortable if their lead pastor was a female. But somehow I still believed with certainty that God was calling me to lead in the church. I knew I was called to pastor, and I knew I was called to preach.

I suppose I shouldn't have been so naïve. Following graduation, I really was surprised to learn that pastors only wanted to interview my husband and not me. When I was finally interviewed, I was asked more about my role in my husband's ministry, future children and where I could work, when all I wanted to talk about was ministry philosophy, leadership development and how to see young people come to know Jesus.

I eventually found myself in a full time ministry position where I agreed to work for free until the church could afford to pay me. I poured my heart into the youth of the community and we literally saw hundreds of students come to know Jesus. But while I was seeing everything I dreamed of unfold in our youth ministry, I was becoming angry, jealous, and resentful.

Whether it was being introduced as the pastor's wife, listening to others praise my husband for the success of our youth ministry, or being left out of ministry planning meetings, it was clear that many people didn't take me seriously as a female pastor.

I wanted to quit a lot. I knew I could likely get a job outside the church where I would be more respected, and certainly better paid, but that deep sense of calling that I had held onto since junior high school never went away. I knew I was called to pastor and anything else would have meant blatant disobedience.

I could tell story after story of the pain and disappointment I experienced because of lack of recognition, but those stories pale in comparison to the lives of the people that God used me to influence, despite my sometimes selfish and entitled attitude. It certainly wasn't because of my position, paycheck or recognition that people came to know the redeeming power of Jesus while I was their pastor.

I'm all about progressive leadership and strategic plans, but they aren't the answer to the problems and obstacles we face as a fellowship. Maybe they'll help, but they're not the answer. We need pastors and leaders who are willing to lay aside everything to see the message of the gospel advance. That might mean opening your mind to the idea of women in ministry, but it also might mean willing to work for free so that people can come to know Jesus. We need people who are willing to do whatever it takes, regardless of the recognition.

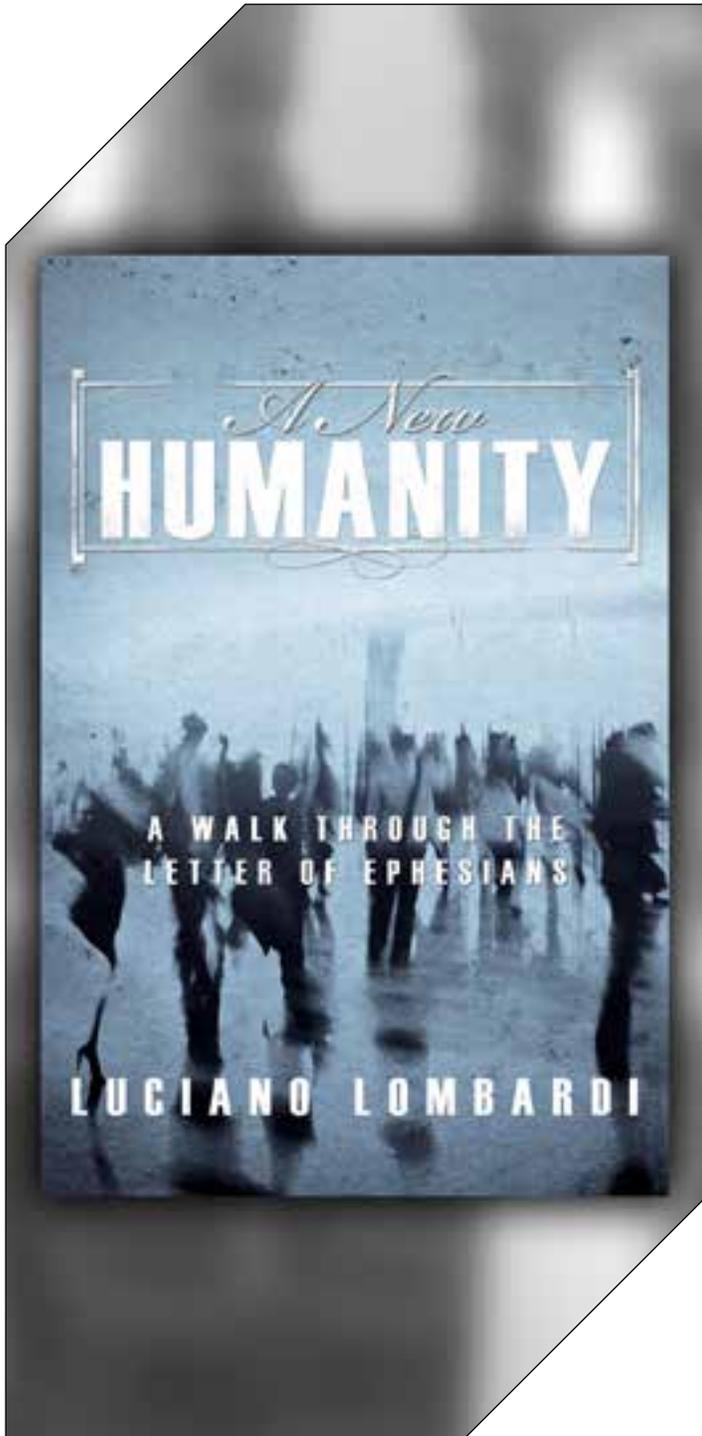
I'm not perfect, but I like to think I'm learning. I'm learning to trust that God really does come through on the things He promises. I'm learning that ministry really isn't about me. And I'm learning that change doesn't often come when you're fighting for it, but when you're living in a way that makes it seem like the only obvious option.

