Spiritus

ORU Journal of Theology

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Spiritus

ORU Journal of Theology

Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology . . .

- Publishes studies from all disciplines pertaining to Spirit-empowered Christianity, from established and emerging scholars
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- Reviews pertinent scholarly works and some professional and popular works of merit
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of

Rev. James B. Buskirk, S.T.D.

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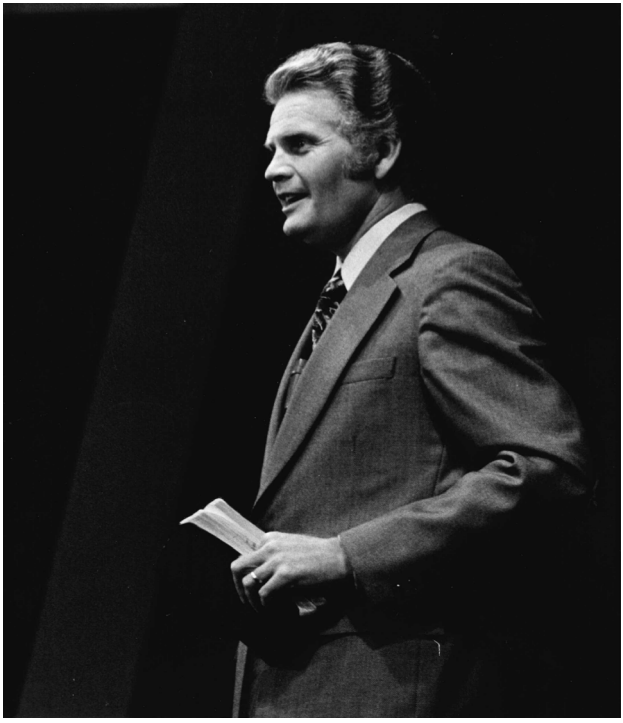


Founding Dean

Graduate School of Theology and Ministry

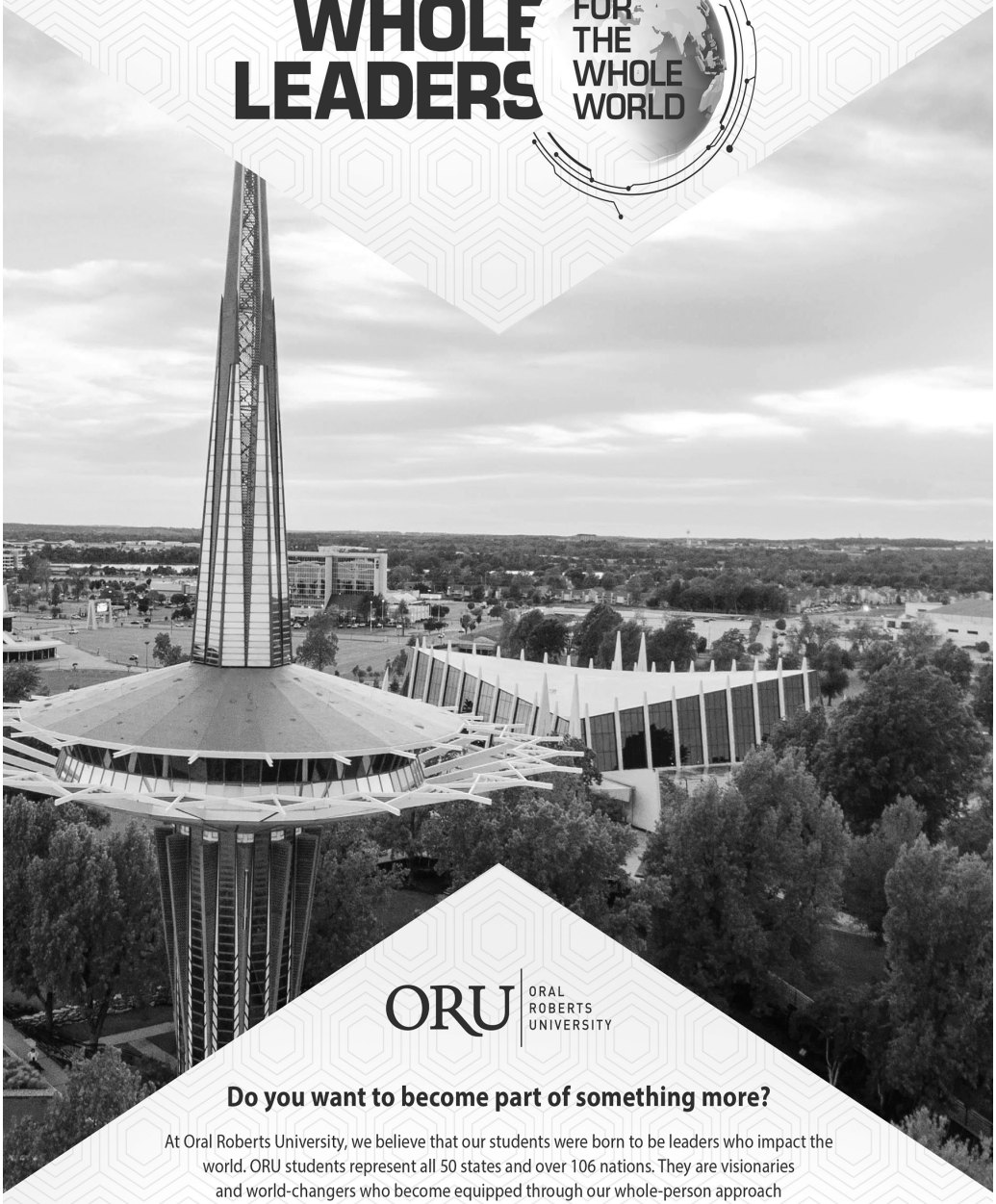
Oral Roberts University

(1976–1984)

ORAL ROBERTS UNIVERSITY

WHOLE LEADERS

FOR THE WHOLE WORLD



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Editorial: So what the Heck was That?

Jeffrey S. Lamp, Editor

By any reckoning, 2020 was a year for the books. For those residing in the United States, it was a confluence of several seismic events, the occurrence of any one of which would have been difficult enough. Of course, in terms of significance and scale is the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, a global pandemic national leadership first assured us was under constant scrutiny and control, only to have it emerge in a way that betrayed our lack of national preparedness and ability to respond in a coherent way. The fact that the pandemic emerged in the lead-up to another divisive presidential election cycle did not help an ideologically polarized society deal with it in a better way. Add to this another in a seemingly endless line of national racial reckonings and the result is a concentrated and complex social unrest that rivaled the Civil Rights and Vietnam Eras of the 1960s and early 1970s.

It would be wonderful if at this juncture in this little discussion I could triumphantly announce that Spirit-empowered believers rose to the occasion as a whole and offered a healing way forward. The reason I cannot do so is for the same reason I cannot announce the opposite, namely that Spirit-empowered believers are largely to blame for the national malaise. The Spirit-empowered movement is too large, diverse, and global to permit such facile assignments. To be sure, there are Spirit-empowered believers who are charting ways forward in the face of all of these issues. On the other hand, there are those who perpetuate racist attitudes and practices, who sow partisan political and social discord with alleged prophetic pronouncements and advocacy of conspiracy theories, and who unnecessarily pit church and state against each other in a God vs. Caesar showdown while thousands suffer physically, economically, and emotionally from the effects of the pandemic and the effects of systemic racism. The sad fact seems to be that Spirit-empowered believers have not clearly distinguished themselves from the rest of the population in terms of responses to the challenges of our day.

