

# Pentecostal Spirituality

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This paper is a draft of a chapter written by Daniel E. Albrecht and myself for the forthcoming *Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*.

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Pentecostalism is a renewal movement that emphasizes the experience of God. [1] Certainly, Pentecostals reflect on theology. Certainly, Pentecostals maintain structures of ecclesiastical life. Yet what is most distinctive, about Pentecostals is not their theology or their ecclesiastical structure, but rather their sense of the experience of God. This being the case, it is appropriate to identify Pentecostalism particularly as a form of “spirituality”.

*Christian spirituality* speaks of the lived experience of faith. Whereas theology examines our understanding of God, spirituality considers our more encompassing experience of God. [2] Christian spirituality has taken many different forms throughout the history of the Church. We can speak of Methodist spirituality, Carmelite spirituality, Reformed spirituality, and Pentecostal spirituality. Each community experiences God in a manner appropriate to its history and culture. But for Pentecostals, the relationship between the tradition and spirituality is particularly significant, because both the identity of the tradition and the nature of spirituality as a field of interest are similarly focused on the lived experience of God. Pentecostalism is a movement of the *Spirit* and spirituality is fundamentally about life in the *Spirit*. More than a collection of kindred denominations and organizations, more than breakthrough of doctrine, Pentecostalism is a spiritual movement, a movement united in its experience of “life in the Spirit.”

But just what is Pentecostal spirituality? What does lived relationship with God look like for a Pentecostal congregation, or for individual Pentecostal Christians, or for the Pentecostal-charismatic movement as a whole? These are the questions we intend to address in this chapter. In the first part we will provide an overview of Pentecostal spirituality by looking at their beliefs, practices, sensibilities, and values. Then in the second part of the chapter we will consider more closely the character of Pentecostalism as a form of “renewal.” We will look at the themes of restoration and continuity in the history of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement(s). Do Pentecostals understand their own experience of God as a restoration of a divine-human relationship lost for centuries, or is it merely a matter of a renewal of aspects of spirituality that have always been present in some form throughout the history of the Church? Reflection on this particular question will bring us around again to a final summary of what is most distinctive or characteristic of Pentecostal spirituality as a whole.

## Part One: An Overview of Pentecostal Spirituality

Relationship with God incorporates various elements which shape the character of that relationship. There are *beliefs* which condition our view of God and our approach to the work of God in our lives. There are *practices*, both corporate and private, which serve as vehicles through which relationship with God is mediated and which contribute to the experience of God itself. There are *sensibilities*, habitual attitudes or capacities for being affected in certain ways, which predispose a given community to notice or respond to the Spirit of God in a distinct manner. And then there are *values* which govern our sense of what is important to notice, to experience, or to do. By reviewing these four elements we can acquire an overall sense of what the spirituality of Pentecostalism is like.

## **Beliefs**

Chapter 13 of the present volume is devoted to a treatment of Pentecostal theology, summarizing the “state of the art” of recent Pentecostal theological research. Consequently, we will touch lightly on beliefs, drawing attention to four aspects of doctrine that directly influence Pentecostal spirituality. These aspects express a fourfold devotion to Jesus Christ as Savior, Spirit Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King (fivefold if Sanctifier is distinguished from Jesus’ roles as Savior and Spirit Baptizer).

By proclaiming Christ as Savior, Pentecostalism stands alongside evangelical and revivalist Protestantism, emphasizing the importance of conversion as entrance into the Christian life. For these, Christianity is not a matter of mere doctrinal precision, denominational allegiance, or religious duty. The Christian faith is about a fundamental conversion to Jesus Christ and an experience of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. For example, both Aimee Semple McPherson, a Pentecostal evangelist and Don Gelpi, a Catholic Charismatic theologian, place conversion at the forefront of Pentecostal spirituality.[3]

But for Pentecostals, Jesus Christ is not only the Savior, but the Spirit-Baptizer and Sanctifier. The Spirit of Christ is not merely a quiet presence received through regeneration but an active force experienced on an ongoing basis as a result of our immersion in the Spirit. While many Pentecostals emphasize the “subsequent” character of this experience of the Spirit after initial conversion to Christ, others interpret further experience(s) of the Spirit as the natural working-out of what was worked-in through regeneration. The point in either case is that Pentecostals expect the Holy Spirit to speak to them, to touch their hearts through strong emotions, to reveal something of God to them through ideas and pictures that come to their minds or through dreams, to pray through them in sighs too deep for words and in unknown languages, and to transform them ever more closely in holiness to the image of Christ.

Pentecostals also expect Christ to Heal. The Jesus who healed those who came to him with their infirmities on earth is the same Jesus who heals those who come to him today. Pentecostals interpret the coming of Christ and the Spirit as an infusion (or perhaps “invasion”) of the supernatural kingdom of God into this world. Through the work of Christ

and the Spirit, people can be delivered from disease, spiritual oppression, strongholds of sin, and unnecessary suffering. This doctrine profoundly shapes their experience of God on a day-to-day basis.