I really do believe with all my heart that diversity and equality are necessary if we want to see the church effectively reach the world, and while there are days I want to scream it from the rooftops, instead I choose to live it out. I refuse to quit; I refuse to take out another person who is trying to live out their call; and I do my best every day to listen to the Holy Spirit.

Maybe that's how we'll see a change. Maybe it will be one life at a time, choosing to live out their call for the one who called them.

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*Rev Kim Moran is the campus pastor and an adjunct faculty at Summit Pacific Bible College, Edmonton, Alberta*



## BOOK REVIEW OF LUCIANO LOMBARDI'S **A NEW HUMANITY**

*A Walk through the Letter of Ephesians*

*Reviewed by Dr. Peter D. Neumann*

*Assistant Academic Dean, Master's College and Seminary*

How differently might Christian life be understood if, rather than merely focussing on alleviation of guilt and forgiveness of sin, it was viewed from the vista of God's all-encompassing plan for humanity? This is the premise of Luciano Lombardi's, *A New Humanity: A Walk through the Letter of Ephesians*. Lombardi's book takes a unique approach to uncovering the message of Paul's general epistle through what might be best described as theological-pastoral commentary. This is not, in other words, a run-of-the-mill, verse-by-verse exposition of Ephesians. Instead, Lombardi offers reflections on larger sections of the letter to provide theological interpretation aimed toward drawing out implications for pastoral leadership and Christian life. (An added bonus here is Lombardi's refreshing personal translation of the Greek text.)

Foundational to Lombardi's understanding of Paul's message is that the triune God has taken the initiative to rescue humanity out of its enslavement to and oppression by the forces of evil, in order to bring all people into God's adopted family—the new humanity. He emphasizes the grand inclusive scope of God's redemptive work, which distinguishes this book from alternative Reformed approaches that might limit the application of God's love to an elect group. What Lombardi wants us to see in Ephesians, Paul's life "manifesto," is the grandeur and wideness of the Father's love, the willingness of God to enter into the human situation through Christ to bring about a decisive victory over evil, and the divine desire to see his vision of a new humanity actualized in and through the life of the church, made possible by the indwelling of the Spirit.

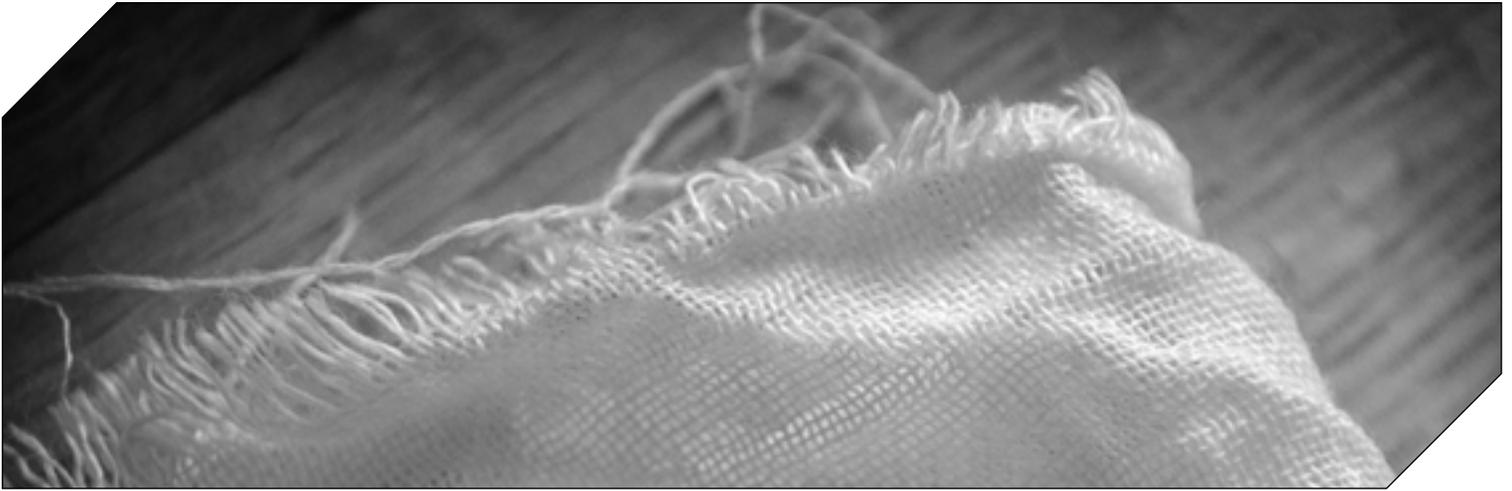
Lombardi patiently follows Paul's argument through Ephesians, allowing the richness of the letter to unfold. And the rewards for doing so are worth the journey. Especially notable is the attention Lombardi gives to the ways in which the church, the new humanity, is to exemplify its God in this yet-darkened world. He demonstrates that the first-century church was called to be a community vastly different from the surrounding culture, shaped by the power-abusive Roman Empire. In contrast to the methods of domination, coercion and bloodshed, the new humanity is to be like its God—a community of peace and self-giving, and honouring the value of every human person. Because of Christ and the Spirit, this community is able to join with its God in fighting against the forces of evil. Practically, Lombardi draws out some profound implications (as opposed to trite applications) for Christian leadership, as well as insights into what being part of the new humanity means for day to day relationships in the home and broader society.