Perhaps this is not even a cause for concern. A monolithic movement would run the risk of running off track without the ability to correct itself effectively. The short history of Pentecostalism shows that there really is no such thing as

"Pentecostalism," but rather, in the well-worn retort, there are only "pentecostalisms." As a mentor of mine back in the 1980s was fond of saying, "The Charismatic Movement does not have a papacy, but we have many popes." Perhaps it is best that in the post-Pentecost (Acts 2 version, not 1906) age of the democratization of the Spirit there is no one entity that can ride herd on all expressions arising from various sectors of the movement.

I surely believe there are individuals and groups within the larger movement who are articulating and living the truth as it is in Christ, just as there are those who seem to have forgotten the moorings of the gospel. The Spirit-empowered conversation is often as "spirited" and vitriolic as the secular counterpart, with one side at one time holding sway and another side at another time. And because even Spirit-empowered human beings are complicated critters, sometimes an individual gets it right on one point and wrong at another. Of course, we could all wish the other side would have a "come to Jesus" moment and see things our way, making all things right. But given that all sides of any issue of concern within the movement might hold to this dream, we're right back where we started.

I suspect there will be no real resolution to this issue on a macro scale. The movement is large and diverse, and there will inevitably be issues where faithful people disagree. Perhaps the test of the day is not which side "wins" the debates, but how we go about waging the battle. A place to start may be to turn attention from winning the argument to helping those who suffer. Who are the victims of the plague? Who are those suffering from injustice on any front? Whose voices aren't being heard, and how can we hear and project them? Does anyone have a cup of cold water to offer? I recognize that even asking these questions as I have evidences a bias in how I view the path toward wholeness. Even so, we must strive as a movement to hear the voice of the Spirit, adopting a stance of humility as we engage each other, and the world, to bring the healing power of God to bear on the ills of our day.

By all indications, 2021 has not proven a remedy to the previous year's maladies. Despite promise of vaccines, the pandemic still rages, cases spiking again when our national discipline wanes. Six days into the new year, the government of the United States came perilously close to unraveling on national television. Much has been said on the matter of race, but as "allyship" increases, so too do voices within our movement that seem to long for the days of Jim Crow. It is painfully obvious that merely turning a calendar page to a new year will not be the answer.

Perhaps a sober examination of what it means to be truly Spirit-empowered will be a place to begin. I jokingly remind my students that the Spirit's first name is "Holy." However we express our empowerment, it must always reflect the Spirit who sanctifies us and leads us to be holy as God is holy.

So in light of all of this we offer this spring's issue of Spiritus. Several of the articles in this issue reflect the topics of the day, some directly, some less so.

The issue opens with a memorial tribute to the founding Dean of ORU's Graduate School of Theology and Ministry, Dr. James (Jimmy) B. Buskirk (1933–2020). Dr. Buskirk's life, ministry, and legacy within the ORU community are lovingly surveyed by Arden Autry and James and Sally Jo Shelton. The tribute clearly shows Jimmy Buskirk as a man who lived for the glory of God both by doing that to which God called him and who lived "in such a way that people have a better opinion of God." Of particular interest in this piece is the story of how Dr. Buskirk came to ORU to serve as its founding Dean and what he accomplished during his tenure (1976–1984).

Next is a trio of articles by professors in the Undergraduate Theology Department at Oral Roberts University. Julie Ma opens with an examination of the major themes of Oral Roberts' preaching. The three key themes are the doctrine of Seed-faith, the healing of the whole person, and the "Fourth Man." These themes emerge from key experiences in Roberts' spirituality and theology: his resolve to be an "original" preacher, his own personal healing from tuberculosis, and his anointing to heal. Following this, James Shelton presents a biblical study of the name of Jesus in Acts. He traces the importance of the concept of the "name" in both Greek and Hebrew cultures, focusing attention on the significance of the name of Jesus in Luke's portrayal in Acts. Shelton concludes that in the name of Jesus is power and authority that impinges directly on the mission of Jesus in the world, particularly in the church's Gentile mission, that addresses the question of whether there may be salvation outside of the name of Jesus. In the name of Jesus resides the power and authority to address the condition of all peoples and thus must be proclaimed in all the world. Eric Newberg addresses the role of Pentecostal churches in the Middle East in terms of migration to this region triggered by poor economic conditions in countries of origin. Immigrants, whether documented or not, and often Pentecostal, flood into these nations and find in Pentecostal churches spiritual, social, economic, and political support, as well as assistance in resisting domination by oppressive local employers. Though small in number in the

Middle East, Pentecostals play a vital role in the acculturation of immigrants arriving due to the realities of globalization.

A pair of articles by Monte Lee Rice and Dimitri Sala address the question of how Spirit-empowered Christians might bring the power and presence of the Spirit to bear on the matter of transforming culture. Rice proposes a complex conversation among several voices leading to a "conscientizing praxis of mass culture engagement." He begins by forging a complementary synthesis of the contrasting pneumatologically themed theologies of culture put forth by Amos Yong and Simon Chan, then bringing this into conversation with Tracey Rowland's critique of Vatican II's *Guadium Et Spes* and *aggioramento* agenda, appropriating her contention that cultural engagement in today's world requires a strong "moral forming ecclesial culture." From here, the discussion is informed by Frankfurt/Birmingham culture critique methodologies and then framed within the apocalyptically-themed Pentecostal cosmology, which entails appropriating the notion of Pentecostal formation Cheryl Bridges Johns calls "conscientization" and integrating James K. A. Smith's practice of apocalyptic culture reading. The result is what Rice calls a "theologically robust model for popular culture analysis." Sala explores the relationship between Pentecostals and the cultures we inhabit, drawing a contrast between "Pentecost*al* culture," in which Pentecostals create a culture within itself, and a "Pentecost *of* culture," in which Pentecostals exert a positive role within culture for its transformation. Based in part on an extension of the Pentecostal notion of Spirit baptism to include culture, he argues for the transformational model of cultural engagement, noting points at which Pentecostals are currently involved in bringing about "Kingdom-transformation" in cultures. He further notes that Pentecostalism is systemically ripe for this type of transforming work via its ability to change paradigms, its embrace of the manifestation of supernatural power, and its ecumenical modeling of unity.

In light of the impending centennial of the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921, Harold Hunter offers a critical look at how Pentecostals have historically embodied interracialism in US churches and denominations, highlighting both points at which the racial harmony of the Azusa revival and the (re)appearance of white supremacy prevailed. Hunter assesses that the impact of Pentecostal interracialism has had a limited effect in addressing systemic racism and calls Pentecostals to "revisit the founders' emphasis on repentance, reform, and restitution."

Following Hunter's piece two articles explore the responses of Pentecostals to the COVID-19 pandemic. Interestingly, one of these articles was written by an African American scholar and the other by an African scholar of Pentecostalism. First, David Daniels, III, provides a look at how the Church of God in Christ (COGIC), a black Pentecostal denomination, has responded to the pandemic. Drawing attention to the leadership of Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr., Daniels argues that the COGIC response to COVID-19 serves as an example of a rapport between Spirit-empowered Christians and secular/scientific actors in addressing this health crisis. The COGIC response occupies a mediating position in which the findings of science and the spiritual and theological treasures of the tradition come together to urge parishioners to bring both sound science and spiritual fervor to bear on the crisis. Moreover, the COGIC approach offers the potential for the church to engage structural racism in healthcare as it addresses the pandemic. In his article, J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu examines how African Pentecostals have responded to the pandemic. Noting the prevalence of the prosperity gospel in African Pentecostalism, Asamoah-Gyadu argues that COVID-19 has presented church leaders with a dilemma in addressing how the negative impacts of this "evil virus" square with a theology of health and wealth. The article surveys the responses of some key figures in African Pentecostalism whose responses range from espousing conspiracy theories, to motivating congregations to hopeful perseverance, to demonizing the virus and declaring protection from its evil. A key shift in emphasis by some leaders is the focus on an eschatological framing of the faith away from an overly realized triumphalism in the present.