Finally, Pentecostals anticipate Jesus's soon return as the Coming King. Pentecostalism emerged in the late nineteenth-century in the midst of a great deal of millennial interest. At that time, conferences on holiness, healing and the return of Christ were often sponsored by the same organizations, attended by the same people, and welcomed the same preachers. A deep longing for power—victorious power over sin and power for effective witness—characterized the spiritual heart of many. When they experienced the power of God in the Pentecostal revivals of the early twentieth century, many Pentecostals saw this as an “end times” restoration of the Church. Consequently, their hope for divine encounter, healing and powerful experience of God was not only fueled by doctrines of conversion, the Spirit, and healing, but also by a belief in the soon coming of Christ.

## **Practices**

When we speak of Pentecostal *practices* we mean, for example, the way Pentecostal Christians worship, the way they perform their personal devotions: in short, those behaviors and activities that characterize their lived relationship with God. Some of these practices—like the act of singing or Bible-reading—are common to other Christians. Others—like praying in tongues—are more distinctive to Pentecostalism.

We begin with corporate practice because that is where Pentecostals begin. “Pentecostals and charismatics focus much of their activity within the worship setting of the church,” Oliver McMahan writes, “Spirituality is frequently defined within the context of a church service more than a devotional closet.”<sup>[4]</sup> A Pentecostal worship service is “ground zero” for examining Pentecostal corporate practice, and consequently Pentecostal spirituality. While terms like “rite,” or “liturgy” may not be common among Pentecostals, they are very helpful for describing the elements and structure of Pentecostal corporate spiritual practice and we will use them here. The term *liturgy* designates a larger set of rites and practices as a whole, for example the entire Pentecostal Sunday service or evangelistic meeting. *Rites*, then, are the particular practices or sets of practices and actions which transpire within liturgy. The giving of a prophetic “word” or the taking of an offering would be considered individual *rites* within the larger context of the *liturgy* of a gathering.

A fundamental threefold structure often frames Pentecostal services, revealing what we might call “foundational rites” or “macro-rites”: worship in praise, pastoral message, and the altar service.<sup>[5]</sup> The term “worship” for Pentecostals with reference to a time of meeting generally identifies the first half-hour or so of their gatherings. This portion of the service (called the “song service” or “preliminaries” in early Pentecostal parlance) both lifts the congregants toward God in adoration and prepares their hearts for the hearing of the word. Song, movement and exclamations of praise are typical within the macro-rite of praise. The

second macro-rite is a time of “word.” Here, the reading of Scripture and the sermon is primary, but other word-rites also appear in this portion of the service: testimonies, prayers, and the delivering of prophetic utterances are common examples. Indeed, regarding the latter, it has been said that if Martin Luther restored the “priesthood” of all believers, Pentecostals have restored the “prophethood” of all believers, emphasizing the universal availability of a direct revelation of God for the gathered body of believers.<sup>[6]</sup> The third macro-rite is the altar service. This portion of the service functions as a rite that calls for the response of the people and provides and an opportunity for those who wish to come to Jesus and have their needs met in a tangible way. As with their Holiness movement predecessors, Pentecostals make use of the altar as a sacred space within which conversion, reconciliation, healing, deliverance and other forms of “doing business with God” are transacted.

Within this threefold macro-rite structure, a number of particular rites or practices are commonly performed, practices which are distinctive of Pentecostal spirituality. There might be a minute or so of “singing in tongues” that arises during the macro-rite of praise. Or perhaps one might see the raising of hands or a few people “dancing in the Spirit.” As mentioned above, one might offer a prophetic utterance following the sermon, or perhaps a “word”: a report (based on an intuitive perception of the activity of the Holy Spirit) that, for example, there are people present in this gathering who might be in need of prayer for some need. As the service moves to a time of response at the altar, it is common to see Pentecostals laying a hand on another as an expression of the ministry of healing. A person receiving prayer might experience being “slain in the Spirit” in which his or her body weakens and God is encountered more directly. What makes these individual practices or rites particularly “pentecostal” or “charismatic” is that they are perceived as anticipations of or responses to the active presence of the Holy Spirit. For example, liturgical dance becomes distinctly “charismatic” when the dancers perceive the impulse of the Spirit or the congregation recognizes the Spirit’s presence in or through the dance. Many of these smaller micro-rites should be considered “moveable parts” in Pentecostal corporate spiritual practice, because their expression can appropriately appear in a number of places in the course of the Pentecostal liturgy.

Sooner or later, the gathered service ends and people return home to their personal devotions. But the corporate and the personal are exceptionally difficult to isolate in Pentecostal spirituality. Individuals take the meeting home with them. What is experienced in community is developed in private. What is discovered in private is brought to the meeting next week. Nevertheless, a couple of practices characteristic of Pentecostal personal spirituality deserve mention here.

One of the most distinctive practices of Pentecostal spirituality is the practice of *glossolalia*, also known as “speaking in tongues,” or “praying in the Spirit.” Having scriptural roots primarily in passages in the book of Acts and in 1 Corinthians, tongues is a form of prayer in which one speaks (or, at times, merely “thinks”) in a language unknown to the one praying,

perhaps unknown to anyone. The apostle Paul speaks of tongues in terms of “the spirit praying” while the mind is “unproductive” (1 Corinthians 14:14), a description which appears to be suggestively supported in recent studies of cerebral activity during glossolalia.<sup>[7]</sup> For many Pentecostals, the practice of praying in tongues permits a unique expression of spiritual intimacy, as deep unconscious material flows through their prayer language to and from God.