*A New Humanity* is an inspiring, thought-provoking commentary. It will likely be best appreciated by pastors and Christian leaders seeking to deepen their understanding of God's grand vision for the church and Christian life. But it could also serve well as a guide for Bible study groups, provided that the participants have some familiarity with Scripture and Christian theology.

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# FREE TO BE LIKE JESUS

*by David Wells, General Superintendent*

A verse from 2 Corinthians 3 that has been used to justify some of the most bizarre behavior in the life of the church is “where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom.” The focus of that “freedom” usually becomes specific demonstrative actions that a person wants to express because they feel “moved.” At times those expressions can be anything from silly to disruptive.

At such moments we are generally cautious about saying too much because we do not want to see the Spirit at work in the life of the Church. Not always is His work just cerebral or orchestrated, sometimes His manifest presence does bring a whole-person response, involving spirit, emotion and body. Recently I was in a service in Malawi where the Spirit was working in a deep way and joyful expressions of laughter and praise were expressed. Who would want to limit the Spirit from bringing such freedom? Not me! That said, it is essential to see what the primary focus of Paul’s instruction was to the Corinthians.

The extended passage reads: “Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:15-18).

Paul is describing how an ongoing encounter with God by His Spirit brings transformation to a person’s life. He provides the Old Covenant example of Moses who was so transformed by his time in God’s presence that he had to wear a veil to not overwhelm the people of Israel. Over time the glory on Moses’ face would fade away, and sadly

Paul notes the people of the Old Covenant were never full recipients of a revelation of God’s transformational presence. But that is not the case for those who are in Jesus. He takes the veil away and by the Spirit allows us continual access to be transformed by the presence of God. Therefore where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom, not to “prove our liberty” or “do our thing,” but rather TO BE LIKE JESUS! There is freedom to be transformed into His likeness in an ongoing, ever-increasing manner.

It is essential that the Pentecostal family and especially its leaders get this right. Our personal destiny and the focus of our corporate lives is that we are conformed to the image of Jesus. As we grasp that the Spirit is our ally in this mission by continually allowing us to encounter the presence of God in every dimension of work, play, worship, rest and relationship, we begin to grasp where true freedom comes from.

## WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE DAY TO DAY?

First, it reinforces why prayer, worship and Scripture engagement are essential life-giving habits and disciplines. Time in God’s presence as the Spirit in a living, active way makes His Word real to our hearts and transforms our minds.

Second, it motivates us to “keep in step with the Spirit” in every context in life. To be conscious that the Spirit is with us, revealing Jesus in every conversation and life experience, elevates our lives to the sacred place they were intended for. That doesn’t mean we’re spooky—it simply means we live out the truths we have at times only mentally acknowledged; God by His Spirit is with us, His gifts enable us, His character is lived out through us and He is alongside of us as we interact with others.

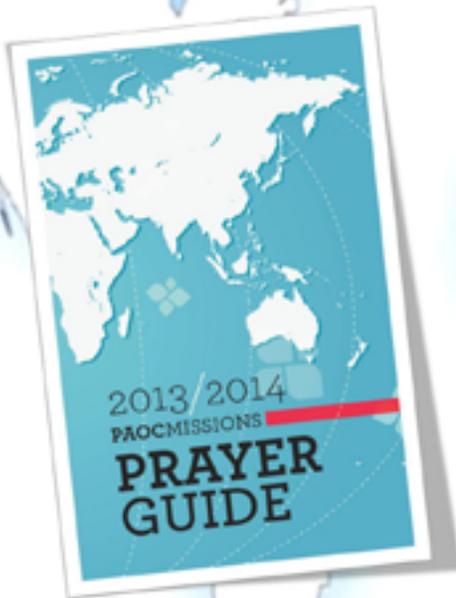
Third, as free people we delight to share freedom with others. Moses’ experience of being transformed in God’s presence had to be veiled until it faded away. Our transformation from “glory to glory” to be more like Jesus is not only for our good, but for the benefit of others. Words and actions that bring life are the intended norm for free people.

As our own Mike Larson reminded us musically, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom...Jesus reigns in this place, showers of mercy and grace, falling on every face. There is freedom.” Joyful, liberating freedom, the freedom to be transformed by the Spirit of God, the freedom to be like Jesus!

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