Finally, on a more administrative note, the editorial board of *Spiritus* is proud to announce that the journal is now indexed in the ATLA Religion Database (ADB). ADB is the premier index of scholarly material in the fields of religion and theology, and the inclusion of *Spiritus* in this database will increase exposure of the journal to a wider audience and lead to more downloads of articles, particularly from other educational institutions. We have Thad Horner, Digital Scholarship and Research Librarian at ORU, to thank for this achievement.

Jeffrey S. Lamp (jlamp@oru.edu) is Professor of New Testament and Instructor of Environmental Science at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA.

In Memoriam: Dr. James B. Buskirk (1933–2020)

Founding Dean of Oral Roberts University Graduate School of Theology and Ministry (1976–1984)

Arden C. Autry
James Shelton
Sally Jo Shelton

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http://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/spiritus/

Keywords *James Buskirk, healing testimony, Dean, Graduate School of Theology, history, Oral Roberts, evangelism, spiritual ecumenicity, MDiv, DMin, PhD, accreditation*

Abstract

James Buskirk is honored as the founding Dean of ORU's Graduate School of Theology. A Master of Arts degree was already in place; Buskirk was tasked with establishing a Master of Divinity, a Doctor of Ministry, and a PhD in theology—each fully accredited. During his tenure, faculty and student numbers increased along with denominational diversity. The MDiv and DMin achieved accreditation. The PhD was not started, however, as Oral Roberts dealt with competing financial priorities. Roberts' declared decision not to offer a PhD led to Buskirk's departure. He remained on good terms personally with Roberts. Buskirk's effect on others is notable particularly in encouraging each to serve selflessly in the Holy Spirit's power.

Introduction

Summing up his earthly ministry, Jesus prayed to the Father: "I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do" (John 17:4, English Standard Version). That is a worthy aspiration for everyone—to do what God calls us to do. Yet there is another way to define what it means to live for the glory of God: "to live in such a way that people have a better opinion of God." James

(Jimmy) Buskirk lived for God's glory in both ways. He remained focused on what God gave him to do; he lived and spoke in ways that caused people to have a good opinion of God. Anyone who met Jimmy (especially those who heard him preach!) found him impressive, but he consistently deflected all the glory to Jesus. At the climactic moment of his sermons, he would often say, "What a Savior!"

As we seek to honor Jimmy Buskirk with this memorial article, we are confident he would want to give glory to God for any and all good things accomplished through his servant. The writers and contributors here have a good opinion of Jimmy Buskirk, in large part because his life—his testimony, his preaching, and his example—gave us a better opinion of God.

Early Life and Ministry

Jimmy was born in a Methodist parsonage in Shannon, Mississippi, in 1933. In his youth he enjoyed sports, particularly basketball, and was an Eagle Scout by age fourteen. He became a Junior Scout Master for a rapidly growing troop of over 100 boys. He later said most of his professional abilities had their start with scouting: planning and executing meetings, motivating scouts, raising funds by speeches, and inspiring local civic clubs.[1]

In 1951, he was called to ministry while a student at Millsaps College in Mississippi. The next year, he was appointed to a charge of five Methodist churches at age 18. While preaching one of many revivals, he met the pianist who became his beloved wife for sixty-six years, "my Nancy."[2]

Jimmy and Nancy had many good experiences in those early years of ministry in Mississippi. But it was sometimes challenging. Interviewed by John Erling for *Voices of Oklahoma*, after Jimmy retired, he recalled the following incident. While serving as pastor in Coldwater, Mississippi, his character and courage were tested by the racial turmoil of that era. After James Meredith enrolled as the first African-American at the University of Mississippi, Buskirk was warned not to talk about race from the pulpit—it would fan the flames, he was told, and it might prove fatal to the pastor! But taking seriously his responsibility as a minister of the gospel, he preached on the high cost of hate, dwelling particularly on the principle that it is impossible to love God and hate one's neighbor.[3]

After a Sunday evening sermon, unknown to the young pastor, sixteen men gathered and were on their way to teach him a lesson. One vigilante's wife asked for a private word with her husband and talked him into coming home. The others proceeded with their plan until they met an alcoholic whom Buskirk had befriended

while trying to lead him to Christ. When this man heard their violent intentions, he spoke up for Buskirk, convincing them also to go home. The following day he gave Buskirk the names of the men in the small mob that intended to hurt him, if not kill him. That week Buskirk visited each man; by the next Sunday they were back in church.[4] Jimmy Buskirk was courageous and persuasive.

A more well-known incident from his early ministry was the healing of his eyes. He told the story many times, and audiences never tired of it. At age 25, he was told he would be blind in six months from chorioretinitis, a degenerating eye disease. Through ongoing prayer (by "Miss Virginia" and others) and through medical care, he miraculously recovered with 20/20 vision (not instantaneously but gradually). A crucial moment of that transforming experience was a conversation with his earthly father, Bob Buskirk, who said to him: "Son, I want you to call your specialist in Memphis and tell him we are going to exchange eyes. With yours, I can function until retirement; with mine, you can have your ministry and life back." That impossible suggestion moved the younger Buskirk deeply. In his own words, he described what happened next:

> [My dad] left and I put my head down on my desk and I didn't just pray, "Lord, I give You my ministry" . . . . I really did give it to Him. I realized that all my begging God to give me back my sight was not really faith. It was lack of faith. I was trying to convince God. And suddenly I realized if my earthly father wanted me to have my vision so much that he'd give me his eyes, that I could afford to trust whatever God would do for me, because my dad's love is just a little reflection of my heavenly Father's love. And my vision started returning from that point. It returned gradually within about a year.[5]

This revelation of God's love opened a new level of trust and deep surrender to the Lord. This realization and the unfolding miracle of restored sight launched a creative burst of ministry. With newborn passion Buskirk pastored growing churches in Mississippi and Georgia over a period of seventeen years.[6]

Having received his Master of Divinity from Candler School of Theology (Emory University in Atlanta), he returned there to earn his Doctorate in Sacred Theology (1972). While completing the degree, he became the first professor to hold the Arthur J. Moore Chair of Evangelism at Candler. He trained students in effective evangelism in the classroom through an original program called Motivation for Ministry. He also took several students with him each time he preached, to observe and share the work of evangelism.

What Brought Him to ORU?

Occupying an endowed chair at a prestigious United Methodist seminary, with significant opportunities to impact students at Candler, why would Buskirk consider leaving? Indeed, he was initially reluctant to accept ORU's invitation, which came as a surprise.