Another practice that has received attention among Pentecostals is *fasting*. While fasting is not limited to the Pentecostal community, Pentecostals have preserved a particular use of fasting that is rare these days, although it was common among Puritans other Protestants from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries. Whereas fasting often has functioned, especially among Catholic and Orthodox Christians, as an ascetical practice oriented toward the purification of desire, Pentecostals see the restriction of food, following the lead of Old Testament portraits of fasting (with a nod to Acts 13:1), as a way of expressing an intensity of the pursuit of God. When Pentecostals get really serious about desiring something from God they fast, often for days at a time. This is true with regards to their personal devotions and it is especially true of seasons of united prayer for a Holy Spirit revival. From Franklin Hall’s *Atomic Power Through Prayer and Fasting* (1946), to Derek Prince’s *Shaping History Through Prayer and Fasting* (1973), to Lou Engle and Catherine Paine’s *Fast Forward: A Call to the Millennial Prayer Revolution* (1999), Pentecostals have made seasons of “prayer and fasting” an important part of their pursuit of God. Through fasting they offer concrete expressions of the longing for more of the Spirit’s influence in their lives.

### **Sensibilities and Values**

By “sensibilities” we refer to certain habitual attitudes or predispositions that characterize a Pentecostal’s relationship with God. By “values” we identify those concerns that are perceived as most important to Pentecostals. Sensibilities and values cannot be neatly separated: The Pentecostal value for experience, for example, is lived out by means of a concretely trained sensitivity toward experience in both corporate and personal devotion. However artificial the categorization though, it may help our understanding of Pentecostal spirituality to describe a few of these sensibilities and values.

Pentecostal spirituality is hard-wired to perceive and respond to the influences of the Holy Spirit. For example, if we examine the dynamics of Pentecostal liturgy, it is possible to identify a number of distinct modes of sensibility present, many of which are oriented around the work of the Spirit. There is a mode of celebration, characterized by spontaneity and expressiveness within the Spirit. There is a mode of contemplation, a “waiting on” or “being open to” the Spirit in the midst of the gathering. There is a mode of ecstasy, when the Spirit moves and one experiences a flood of the Spirit’s influence. And there is a mode of improvisation, following the Spirit’s guidance from one moment of the gathering to the next. All of these various “modes” of presence in a gathering are habitual attitudes, sensitivities

embodied in the Pentecostal worship or evangelistic service. While these ways of being present in a worship gathering are not exclusive to Pentecostals, they are together demonstrative of a characteristically Pentecostal relationship with God.[8]

More particularly, we can speak of the *orientation to experience* as a Pentecostal sensitivity. The practice of repeating worship choruses for extended periods of time, the language of “worship” as being almost synonymous with entering into an experienced sense of the “presence of God,” the oral (rather than written) character of Pentecostal interaction, and the centrality of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, are only a few examples of this sensitivity built into the Pentecostal mind and heart.

Another Pentecostal sensitivity is their *faith or expectation* of God. Faith, or the expectation that God can or will heal/deliver/transform is quite common among Pentecostals. Within a gathering, this sensitivity can be seen in a mode of divine efficacy present in portions of the service, particularly in the altar response. Some branches of Pentecostalism (for example, the so-called “faith churches”) have identified themselves particularly around this sensitivity, emphasizing the value of understanding biblical principles and then of developing the “skills” of placing confident faith in those principles, thus assuring their concrete fulfillment in life.

*Attention* to the Holy Spirit is another Pentecostal sensitivity. Whereas many capable Reformed Christians have developed the cognitive ability to carefully notice the logical nuances of the Scriptures, capable Pentecostals have similarly developed an affective ability to carefully notice the nuances of the Spirit. The New Testament speaks of the Holy Spirit leading, filling, convicting, comforting, and encouraging Christ’s people. There is, in Pentecostal culture, a kind of radical receptivity to this activity of the Spirit, a softness to changes in intuition and feeling that indicate the direction of the winds of the Spirit. Along with this attention to the Spirit more generally, there is specifically among Pentecostals an orientation toward the gifts of the Spirit, in particular the more demonstrative or “miraculous” gifts: tongues, prophecy, healing, miracles and the like.

Another Pentecostal sensitivity—or perhaps more accurately a Pentecostal predisposition—is their sense of conflict or *spiritual warfare*. Pentecostals take the battle-imagery of the Scriptures seriously. It is simply part of their world-view. Pentecostals see themselves as players on a battlefield of cosmic proportions. L. Grant McClung writes, “A review of the literature, history and oral stories of Pentecostalism reveal the centrality of the practice of exorcism in the expansion of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements.”[9] While Pentecostals agree generally on the reality of the demonic, the need for sensitivity to spiritual warfare, and the power of God to deliver us from the clutches of Satan, there is a range of opinion regarding the particulars of demonology and the strategies for confronting evil spirits.

