

EDITORIAL

JEFFREY S. LAMP

As I was pulling into campus one recent morning, mulling over the tasks that lay before me for the day, the late Michael Jackson's song "Man in the Mirror" was blasting through the speakers of my truck radio. The song had a beat that made Michael Jackson famous, but it was the words that caught my attention at that moment. The lyrics are of a more introspective nature than is typically associated with this artist. In them, the singer urges himself to look into the mirror, to take an assessment of himself, and to make a change in himself if he wishes to make the world a better place. It was only later in the day that I would see how this musical episode in the cab of my pickup would impinge on the current issue of *Spiritus*.

That afternoon, I began the task of reading through the accepted submissions for this issue, performing the laborious task of the initial copyedit, when a pattern began to emerge. If what has come to be called "Pentecostalism" got its formal start with the revival at Azusa, that means it is currently a bit more than a decade into its second century. This is clearly more than enough time to discern trajectories within the movement, to assess its current state, and to project its future. As I perused the collection of articles published in this issue, it became apparent that virtually all of them undertake to look at where Pentecostalism has been and where it is going, to call Pentecostals to "look in the mirror," to adapt Mr. Jackson's language, to perform an inventory of the present in light of the past in order to shape the future.

In many ways, this issue took shape around an event that happened on the ORU campus in March 2018. Craig S. Keener gave a presentation to the university community on what he termed "Spirit hermeneutics," drawing on his recent volume of the same name. In his talk, he placed his approach to hermeneutics directly into the ongoing quest of many Pentecostal scholars to develop a distinctive Pentecostal hermeneutic. Keener's approach, while sharing many of the

concerns of those Pentecostal thinkers, does not explicitly align itself with those Pentecostals who seem to desire a hermeneutical approach that emphasizes that which makes Pentecostals distinctive as opposed to that which they share in common with other Christian believers. After his lengthy presentation that day, two ORU theology professors, Arden Autry and I, gave brief responses to Keener's paper. Afterward, I approached Professor Keener and asked if he would consider publishing his talk in *Spiritus*. He graciously accepted and even secured permissions to allow its publication in these pages! After consulting with the newly-announced dean of ORU's College of Theology and Ministry, Wonsuk Ma, we decided to publish Keener's paper along with the responses given that day. Moreover, Ma suggested enlisting a student present at the lecture to provide a response for the journal. So I recruited Pamela Idriss, a recent Master of Arts graduate, to write a response from a student's perspective. These four pieces are the heart of the issue and constitute a long look into the mirror in terms of hermeneutics in the Spirit-empowered movement.

The issue opens with a study by Younghoon Lee, who teases out connections between the ministries of Korean pastor Yonggi Cho and Oral Roberts. Coming on the heels of the previous issue, which was entirely dedicated to Oral Roberts on the centennial anniversary of his birth, this study enhances our understanding not only of the influence of Roberts on Cho, but also of Cho's influence on Roberts. Here *Spiritus* continues its commitment to further our understanding of the place of Oral Roberts in Christian history.

If Keener's study is a consideration of hermeneutical methods in the Spirit-empowered movement, Andrew Williams' study on the place of water baptism in Pentecostalism provides an impetus for a (re) consideration of the rite in Pentecostal thought and practice. Williams is here following in the model of his doctoral supervisor, Chris E. W. Green, whose own work on the Lord's Supper in Pentecostalism is fueling liturgical imagination among congregations today in light of Eucharistic practice among early Pentecostals. Williams provides a "bibliographical evaluation" of the practice of water baptism in Pentecostal history, with an eye toward its place in the future piety of Pentecostal believers, particularly in terms of the historical (both

Pentecostal and early Christian) connection between water and Spirit baptism.

The studies by Mathew Clark and David Hebert, in terms of their subject matters, are quite different from each other. Clark provides a detailed historical study that compares the founding ethos and ecclesiology of early sixteenth-century South German Anabaptists to that of early twentieth-century Pentecostalism, finding several resonances between the two movements in their respective early formations. Clark identifies the following elements of these Anabaptists as present among early Pentecostals: “a radically consistent application of *sola scriptura*, a rejection of the state-church synthesis, a revisioning of sacramental belief and practice that subverts the clergy-laity divide, commitment to the teachings of Jesus as the primary and central guide to discipleship, a sacrificial pilgrim mentality of ‘just passing through this world,’ individual choice and responsibility to follow Jesus, confident personal witness to the goodness and salvation of the Lord, and some level of demonstration of the charismatic gifts.” Entering into its second century, modern popular Pentecostalism, primarily in the West, according to Clark, is diverging from these early features in such a way as to imperil its continuation and its authenticity in relation to its early core beliefs and practices. Clark’s piece is a clarion call for Pentecostalism to reclaim these elements of its early heritage as it goes forth into the future.

Hebert’s study, distilled from his doctoral thesis completed at the University of South Africa in 2009, takes its point of departure from a visionary experience Oral Roberts reported in August 2004 concerning the imminent return of Jesus Christ. Roberts’ vision functions prophetically, in Hebert’s view, to urge contemporary Christians to recall a theme prevalent in historic Christianity and earlier Pentecostal/Charismatic tradition, termed by Hebert the “Perfect and Complete Gospel of Both Comings of Jesus Christ.” Hebert traces historically both the presence of this emphasis throughout Christian, particularly Pentecostal, history and its eventual decline in contemporary proclamation of the gospel. The framework within which Hebert argues for reclamation of this emphasis is unashamedly the dispensationalism of much early and present popular Pentecostalism. Though the

substance of Clark's and Hebert's articles is significantly different, the tenor is quite similar: contemporary Pentecostalism must reclaim something of its history if it is to minister effectively in the future. It must gaze into the mirror and then turn to face the world without forgetting what it looks like (Jas 1:23–24).

Emmanuel Anim offers a brief study of the role that migration and population displacement play in the propagation of the faith. Drawing on examples primarily from African nations and churches, Anim demonstrates that refugee crises and population movements are often significant channels for spreading the Christian faith in the African diaspora. This phenomenon is well attested both biblically and historically, and in light of global tensions surrounding issues of immigration policy, it presents a challenge for Pentecostals living both in nations producing refugees and nations having to deal with the influx of immigrants.

This collection of studies forces Pentecostals to ask themselves some probing questions. How do they fit into the flow of Christian history? How do they navigate between the quest for their own distinctiveness and their calling to be a renewing presence in the global church? Are they especially indebted to the earliest days of the Pentecostal revival as they seek a way forward into the future? These questions and more drive Pentecostals to the mirror, to look at themselves as they are, to remember what they once were, and to decide how then to move into the future. Maybe the once-crowned King of Pop has given Pentecostals a nudge in the right direction.

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