As a guest preacher for ORU chapel (invited by Rev. Bob Stamps, campus minister), Buskirk was well received by students, faculty, and Oral Roberts himself. This reception went far beyond Buskirk's expectation or imagination. When he arrived in Tulsa he was not feeling well, and he prayed for God's help just to get through that one sermon. He made it through and gave an invitation, as usual. He was surprised to see Oral Roberts come forward—weeping! When Oral asked for a microphone to speak to the students, he surprised everyone there by confessing he had not been as close to the Lord for the last thirty days as he normally felt. He apologized to the students; he feared his spiritual half-heartedness might have negatively affected them. President Roberts asked the students to pray for him. Several laid hands on Oral and prayed, along with Jimmy Buskirk. The after-effect was something Buskirk had not witnessed before: the chapel was filled with corporate singing in tongues. Jimmy prayed in tongues himself, but he had never heard anything quite like that![7]

Jimmy was asked to stay longer and speak for Friday night communion; he accepted. After that, he was invited to speak to theological students on Saturday and then to the popular Sunday evening vespers on campus. On all these occasions, Oral Roberts was moved deeply by what he experienced.[8]

During this extended visit, Jimmy and Bob Stamps went to Roberts' home for conversation on Sunday. Oral asked Jimmy, "If you were going to build a school of theology, what kind would it be?" Jimmy answered with what he later described as his "wish list for Candler," not suspecting where this conversation was headed. After hearing Jimmy's "wish list," Oral asked him, why not come here and build that school "and be the Dean of it?"[9] Buskirk was so surprised he hardly knew how to answer. He felt he was already where God wanted him, making a difference for Candler students who would, he hoped, make a difference in the United Methodist Church and beyond.

At the end of that surprising first visit to ORU, Oral had one more question to ask Jimmy. Oral drove his guest to the airport and asked, "If the Lord were to ask you to come and be our Dean, you would not refuse, would you?" Jimmy disliked being put on the spot like that, and he told Oral so. Not deterred, Oral followed up

by telephone "about every month or so" to ask what the Lord was telling Jimmy. For about a year, Jimmy's answer remained unchanged—he did not think God wanted him to move to ORU.[10]

A year later, there was a second visit. Tommy Tyson (ORU's first campus minister, 1965–68) was scheduled to preach at ORU, but he was in the hospital and unable to go. He called his friend, Jimmy Buskirk, asking him to go instead. God's Holy Spirit blessed this visit as much as the first. ORU faculty responded to the preaching with soul-searching examination of their commitment to Jesus. And faculty members from the still-small School of Theology urged him "to pray about being their Dean." Having endured the petty jealousies and competition which can plague any school's faculty, Jimmy sometimes thought of his colleagues at Candler "as a tough thirty-two-member obstacle course." In stark contrast, here were faculty asking him "to consider being their Dean." He was quite overwhelmed.[11]

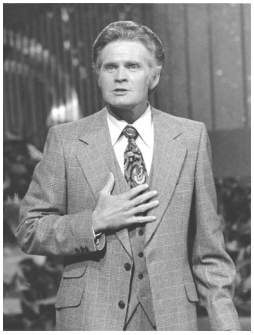
During that visit, in 1975, Buskirk recalls Oral Roberts telling him he felt called to be "a leader in the healing of the whole Body of Christ." Buskirk had not heard that aspiration voiced by anyone else. It was not a new concept for Oral, however. One author of this article (Autry) remembers that Oral Roberts had earlier said something like that to ORU students in chapel (1967–70): "ORU is called to bring healing to the Body of Christ." Even before that, Roberts had acted energetically on his belief in "spiritual ecumenicity."

Oral Roberts was a key partner with Demos Shakarian in launching the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI) in the early 1950s. The FGBMFI encouraged participation by people from Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal backgrounds. What unified the FGBMFI was not doctrine per se but strong commitment to Jesus as Savior and pursuit of the baptism with the Holy Spirit.[12] Those who have experienced such unity—centered on Jesus and the Holy Spirit—long for divisions among Christians to be overcome by the greater reality of God's gift. Even when separate institutional structures remain, Christians with the same focus can work and worship together. Oral Roberts sought and practiced this unity.

To be part of "healing the whole Body of Christ" was a calling that resonated with Jimmy Buskirk's heart. In their conversations, he heard Oral saying that the Charismatic churches had "the power without the theology," while the church at large had a "critical theology without the power." For the church to be whole, and fully effective in ministry to the world, theology and power need to be brought together and kept together. Any seminary that wants to help heal the body of Christ needs both. Oral was saying (using other words) exactly what Jimmy believed.[13]

After that second visit, Jimmy "went back to Georgia in trouble"—committed to what he had started at Candler but attracted to what he saw at ORU.[14] Buskirk was loved and appreciated by Candler students; he was not easily willing to let that go. (Once, Oral and Bob Stamps visited Buskirk at Candler, to press the case for coming to Tulsa. Bob observed how much the Candler students loved Jimmy.)[15] Finally, after a second year of prayer, calls from Oral, and thoughtful comparison of his opportunities at Candler and ORU, Jimmy Buskirk decided, in April 1976, to come to Tulsa

Years at ORU (1976-1984)



Buskirk came to ORU clearly understanding what was expected of him and what he could expect to do: first, establish an accredited Master of Divinity (MDiv) program in addition to the existing Master of Arts in Theology; second, add a Doctor of Ministry program (DMin) to provide further professional training for pastors who had completed an MDiv; and third, build toward an eventual PhD program.

MDiv and DMin programs aim at equipping pastors and chaplains. The third objective—the PhD—was expected to be the most challenging. Significant expenditures would be required to upgrade the library and recruit additional faculty. But a PhD program was critical to the vision of renewing theological education across denominational lines—a vision shared by Oral Roberts and Jimmy Buskirk. They knew the "liberal" theology that had weakened "mainline" Protestant churches started with the seminaries' faculties and then spread to the pastors they trained. To counter that influence required faculty empowered by the Holy Spirit and trained at the highest levels. Such faculty could train pastors for coming generations—at ORU but also at other seminaries staffed by ORU PhDs.

Pursuing this strategy, Jimmy and Oral were convinced of the need for "spiritual ecumenicity." Both men had experienced this in the Neo-Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement, which promoted Christian unity—"making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3, New Revised Standard Version). Oral had already hired Charismatic professors, not just classical Pentecostals, unifying and drawing on the strengths of varied Christian strands. As Jimmy expanded the faculty, he included members from the Pentecostal Holiness, Assemblies of God, United Methodist, American Baptist, Southern Baptist, Mennonite, Eastern Orthodox, and Roman Catholic traditions. The constituency of the student body also shifted more toward historic churches.

The first several years of Buskirk's deanship were filled with growth and achievement. In his well-written history of the graduate program Dr. Larry Hart provides important facts and perspective:

> Buskirk's first task then was to recruit a world class faculty as well as to attract students from across the globe. Half of the faculty and up to one-half of the student body initially were United Methodist. But Oral Roberts was not troubled by this, having joined the United Methodist church himself [in 1968]. Perhaps this imbalance was necessary at the outset to maintain the seminary's ecumenical flavor. The school would evolve to much greater denominational (and nondenominational) diversity in the years to follow. Of utmost importance, it would continue to have a vital charismatic ethos, in harmony with the ministry of Oral Roberts.[16]

Successful recruiting of excellent faculty was key to a major accomplishment vital to the vision Roberts and Buskirk had for the School of Theology: in June of 1980, the Association of Theological Schools granted full accreditation for ORU's MDiv program.[17] This was the first of three major objectives to which Oral and Jimmy were committed.