We can also think of the Pentecostals' sense of themselves as part of *amovement* (rather than a denomination or organization or religious society) as a sensibility of Pentecostal spirituality. Although many early Pentecostals in America ultimately formed denominations (such as the Assemblies of God), more significant was their own self-perception as participants in a work of the Spirit on this earth. While it has been common among Westerners to interpret Pentecostalism as a development of the Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles in 1907, it is now proper to understand the origins of Pentecostalism as a somewhat-spontaneous emergence of kindred phenomena and interests globally. As Allan Anderson states, "there were revivals all over the world unconnected with North American Pentecostalism."<sup>[10]</sup> Pentecostals have tended to see themselves as part of "something big." Consequently, they behave less as an ecclesiastical structure and more as a cultural movement. Needless to say, this kind of a self-perception has implications for their spirituality, for example in their sense of being in the cusp of God's activity on earth.

In addition to the sensibilities of Pentecostal spirituality, we can also identify a few basic values which guide or govern the way that Pentecostals conduct their relationship with God corporately and personally. While some Pentecostal values are characteristic of evangelical Protestantism more generally (for example, respect for Biblical authority), others are more characteristic of the Pentecostal community.

The first of these is the importance of the *supernatural* and of the "power" of God. Immediately prior to the Pentecostal revivals, Christians were eagerly seeking the power of God: power for abundant living, powerful victory over sin, power for effective witness to the world. In the experience of the Baptism of the Spirit, Pentecostals found that power. It is not a matter of denying the place of the natural, but rather of intentionally placing a focus on the supernatural.

A second value is the Pentecostal value for *restoration*. Whether they speak of "revival," "renewal," or "restoration," Pentecostals emphasize God as a Restorer. Holiness Pentecostals emphasize the role of Christ entirely cleansing us from sin. They saw the work of Christ and the Spirit restoring us in a threefold progression: saved, sanctified, and Baptized in the Holy Spirit (the "full gospel"). The value for restoration, combined with the value for the supernatural, serves to heighten Pentecostal interest in healing. Whereas some might interpret Pentecostalism as an "otherworldly" expression of Christianity, Pentecostals in fact have expressed a very "embodied" faith: both through the use of their body in worship as well as in their belief in God's interest in the restoration of the human body through healing. We have discussed the Pentecostal sensitivity to spiritual warfare above, a sensitivity that is intimately connected with their sense of God's desire to restore Christians from the dark influences. Finally, Pentecostal emphasis on restoration also extends to their approach to ordinary human suffering. For example, there is a tendency among some Pentecostals to expect God not only to restore humans from their bondages to sin, sickness and Satan, but also to restore a measure of prosperity to Spirit-filled Christians.

A third Pentecostal value is *participation*. Their emphasis on the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and particularly on the place of the gifts of the Spirit, obliges Pentecostals to understand themselves less as an ordered structure and more as a fluid, co-participating organism. God gives gifts to believers for the benefit of the whole body, and there is, along with this understanding, an expectation for believers to participate in the life of the body through the use of their gifts. Leadership in a congregation may arise at any moment as one sister or brother becomes the vehicle for the authoritative word or touch of God in the midst of a gathering. Similarly what Pentecostals term “ministry” commonly happens during the altar service, as people minister to one another in prayer. Ministry also happens as people take on appropriate roles in the local community of faith. As a result of this somewhat fluid recognition and release of others’ contributions to the community, Pentecostals have a certain knack for improvisation. The value for participation and their ability to improvise makes Pentecostals particularly able to get things done quickly and adapt to new situations and environments.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the Pentecostal value of *missions*. Pentecostals see God as an empowering and a commissioning God. Once again, this cannot be entirely separated from their interest in restoration, participation, faith, and their sense of themselves as a movement. Their perspective is that the Spirit has made available a new abundance to this world which Christians are joyfully obliged to share with others. Christ sends us to share this new life with others, and then the Spirit empowers us to demonstrate the reality of this gospel through healing, deliverance, and other signs of the Holy Spirit. It is this value that makes Pentecostal mission agencies some of the most strongly supported organizations in the Christian Church today.

Having looked at the beliefs, the practices, and the sensibilities of Pentecostal spirituality, we repeat: it is appropriate to interpret Pentecostalism as a form of spirituality. The experience of God is a central part of all that Pentecostals think and do. It frames their beliefs, forms their practices, and informs their sensibilities and values. Whether we consider the dynamics of a Pentecostal evangelistic or worship service, the nuances of personal devotion, or their sense of participation with a global movement of God, what is primary for Pentecostals is their consciousness that God has “broken in” to this world through the Spirit of Christ, invading it with an existentially real and tangible encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

## **Part Two: Pentecostalism and History: Restoration, Renewal, or Revitalization**

In this second part of the chapter we will consider more closely the character of Pentecostal spirituality by exploring the themes of restoration and renewal. The subject of Christian spirituality has a long history. Yet the history of Pentecostalism is relatively short and is often viewed (particularly within their community) through a “restorationist” lens which highlights



their discontinuity with the rest of that history. But the Charismatic movement saw things differently. Thus, the questions we will examine in this part of the chapter are: “Should we understand Pentecostalism’s experience of God as a radical (even eschatological) restoration of a divine-human relationship lost for centuries? Is it merely a matter of a renewal of aspects of spirituality that have always been present in some form throughout the history of the Church? Or is it something else?”