Hart continues:

> After five years of rapid development, the seminary was hitting full stride. May 1981 saw the largest graduating class thus far of 55 graduates. The 1981-82 year saw the following important developments:
>
> 1. Addition of first full-time woman professor;

2. Development of first class in Koinonia ministry;
3. Addition of first cross-cultural field education class to enable international students to assimilate their education into their native cultural settings;
4. Establishment of the first missionary internship;
5. Official approval by the University Senate of the United Methodist Church to train candidates for ministry in that denomination;
6. Inauguration of the Doctor of Ministry program with 11 students participating in the first seminar;
7. Offer of Holy Spirit conference[s] as continuing education with a national audience of over 1200 participants.[18]

Why Did He Leave ORU?

All of the developments of 1981–82 were important in Buskirk's departure from ORU. Establishing a DMin program was the second of three major objectives on which Oral Roberts and Jimmy Buskirk had agreed. Approval by the University Senate for United Methodist ministers to be educated in ORU's MDiv program was equally important. Both Buskirk and Roberts valued it, as both were ordained elders in that denomination.

Buskirk grew up Methodist; his ministerial credentials as an "elder" had always been with that body. Roberts, however, was first ordained by the Pentecostal Holiness Church. When he joined the United Methodist Church, he was received as an "elder," with the same standing as Buskirk or any other United Methodist minister. But that changed when the United Methodists invoked a distinction between "traveling elder" and "local elder." [Theoretically, a "traveling elder" is subject to being moved by the church hierarchy.] According to Buskirk, Roberts received some bad advice and allowed his standing to be defined as "local elder," which effectively downgraded his status from "ordained" to "laity." Buskirk saw that Roberts was hurt by that action, but he knew Oral well enough to know he would not fight back. Any initiative to reinstate him as a full "elder" would have to come from the United Methodists.[19]

Oral's loss of full standing in the United Methodist Church was likely a factor in his cooling enthusiasm for developing a PhD program. Buskirk clearly expressed his opinion: there "was a connection between the fact that he was not an elder in the mainline church and his spending money to have a PhD program which would help the mainline church."[20] At that time in the Roberts ministry, there seemed—to Oral if not to Jimmy—more pressing needs for "spending money."

The years-long struggles to build the City of Faith medical complex and try to keep the medical school going took a toll on many programs at ORU. In particular, Buskirk's and Roberts' commitment to build a PhD program was jeopardized, not all at once but over time. As early as Jimmy's fifth year at ORU, Oral began "asking if they should have a PhD." Then Oral told Jimmy he should raise the money for it himself, which was not consistent with the original agreement before Jimmy left Candler. The agreement had been that Jimmy would ensure the quality of faculty and education, while Oral ensured the resources.[21]

Jimmy asked, "What are you going to tell the Lord when He asks you what you did about His PhD?" Jimmy told Oral that, if the Lord asked him that question, he was going to tell the Lord that Oral "forgot the vision." Obviously the two men had a close relationship—they genuinely loved and admired one another. Jimmy knew he could speak candidly to Oral. Jimmy now spoke to Oral with a broken heart, but not in anger. After many discussions of how to fund a PhD, the final resolution (in Jimmy's mind) came when Oral indicated they simply "were not going to do it, which meant there was no point in raising the money."[22] Oral and Jimmy still loved each other, but Jimmy was deeply grieved by Oral's decision. Oral's decision—driven by perceived necessity—made Jimmy's decision to leave possible.

That was Buskirk's view of his reason for leaving: "when Oral said they were not going to do it," Jimmy felt released from the commitment. Together they "had done all the things they had planned to do—except the PhD." The MDiv had been established and accredited; the DMin had been started and approved.[23] Failure to start the PhD before Buskirk left ORU should not diminish the stellar accomplishments of his tenure as Dean.

[Buskirk would not want all the credit for these accomplishments. The Provost of the University, Dr. Carl Hamilton, had wisely and patiently helped Buskirk learn how to navigate the administrative challenges of an academic program, since Buskirk had never been a dean before. Hamilton was of incalculable value also in dealing with accreditation issues, since he had dealt with those issues for the larger University.]

After leaving, Buskirk still believed a PhD was God's will for ORU's School of Theology. We are grateful that God—in his wisdom, patience, and mercy—has enabled subsequent leadership to bring the PhD dream into reality (under the current Dean, Dr. Wonsuk Ma). Jimmy Buskirk was certainly grateful. He remained steadfastly committed to seeing ORU have a PhD, even if he had to leave to see it happen.

Ministry after ORU

After growing a faculty of twenty-one professors and over 300 students in an amazingly short time, Buskirk left ORU in 1984 to become Pastor and Senior Minister of First United Methodist Church (FUMC), Tulsa. He served the Lord in this already prominent church until his retirement in 2001.

One innovation he brought to FUMC was "community ministries," which encouraged and enabled laity to reach out locally. If anyone saw a need, and at least one other person was interested in meeting that need, the church would help them form a ministry team. Importantly, the commitment to serve was for six months at a time. This encouraged people to "try it out." If it turned out not to be a good fit, or the person needed a break, they did not "have to die to get out of it," Buskirk would say. Every six months the entire menu of newly discovered needs and ongoing ministries was presented to the congregation, so that each person could volunteer, volunteer again, or change their focus to another outreach. Besides the blessing this was to recipients (like those whose car was repaired by the "used car ministry"), the spirit of service became contagious in the church.

The congregation grew to a membership of 8,600 (eighth largest United Methodist Church in the nation at the time). More than 6,200 conversions were recorded during the tenure of this pastor who always had the heart of an evangelist. Indeed, no single word captures the essence of Jimmy Buskirk better than "evangelism." Before, during, and after his time at ORU—all his life—he was a tireless evangelist. He preached for sixty-eight years. He spoke in 554 churches throughout the country.[24]

In addition to his own evangelistic work, he saw the potential contributions others could make to the cause of Christ. That was his motive for establishing the Jimmy Buskirk Ministries, a fund supported by Buskirk and those touched by his ministry. Over the years, that fund helped 368 students with scholarships for theological education.[25] This was not something he talked about much in his sermons. Rather, in this quiet way he showed how he believed in others and the ministry they could do by the Holy Spirit's power.

After Retirement

When he left the deanship at ORU, Buskirk did not cut all his ties with the University or with Oral Roberts. He continued to serve in various capacities and committees. He never became a Trustee because that might present a conflict of

interests, especially regarding the School of Theology. He did serve, however, on the Board of Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky.

After retiring from the pastorate, Jimmy had the opportunity to teach evangelism at Asbury. (The president of Asbury, Dr. Timothy Tennent, did undergraduate studies at ORU.) Plus, Buskirk continued to give time to organizations among United Methodists working to preserve orthodox theology and practice. He strongly believed in the importance of the church—as a local organism but also as an expression of "connection" to other locations in America and abroad. He was a faithful follower of Jesus, but he was also always "a churchman."[26]

Personal Encounters and Reflections

Michael Postlethwait, an ORU alumnus, credits Jimmy Buskirk with significant impact on his life during a weekend seminar on the Holy Spirit. At a morning session the speaker (not Buskirk) invited students to pray for those indicating their need by a raised hand. In turn, they were instructed to ask the prayed-for person to pray for them.

As an ORU student confined to a wheelchair, Mike was accustomed to receiving prayer. This time he received prayer from other students. Then, he says, "Despite many people having prayed for me, I did not have the opportunity to pray for others as instructed." Afterwards, people went their own way. Even those who remained in the area long enough showed no interest in having a student in a wheelchair pray for them. Mike felt very frustrated.

Before the evening service (when Buskirk would be speaking), Mike shared his lingering frustration with friends seated near him at the front of the audience, "only to look up and realize that Dr. Buskirk had heard the whole thing from stage! He immediately came down to where I was seated and asked me to remain afterwards with my friends so I could pray for him! At first, I was quite embarrassed that he had heard my complaint from stage, but he immediately put me at ease."

Remaining afterwards as instructed, Mike reports that Dr. Buskirk "came to where we were seated as promised."

> As he knelt down next to me, we joined hands and prayed as my friends joined in the background. During that time of prayer, I was surprised that I was "seeing" an image "in my head" that I can only conclude was meant to minister to him. With humble hesitation, I carefully described what I perceived I was seeing. At first, I was scared

> he might regret the offer he had made if indeed I had missed hearing from God properly. Before I could even begin to process the implications of what I had just done, he immediately reassured me my description was on target and he knew exactly to what it referred. As our short time together ended, I think all parties involved were blessed at what we had just witnessed. We all knew we had just witnessed something special.

In following weeks, Mike was "inundated with people asking me to pray for them. Moreover, nearly everyone I prayed for during that period was touched or healed in a significant way! In retrospect, I suspect that Buskirk's humble anointing stirred God's gifts in me." Decades later, Mike says, "God has continued to move in and through my life in unique ways to bless others from that day forward."

Mike further observes about Buskirk's humility: Even when sharing the remarkable story of how his eyes were healed, "Buskirk resisted the tendency to make himself the central character. . . . The ladies who interceded and prayed for his healing were the central characters."[27]

Dr. Robert Tuttle, former professor at ORU Graduate School of Theology, says,

> My first memory of Jim Buskirk was at a Laity Conference for the Southeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church at Lake Junaluska, NC, nearly 50 years ago. Jim was the Bible teacher, and I was the evangelist. I preached every evening and Jim would sit on the front row. When the invitation was given, he was always the first one to the communion rail asking for prayer. That so impressed me that when I moved to Tulsa a few years later I applied for a position on the faculty of the ORU Graduate School of Theology. Jim was the Dean and he hired me on the spot. Under his leadership, I then spent six of the most fruitful years of my ministry. His office was always open. His sweet humble spirit spoke to me on a weekly basis. I became close friends with both Jim and his dear wife Nancy and spent many hours in their home with family and friends. I will be forever in his debt. Heaven is now a better place![28]

Dr. Steve O'Malley, former professor at ORU Graduate School of Theology, remembers his decision to come to ORU and Buskirk's impact on him personally:

> We saw the vision Jim had for the new School as integral to the larger mission of impacting the world with the needed message of full salvation in Christ, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, with focus on healing, understood by Jim as involving all areas of our lives and ministries. Yes, he led us in an upbeat, Spirit guided vision for the Kingdom in fresh encounters with the active work of the Holy Spirit, . . .
>
> Jim helped me to see and internalize what it means to take every challenge in life and make it a space where the Holy Spirit can intervene redemptively in persons' lives, especially at their points of deepest need. For that, I am eternally grateful, as well as for the community of brothers and sisters in Christ formed at our School through his guidance.[29]

Margie McAdoo, Administrative Assistant for Dr. Buskirk at First United Methodist Church, Tulsa, spoke of his transition from being Dean to being Pastor:

> He was returning to his first love, preaching from the pulpit. However, his love of teaching students how to effectively do ministry did not stop with the deanship. He continued to take groups of students with him on ministry trips, making provision for their expenses, to give them a firsthand opportunity to do the work of evangelism.[30]

Dr. James Hewett taught New Testament Greek at ORU's Graduate School of Theology. Later, he joined the pastoral staff at First United Methodist, again under the leadership of Dr. Buskirk. Thus, Hewett heard many Buskirk stories and sermons. He remembers one story that many perhaps did not hear:

> Jim had his "salty" side. He preached passionately. He lived what he preached—to my knowledge. But he wasn't afraid to step up and face down a challenger. Once in his pastoring days down in Mississippi he was being hassled by some local rowdies. One evening they pulled up alongside him. As they waited for the light to change and challenged him, he leveled a shotgun out his window, asked how far they wanted to push the matter! He said he was never bothered again by local ruffians.[31]

What impressed Hewett most about his dean and pastor was this: "Jim believed in education, but he believed more in salvation. I do not recall any

academically mind-stirring moments with him, either in a class or sermon. But, oh, how he could stir the soul."[32]

Dr. Robert Mansfield, Emeritus Professor of New Testament at ORU Graduate School of Theology, wrote this tribute:

> My admiration for and indebtedness to Jim Buskirk are great. We both began our careers in North Mississippi as United Methodist ministers and actually served the same church (my wife Jane's home church). Twelve years later, when he was appointed Dean at ORU and began building a faculty, we were already well acquainted. I was teaching at Mount Union College in Ohio, and Dr. Buskirk contacted me in 1978 about coming as Professor of New Testament. We came for an interview; he offered me the position on the spot. I accepted, resigned my position, sold our house, and came on a handshake without a signed contract. So strong was my trust in Jim as a man of integrity. There was great camaraderie among the faculty as we worked together under Dean Buskirk's strong leadership to achieve ATS accreditation and certification by the UMC for training United Methodist ministers. Those were exciting years, beginning a fulfilling forty-year tenure at ORU for me. In large measure, I owe my career to the leadership of Jim Buskirk, my Dean, colleague, and friend.[33]

Dr. Arden Autry, former professor at ORU, former staff member at First United Methodist Church, and co-author of this article, said this about Jimmy Buskirk:

> Dr. Buskirk hired me twice: first to join the undergraduate department of theology at ORU and later to work fulltime on the church staff. I told him I felt honored he would offer me a position twice. With characteristic humility he replied, "I'm honored you would accept it twice." Then we both laughed.
>
> When favorably impressed by public figures (such as pastors or deans), you might be disillusioned by getting to know them better. The opposite was the case for me with Jimmy Buskirk. The longer I knew him, the more I respected him. Even when he chided me for not doing something I was supposed to do, or for doing it in a way he disapproved of, his sharpest rebukes were given in private. I never felt he was trying to embarrass me or make me smaller in the eyes of

> others. I never feared he might use his frustration or his (justified!) anger to sabotage me and the ministry God called me to do. On those occasions when I had to endure his rebukes, I still knew I could trust that his trust in me ran deeper. I knew he loved me and wanted me to succeed.

Dr. James Shelton, professor at ORU and co-author of this article, recalled this about Jimmy Buskirk:

> When he was at First United Methodist some people often spontaneously raised their hands during the "Alleluia" that was sung before the reading of the Gospel. Some of the staider members asked Jimmy to demand that the more charismatic members not raise their hands in the service. He responded, "I will tell them to lower their hands when you give me permission to tell you to raise your hands!" A pastor that stared down racial bigots and risked his life in racial reconciliation in segregated Mississippi was not to be cowed by such divisiveness.

On a more personal note, Shelton remembers this: "Most every time he preached at First United Methodist, he gave an altar call for people to commit their lives to Jesus and to receive prayer for healing and special needs. It was after a stirring sermon that our daughter Jenny settled in her young heart to follow the Lord seriously."