We have already drawn near this topic as we have sketched out our overview of Pentecostal spirituality. But we must probe this issue further. We will divide our presentation of this part into three heads. Under the first head (“Restoration”) we will look at this theme from the perspective of the classical Pentecostal restorationist lens, which has tended to see Pentecostalism in radical discontinuity with Christian history. Under the second head (“Renewal”) we shall see how Charismatic movements from 1960 forward saw themselves as part of a rich—though often ignored—history of Spirit-led phenomena. As earlier chapters of this present volume demonstrate, strict distinctions of “Pentecostal” and “Charismatic” are problematic, particularly when our viewpoint is taken not simply from the United States but globally. Nonetheless, it is helpful in this case to distinguish two ways of approaching one’s own spirituality vis-à-vis the historic Christian Church and to use the North American history as an illustration of these distinctions. Finally, we shall propose a third term (“Revitalization”) to describe more functionally how the Pentecostal-charismatic movement(s) have interacted with the traditions from which they have emerged.

### **Restoration: The Classical Pentecostal Perspective**

The first paragraph of the first entry in the first publication (September 1906) of *The Apostolic Faith*, a Los Angeles-based newspaper dedicated to the spread of the Pentecostal revival, reads:

The power of God now has this city agitated as never before. Pentecost has truly come and with it the Bible evidences are following, many being converted and sanctified and filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues as they did on the day of Pentecost.

Further in the same page we read:

The meetings are held in an old Methodist church that had been converted in part into a tenement house, leaving a large, unplastered, barn-like room on the ground floor. . . . Many churches have been praying for Pentecost, and Pentecost has come. The question is now, will they accept it? God has answered in a way they did not look for. He came in a humble way as of old, born in a manger. . . . Jesus was too large for the synagogues. He preached outside because there was not room for him inside. This Pentecostal movement is too large to be confined in any denomination or sect. It works outside, drawing all together in one bond of love, one church, one body of Christ.[11]

In these few sentences we can identify a number of characteristics of the restorationist viewpoint of the Pentecostal movement's relationship with church history.

The first item to note is the mention of "power." Many Christians have longed for the power of God, but for these Pentecostals power was not simply a blessing from God, but a sign with eschatological significance. Their study of the Scriptures had led them to believe that in the end times God would manifest his presence in a display of power. They believed that they were nearing those end times, and so to witness such an experience of God's power as they encountered in the Pentecostal meetings at Azusa Street and elsewhere only confirmed their sense that "this was it!" This was a unique moment in history. The very "agitation" of the city (as never before) suggested the unique significance of the events.

The second item to note is the mention of Pentecost. Pentecost has come. We cannot minimize the importance of the biblical precedent of Acts, chapters 2, 10 and elsewhere. When God wanted to do something new among the people of God, he poured out his Spirit upon the people, giving them a powerful experience of himself. Those like Charles Parham and William Seymour, who in the first decade of the twentieth-century examined the scriptures for wisdom about the Pentecost they sought, began to see these stories as normative patterns for the church of their time. They began to hope and to pray that God would send his Spirit on the earth as he did at the first Pentecost. And in September of 1906 that is now what they were proclaiming: Pentecost has come. God is restoring the Church to its primitive, apostolic, purity.

The third point to notice is that Pentecost was confirmed with tangible "Bible evidences": conversions, powerful experiences of sanctification, and amazing experiences of being "filled" with the Holy Ghost.<sup>[12]</sup> Of particular importance was the sign of "speaking in tongues." Pentecostals saw the manifestation of speaking in tongues as a distinct sign of God's restoration of God's people in power to the fullness of the gospel. It has been an important pillar of the restorationist perspective from that point on.

A fourth point to note is subtly embedded in the comments included after the first paragraph, comments like, "will they accept it?," "a humble way," "too large for the synagogues," and "too large to be confined." The restorationist perspective perceived themselves in tension with traditional Christianity from the start. Even though many ended up forming "denominations and sects," the restorationist perspective saw the Pentecostal movement as transcending those categories. There are denominations and other ecclesiastical organizations. But *this* is something else.

Many Pentecostals, however, did not understand this restoration of the church to its primitive purity as a sudden transformation appearing in the twentieth century. Indeed, it was common to describe the restoration of the gospel as a progressive restoration, leading from Wycliffe and Luther (who restored Scripture and justification by faith) through Wesley (who restored the doctrine of sanctification) and on to the present revival which was understood to

have restored the doctrine of the Baptism and gifts of the Spirit. Thus Aimee Semple McPherson, evangelist and founder of the Foursquare Church, proclaimed in her classic restorationist sermon, "Lost and Restored," "Now the Church had not lost this "all" at one time. The restoration came . . . as line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, till today we are nearing the completion of this Restoration, and Jesus is coming soon to take His perfect Church."<sup>[13]</sup>

Finally, we should note that while the Pentecostal movement saw itself in tension with traditional Christianity, it simultaneously understood itself as a restoration of the *unity* of the Church. Through the renewal of the baptism and gifts of the Spirit, God was re-collecting his people from all denominations and walks of life. God was inviting Christians of every stripe to join the Church of the full gospel and was empowering his people to be sent to all parts of the world to usher in the harvest of the last days. It is important to see that the restorationists perceived themselves as a movement of church unity, not division.