Shelton also recalls with heart-felt gratitude the generous support that Buskirk's ministry gave during the three years he read for a PhD in biblical studies at the University of Stirling in Scotland (1979-82). Furthermore, when Shelton first revealed the call he had received to enter the Catholic Church in 1996, Buskirk, who had been his dean while at ORU and then his pastor at First United Methodist in Tulsa for over a decade, in demonstration of his commitment to the unity of the church regardless of denomination, sent him forth with his blessing as "a missionary" to assist in the re-evangelization of the ancient church.

Dr. Robert Stamps, Campus Minister at ORU, 1968–1984, was known as "Brother Bob" to many ORU students (including the co-authors of this article). Bob first heard Jimmy Buskirk preach in 1970, at a Prayer Conference in Knoxville, Tennessee. Jimmy impressed Bob with his masterful ability to tell stories that were hard to forget, especially the story of how his eyes were healed. Four years later, Bob

invited Jimmy to preach for the ORU chapel service that eventually led to Oral Roberts' invitation for Buskirk to become Dean of the School of Theology.

When Buskirk finally agreed to come to ORU, he brought with him a vision for the theology school to serve the whole church, and not just a part. According to Bob Stamps, Jimmy Buskirk was "a man of the universal Church, a man of the Gospel, and a man of the Bible." The Pentecostal and Charismatic churches are part of that universal church, and Buskirk always "believed in the rest of us" (i.e., any Christian who might feel excluded by other Christians; if they belong to Christ, they are part of "us"). Believing God is at work in the whole church in no way diminishes the Pentecostal/Charismatic experience. If anything, that perspective on the whole church provides the context for appreciating what God is doing in the Charismatic Movement to bless the whole church and the whole world.

For ORU's School of Theology to represent the whole and not just the part, there would need to be diversity in the faculty as well as in the student body. There would need to be diversity of experience and even diversity of theological positions. The unifying value would be openness to the charismatic experience of the Holy Spirit. Speaking in tongues would be strongly encouraged but not required of everyone—a "huge" point for Buskirk, according to Stamps.

Bob remembers that Buskirk enjoyed putting the seminary together the way he thought it should be, according to his vision for it. He willingly did the work and fought the battles to achieve full accreditation for the MDiv with the Association of Theological Schools and with the University Senate of the United Methodist Church.

Along with being Dean of the Graduate School of Theology, Buskirk was also Vice-President for Spiritual Life for the University, an office previously held by Bob Stamps. Bob was glad to relinquish the title and continue as campus minister directly answerable to Buskirk. That meant the two men met weekly to assess matters and plan ministry. Bob always enjoyed those meetings, and there was "never a cross word" between them. Buskirk sometimes asked questions about things Bob proposed, but he never opposed him. Bob relished such great support from a supervisor whose theology was the same as his.

While experiencing the memorial service for Dr. Buskirk (First United Methodist Church, Tulsa, September 29, 2020), Bob recalled many reasons to give thanks. Prominent among those points of thanksgiving was Jimmy's great marriage with Nancy. Better than many would know, Bob knew how much strength she was to Jimmy through sixty-six years of marriage. The way she researched illustrations

for his sermons was just one way she supported him in ministry. Bob was grateful for how much Jimmy loved Nancy.

Bob was grateful for how Jimmy's parishes in Mississippi and Georgia loved him. He was "like Jesus to them," said Bob. Jimmy was grateful for their love, which continued even after he moved on to academia. "He loved the memory of his parishes." Throughout the memorial service Bob gave thanks for Jimmy's life. He called it "a big life," the kind of life that makes you wonder how the world can go on without this person.[34]

Conclusion

Those who personally know Jimmy Buskirk's influence on our lives share the gratitude Bob Stamps expressed. Such was Jimmy Buskirk to so many—to his family, his friends, his parishes, his students, and a Graduate School of Theology that he shaped for generations to come according to a God-given vision for serving the whole church. Thank God for the life of Jimmy Buskirk. Thank God for a man whose life gave us a better opinion of God. Thank God for doing such glorious things through a humble servant like Jimmy. Thank God, who can do such things to his glory in "the rest of us." Amen.

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Sally Jo Shelton is retired after serving 24 years as Theological Librarian and Associate Professor of Learning Resources at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA.

Notes

[1] Family obituary, read at memorial service, 29 September 29 2020.

[2] Family obituary.

[3] John Erling, "Interview with James and Nancy Buskirk," *Voices of Oklahoma*, 29 February 2016, ch. 8, www.voicesofoklahoma.com/interview/buskirk-dr-james-b/ (11 January 2021).

[4] Erling, "Interview," ch. 8.

[5] "The Spiritual Awakening in America—and a Miracle of Healing," *Abundant Life* 30:7, July 1976, 8–13, http://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/almag/260 (11 January 2021). This is a transcript of a televised interview with Oral and Evelyn Roberts.

[6] Family obituary.

[7] Harold Paul, "Interview Granted Dr. Harold Paul by Dr. James Buskirk, Founding Dean of the Graduate School of Theology at ORU" (Tulsa, OK: Oral Roberts University, 1985, Holy Spirit Research Center archive), 2.

[8] Paul, "Interview," 2.

[9] Paul, "Interview," 3.

[10] Paul, "Interview," 4.

[11] Paul, "Interview," 4.

[12] David Edwin Harrell, Jr., *Oral Roberts: An American Life* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), 153–55, 288–90.

[13] Paul, "Interview," 4.

[14] Paul, "Interview," 5.

[15] Robert Stamps, telephone interview by authors, 2 December 2020.

[16] Larry Hart, "The Seminary: A History of Graduate Theological Education," 2016, 8, https://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1000&context=theo_history (11 January 2021).

[17] Hart, "The Seminary," 11.

[18] Hart, "The Seminary," 12.

[19] Paul, "Interview," 7. Paul concurred on Oral's characteristic response to criticism.

[20] Paul, "Interview," 8.

[21] Paul, "Interview," 8.

[22] Paul, "Interview," 8.

[23] Paul, "Interview," 9.

[24] Family obituary.

[25] Family obituary.

[26] Stamps, telephone interview.

[27] Michael Postlethwait, written response, December 2020.

[28] Robert Tuttle, written response, 15 December 2020.

[29] Steve O'Malley, written response, 15 December 2020.

[30] Margie McAdoo, written response, 15 December 2020.

[31] James Hewett, written response, December 2020.

[32] Hewett, written response.

[33] Robert Mansfield, written response, 5 January 2021.

[34] Stamps, telephone interview.

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Three Unique Theological Themes of Oral Roberts' Preaching

Julie Ma

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Abstract

The study examines three unique theological themes of Oral Roberts: "Seed-faith," healing of the whole being, and the "Fourth Man." Since his message was a reflection of his theology, I also investigate his theological formation, informed particularly by his experiences such as miraculous healing.

Introduction

One of the most prominent Pentecostal-Charismatic preachers is Oral Roberts. Pentecostal-Charismatic preaching is characterized by giving the Word's authority and placing great value upon the authority and power of the Holy Spirit that comes from the anointing of Spirit.[1] These preachers have an unwavering assurance in God's power, declaring it in the lives of Christians in the present. They argue that their supernatural experiences array with Scripture. God's involvement is spontaneously proclaimed and anticipated. God is experienced in Pentecostal-Charismatic worship in rather touchable ways. Subsequently, preachers preach life-connected problems such as sickness, deficiency, family problems, etc.[2]

I became acquainted with Oral Roberts (1918–2009) as a relatively newer member of Oral Roberts University. Observing the unique ethos of the institution, I began to probe the life and ministry of its founder. As I learned of his life and ministry, an image began to emerge of this preacher and Christian statesman, a powerful social influence to the American perception of Pentecostal Christianity from the mid-twentieth century with a good dose of controversies. As a popular preacher with the largest "pulpit" reaching out to potentially every household of the

nation, my research took me on a journey of discovery of this intriguing figure. As I read and listened to sermons, several unique themes soon emerged: the rule of "Seed-faith," healing of the whole person, and the "Fourth Man." As a preacher before theologian, his theology was mostly expressed through his sermons (and books), and they also had practical consequences for his institutional management. Then I looked into his life more closely to investigate the roots of his theological formation, and I identified another three key experiences that played pivotal roles. Thus, the study begins with the formation of his theology and discusses the unique theological concepts he regularly preached.