### **Renewal: The Charismatic Perspective**

The Charismatic movement (particularly that expression of it emerging in North America from the 1960s through the 1980s) is usually described as a Holy Spirit movement among mainline churches: Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and so on. With earlier roots in the Latter Rain movement, healing revivals, and the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship, the Charismatic movement witnessed the influence of the Spirit to populations that were largely unaffected by the earlier Pentecostal movement. Charismatics share a number of constant characteristics with their Pentecostal forebears: a focus on Jesus, an emphasis on praise, value for Scripture, belief that God speaks today, interest in spiritual gifts, and so on.<sup>[14]</sup> Nevertheless, when it comes to the self-perception of the movement in terms of their relationship with the historic Christian Church, the Charismatic movement differs from classical Restorationist Pentecostals. Charismatics generally do not see the outpouring of the Spirit so much as a divine restoring of a primitively pure Church, but rather a "renewal" of elements of spirituality present in the Church throughout its history. Indeed, one term frequently used to refer to the charismatic movement is "the renewal." Whereas restorationist Pentecostals emphasized discontinuity with the Church, Charismatics highlighted the continuity. The question we must ask to explore that distinction is this: how did the Charismatic movement understand their relationship with the history of their own traditions?

The Charismatic movement, as a *renewal*, was also a *recovery*. Led by mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy and theologians, the movement was well-equipped to examine the evidence for the continuity or the novelty of charismatic phenomena in history. And whereas in the early Pentecostal revival a sense of novelty helped spread the movement, wise Charismatics knew that novelty would be viewed as a sign of danger and that

documenting continuity would contribute to the spread of the Spirit among their own constituents. Consequently, especially in the 70s and 80s a number of excellent historical surveys of charismatic phenomena were produced.[15]

So what did charismatic explorers discover in their quest for the charismatic in history? Space prevents a full summary of this material here, but we can venture a few comments by way of distinguishing the charismatic from the pentecostal perspectives. First, Charismatics found that they were *not alone*. Healings, tongues, prophetic utterances and such, had been present at various times and places throughout the history of the Christian Church. Often they were found on the fringes: in the monasteries and the groups bordering on heresy. But they were clearly present, even in the experience and beliefs of some of the most respected Christians in history (like Irenaeus and Francis of Assisi). Furthermore, if they occasionally found spectacular phenomena in history, they encountered the more general Pentecostal values and sensibilities (experience, attention to the Spirit, faith/expectation, participation, missions, spiritual warfare, and so on) frequently. Although, for example, attention to conflict with spiritual forces was not common to mainline Christianity of 1970, they found that it was common among desert mothers and fathers, Jesuits, and Puritans. Although the “modernist” worldview had dominated the twentieth-century church with a value for reason and order, Charismatics discovered that a sense of experience (spirituality) was central to many Christians throughout history. A powerful recovery of the history of Christian spirituality gave Charismatics, along with mainline contemplatives and mystics, a sense of confidence in the possibility of an integration of their fresh experience of the living Spirit of Christ with their own historically-rooted faith-traditions.

A second discovery many Charismatics made in their historical explorations was that not only were they not alone in their experience of the Spirit, they also were not alone in their sense of living in the Spirit *in tension with their surrounding community*. Struggles between charism and institution were commonplace in history. Take, for example, Tertullian’s association with the Montanists: how much was authentic Spirit-filled renewal and how much was heresy? Francis of Assisi walked the tightrope of acceptance by ecclesial officials. Ignatius of Loyola was suspect of being a heretical mystic. Many of the Anabaptists were misunderstood and labeled “enthusiasts.” Indeed, even the apostle Paul was pressed to reconcile believers struggling with their practice of the charismatic gifts. And yet the values, sensibilities and practices of Pentecostal spirituality would often reappear in times of renewal, when a dry or dead community would discover a new life in Christ. Gifts not a guarantee of unity, yet they were valuable.

Some even discovered that the restorationist perspective itself was not novel. Long before the Pentecostal revivals, Franciscan Spirituals interpreted history in terms of a dispensation of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thomas Muntzer and other Anabaptists perceived themselves as a movement of return to the purity of the primitive Church. A number of utopian communities in the nineteenth-century had a kindred sense of restoration.

The Charismatic historical recovery found—and emphasized—a sense of continuity with the historic Church, even a sense of continuity with the struggles of Christianity to incorporate the Spirit into the Body of Christ. Along with the restorationists, Charismatics saw the experience of the baptism of the Spirit and the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit as a normative standard gloriously re-introduced to the people of God through the work of the Spirit in their day. But rather than interpreting this outpouring as an eschatological *restoration* of an ideal primitive church, they interpreted the outpouring as a welcome *renewal* of life to dry communities of faith.

### **Revitalization: An Alternative Understanding**

Early restorationist Pentecostals have interpreted themselves through an eschatological paradigm, seeing the message of Pentecost as the expression of an end-time restoration of the primitive and pure Church of Christ. Later Charismatics utilized theological and church historical paradigms to interpret themselves as supporters of a renewal of neglected but valuable elements of historic Christian spirituality. We would like to propose a third paradigm that may help interpret the Pentecostal movement vis-à-vis the larger historic Church. Using the language of cultural anthropology, we would like to suggest the idea of “revitalization” as a way of looking at the relationship between the Pentecostal movement, the historic Church, and the emergence and ongoing development of a new Christian spirituality.[16]

Anthony Wallace’s classic study of revitalization movements provides a useful guide for considering the process of revitalization, i.e., how the various elements of spirituality from a variety of groups that predated Pentecostalism combined and emerged as something unique. By revitalization we mean a *dynamic process* within which a group of people change by re-visioning and reshaping their understanding and living out of Christian spirituality.[17]

The fulcrum of a revitalization movement is a reformulation of the ways in which a group understands life and the world. Spiritual movements do not emerge in a vacuum; they occur in particular contexts. The worshipping community at Azusa Street and other similar early 20<sup>th</sup> century Pentecostal “hotspots” around the globe provided intense social contexts. The sense of solidarity and togetherness produced in these intense social contexts were reinforced by rituals, attitudes, and values that increasingly distinguished the community from both the “world” and other strains of Christian spirituality. This unique sense of solidarity (called *communitas*)[18] allowed for the early seekers to participate in common experience. It functionally democratized the field for all who attended.

Pentecostal experience of *communitas*, in turn, provided an environment that attracted people from different spiritual heritages, allowing them to experiment in the Spirit, sometimes mixing and merging elements of the heritages, which then served as the environment for a re-visioning of spirituality.[19] The people who came to the hotspots

experienced the open mix of elements and in this environment—charged with the Holy Spirit—they were enabled to become something new: to become “Pentecostals.” Wallace calls this re-visioning “mazeway reformulation.” As a group re-formulates their way of seeing, being and understanding life and the world, a new vision of “reality” emerges. Proto-pentecostals experienced this change of mazeway. The process of reformulating included a new or re-synthesis of Christian Spirituality. It ushered in a new coherent vision for and experience of spirituality and all of life.

The new configuration, that is the reformulated spiritual mazeway, incorporated a new understanding of life in the Spirit. The notion of the life in the Spirit was “transmuted.”<sup>[20]</sup> In fact the view of life lived in the Spirit and the Baptism in the Spirit acted as a catalyst for the process of transmutation that brought with it a new vision of Spirit-filled spirituality, a qualitatively different experience.<sup>[21]</sup> Both speaking in tongues and Spirit Baptism had been experienced as a part of other spiritualities. The emerging Pentecostal spirituality, however, saw these two experiences linked, both part of one experience. This understanding was a new element within their way of conceiving reality and it effected further changes that modified the constitutive relational structure of their way of relating to God.

Later, Charismatics experienced a similar process of *communitas* and transmuting mazeway re-formulation. A sense of solidarity in intense communal experiences (welcoming a diverse participation) enabled them to begin to re-think the ways of viewing their faith. Their notion of the Spirit and relationship with the Spirit was transformed (transmuted). While early Pentecostals emphasized their discontinuity with the Church and later Charismatics emphasized their continuity, both were reformulating a set of diverse elements into a new, creative whole. Functionally, they were both “revitalization” movements, each being expressed in the contexts of their own place and time.

## **Conclusion**

Pentecostal spirituality is about lived experience of God in the Spirit of Christ. It is a revitalized vision of the Church and its relationship with historic Christianity, emphasizing the dramatic ministry of renewal and restoration that Christ brings to the people of God through the Holy Spirit. It is this experience and this vision that has fueled the expansion of Pentecostalism throughout the globe.

## **For Further Reading**

Albrecht, Daniel E., *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999.

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Gelpi, Donald L., *Charism and Sacrament: A Theology of Christian Conversion*, New York: Paulist Press, 1993.

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Land, Steven Jack, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003.

Macchia, Frank D., *Baptized in the Spirit: A Global Pentecostal Theology*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Zonervan, 2009.

Yun, Koo Dong, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit: An Ecumenical Theology of Spirit Baptism*, Lanham, New Jersey: University Press of America, 2003.

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[1] We will refer to all expressions of global pentecostal/charismatic/neo-charismatic or renewalist movements by the term “pentecostal.”

[2] See Walter Principe, “Toward Defining Spirituality,” *Studies in Religion* 12, no. 2 (1983): 127-41; Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality and Theology: Christian Living and the Doctrine of God* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 40-64.

[3] See Aimee Semple McPherson, *The Foursquare Gospel* (Los Angeles: Echo Park Evangelistic Assoc, 1946); Donald Gelpi, *Experiencing God: A Theology of Human Emergence* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1987), *The Conversion Experience: A Reflective Process for RCIA Participants and Others* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1998). For evangelical spirituality more generally see, Evan B. Howard, “Evangelical Spirituality” in *Four Views on Christian Spirituality*, edited by Bruce Demarest (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2012), 159-86.

[4] Oliver McMahan, “Spiritual Direction in the Pentecostal/Charismatic Tradition,” in Gary W. Moon and David G. Benner, editors, *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 152-53.

[5] Daniel E. Albrecht, “An Anatomy of Worship: A Pentecostal Analysis” in Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies, editors, *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honor of Russell P. Spittler* (New York: T & T Clark International, A Continuum Imprint, 2004), 70-82.

[6] See Roger Stronstad, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke’s Charismatic Theology* (Cleveland, TN: CTP Press, 2010; formerly published by Sheffield Academic Press, 1999).

[7] For example, Andrew B. Newberg, Nancy A. Wintering, Donna Morgan, Mark R. Waldman, “The measurement of regional cerebral blood flow during glossolalia: A preliminary SPECT study,” *Psychiatry Research: Neuroimaging* 148 (2006) 67–71; Andrew Newberg and Mark Robert Waldman *How God Changes Your Brain* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2009), 49.

[8] Daniel Albrecht, “Variations on Themes in Worship...” in Thomas F. Best and Dagmar Heller, editors, *Worship Today: Understanding, Practice, Ecumenical Implications* (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 2004), 139-57.

[9] L. Grant McClung, “Pentecostal/Charismatic Understanding of Exorcism” in C. Peter Wagner and F. Douglas Pennoyer, editors, *Wrestling with Dark Angels: Toward a Deeper Understanding of the Supernatural Forces in Spiritual Warfare* (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1990), 196.

[10] Allan Anderson, “The Future of Protestantism: The Rise of Pentecostalism,” in Alister E. McGrath and Darren C. Marks, *The Blackwell Companion to Protestantism* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 439. The Regional Studies in the present volume document this more recent interpretation.

[11] *The Apostolic Faith* Vol.1, No. 1 (September, 1906), 1.

[12] This use of biblical and spatial language (for example “being filled,” “in” “poured out” and so on) as ways of describing existential encounters with God is clarified nicely by Max Turner in M. M. B. Turner, “Spirit Endowment in Luke/Acts: Some Linguistic Considerations” *Vox Evangelica* Volume 12 (1981), 44-63.

[13] Aimee Semple McPherson, *This is That: Personal Experiences, Sermons, and Writings* (Los Angeles, CA: The Bridal Call Publishing House, 1919), 394-95.

[14] For a more thorough treatment of the charismatic movement, see Peter D. Hocken, “Charismatic Movement” *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded edition (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2003), 477-519.

[15] For example, George H. Williams and Edith Waldvogel, “A History of Speaking in Tongues and Related Gifts,” *The Charismatic Movement*, ed. Michael Hamilton, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 61- 113; Ronald A. N. Kydd, *Charismatic Gifts in the Early Church* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendricksen Publishers, 1984); Stanley M. Burgess’s research is summarized in “The Holy Spirit: Doctrine of . . .” in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 730-69. Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Michael Glazier, 1994).



[16] For a more detailed explanation of Pentecostal spirituality as revitalization see Daniel E. Albrecht, "Worshipping and the Spirit: Transmuting Liturgy Pentecostally" in Teresa Berger and Bryan D. Spinks, editors, *The Spirit in Worship—Worship in the Spirit* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009) 223-44.

[17] See Anthony F. C. Wallace's seminal work, "Revitalization Movements," *American Anthropologist* 58 (1956) 264-81.

[18] See Victor Turner in "Variations on a Theme of Liminality," in *Secular Ritual*, ed. Sally F. Moore and Barbara G. Myerhoff, 36-52 (Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1977). See also Edith Turner. *Communitas: The Anthropology of Collective Joy* (New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2012); and Roberto Esposito (trans. Timothy Campbell). *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*. (Stanford University Press, 2011).

[19] See Wacker, *Heaven Below*, 9, on the "mix."

[20] On "transmutation" see Don Gelpi, *Grace as Transmuted Experience and Social Process, and Other Essays in North American Theology* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1988) 48.

[21] See Dayton, *Theological Roots* for a tracing of the evolution and shift(s) in the concept of Spirit Baptism in the nineteenth century.

Pentecostal spirituality characterizes ministry as a giving and receiving of empathic understanding, a concerned touch, heartfelt prayer and appropriate action, by people who deeply care for one another. But Pentecostal concern extends beyond the liturgy from within the faith community outward where the symbol of ministry shifts to the symbol of missions. Pentecostalism is not a church in itself, but a movement that includes many different churches. It is also a movement of renewal or revival within other denominations. It's not always easy to see if a church is Pentecostal because many Pentecostal denominations don't include the word 'Pentecostal' in their name. In the West, Pentecostalism is strong in the Black churches and the American and Australian 'mega-churches' such as Hillsong Church. Spirituality is not only Christian spirituality; it is also evangelical, Pentecostal, or charismatic spirituality. It is nurtured and growing from historic traditions, biblically framed values/disciplines, and in Christianity's twenty-first century zeitgeist ecology. Life in ANZ society is progressively becoming a 24/7 world . . . so, what does an EPC's spirituality look like on Wednesday? How is it nurtured to function beyond or before Sunday? Is 'cesans-church' a synonym for 'cesans-spirituality'?