Spiritual and Theological Formation

The theological formation of Oral Roberts is rooted in various experiences throughout his life. I begin with his healing experience as the starting point of his healing ministry. His entire theology appears to have evolved around the concept of healing. The second is his identity formation, both physical and spiritual, and its implications for his ministry. The third is his understanding of anointing, which set the ethos of his preaching ministry.

Healing Experience

Born of a Cherokee mother and a Holiness Pentecostal preacher father in 1918, Roberts grew up in an Oklahoma pastor's home. As Pentecostals, his parents devoted themselves to serving God with the expectation of God's supernatural provision for their daily life and supernatural manifestations for their ministry. Although fully acquainted with his parents' belief, there is no definite evidence that the young Roberts had developed an understanding and knowledge of the supernatural works of God's miracles and healing. Indeed, regretting the chronic poverty of the family, he moved away from his hometown for his high school education as a basketball player. When he was dying of tuberculosis, he had become a hopeless young man, bound to the sickbed for 163 gloomy days. The fatal disease was common among his mother's people, the Cherokee Indians of Oklahoma. His healing experience in 1935 has been recounted in his autobiographies. It is worth repeating here not only for its details but also for how he perceived the experience.

> While I looked at him, Papa's countenance changed in my sight. A bright light seemed to envelop him, and suddenly, the likeness of Jesus

> appeared in his face! From the depths of my soul, I called on the name of Jesus for the first time even to save my soul and my life! I felt God's presence go through my whole being. My spirit, mind, and body felt like they were suffused with God's presence. I felt strength enter my body that had not been there for months.[3]

At the same time, a revival meeting was held in Pontotoc County by a healing evangelist where God's outburst of healing power was manifested. After a long service, the sick lined up to be prayed for by the evangelist. Roberts was the last one in the healing line. Finally, the preacher, George Moncey, came over and laid his hands on his head and commanded the illness that was binding him: "You foul tormenting disease, I command you in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, come out of this boy! Loose him and let him go free."[4]

During the prayer, Roberts sensed "something like an electrical shock" going through his entire body. Then a "strong warming sensation" ran into him. He felt "his lungs open like a flower, and the most exhilarating energy swept over him." Soon he could breathe from his lungs all the way down without coughing, severe rushing agony, or feebleness. He shouted, "I'm healed! I'm healed." Then, "he cried, laughed, and praised God." People in the tent watched him overjoyed, jumped to their feet, and all the people brought glory to God.[5]

During the subsequent period of full recovery, he diligently studied the Scripture and learned of God's promise: "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:18). He believed that the calling he received from the Lord was an even more significant spiritual experience. Roberts claimed that he heard God's audible voice: "You are to take My healing power to your generation." He also stated that the Lord gave the vision to establish a university: "You are to build Me a university and build it on My authority and the Holy Spirit."[6] His healing experience was part of an enormous spiritual transformation, which was a total turning point in his life.

This experience had firstly impacted his personal life. This watershed encounter led him through regeneration and God's call to preach. His encounter with the supernatural power of God also led him earnestly to seek the gift of healing. Understanding that God's power would only come through a close relationship with God,[7] he diligently read the Bible, often repeating the same books in the Bible over, again and again, to be able to understand more deeply. He also learned to hear God's voice, which had become another routine claim of his: "The Lord spoke to me."

Secondly, the experience set healing as the primary theological agenda for his ministry. Through his colorful and sometimes controversial life as a preacher, evangelistic, educator, and church statesman, he is best remembered as a healing evangelist. In a sense, his passion for healing remained unchanged even if the modality of his ministry evolved into several platforms: tent meetings, TV preaching, international meetings, university, and a medical school. For instance, the voice he heard had become the Vision Statement of Oral Roberts University. The establishment of the university is the continuation of his healing ministry.

> Raise up your students to hear My voice, to go where My light is dim, where My voice is heard small, and My healing power is not known, even to the uttermost bounds of the earth. Their work will exceed yours, and in this I am well pleased.[8]

The primary focus of healing in his ministry is later reflected on and affirmed by him:

> My healing ministry of forty-eight continuous years spans nearly one-fifth of the life of this country. I have conducted approximately three hundred healing crusades, given thousands of sermons and speeches, prayed for the healing of the sick in person in forty-six states in America and seventy nations in all continents.[9]

"To Become an Original"[10]

In the early years of his ministry, Roberts had a notion that he had to imitate what other famous preachers did to be successful in his preaching. As a young Pentecostal preacher, there were many fiery preachers and evangelists, including his own father, whom young aspiring ministers were eager to imitate. Soon, he realized, however, that he had made a grave mistake to become an "echo" rather than a "voice," believing that it was not what God wanted him to do. This was an important shift in his understanding of preaching: from the style to the content of the message.

Thus, he began to read the Bible several times a year and studied each passage's historical background and central teachings. Roberts dug in-depth into the words. One day, according to him, Jesus told him to read through the four Gospels and the book of Acts three times in thirty days, and "do it on his knees." Then, "he [God] would show him Jesus and His healing ways."[11] When he preached and taught the words, he sensed he was standing on firm ground. The

word, he believed, provided a firm foundation and practical wisdom both for our day-to-day life and in perpetuity.[12] And this was God's way for Roberts to develop his unique and authentic ministry:

> To become the original God intended me to be, I not only had to change my methods for studying the Bible, but I also had to receive *revelation knowledge* on how to incorporate the healing ministry into my preaching and teaching. For this, I studied how Jesus did it, and little did I know that this would help transform the world. I was about to see the invisible![13]

Another encounter with Jesus took him a step further toward his unique ministry. As he was reading the miracle account of John 5:1–9, the Spirit overcame him, and God spoke to him: "[You are] not to be like other men, nor like any denomination, but to be like Jesus and heal the people as He did."[14] Then, he recognized that he had unknowingly preached to conform to his Holiness Pentecostal denomination. He also became aware that he had preached to please the audience "instead of burning inside to see the sick, hurting, and lost people delivered and established in the life of Jesus."[15] In the course of his continuing reflection and study of the Bible, he developed an earnest desire to have "the whole of Jesus in the 'now' of my life," although he recognized that he "could never be Jesus or do His works remotely as well."[16]

This subtle and progressive experience had a long-lasting effect on Roberts' spirituality, theology, and ministry. The first was the formation of his identity, both biological and spiritual. From his early years, he was conscious of his racial identity as his part-Cherokee mother had exerted significant influence over him.[17] He took his identity as a unique gift to bridge the whites and the blacks: "I am part Cherokee Indian myself. I am neither white nor black. I often say, 'I am in between.'"[18] This statement had a particular significance as Tulsa, Oklahoma, the headquarters of his ministry and later university, had a grim history of racial conflict and massacre in 1921.[19] Throughout his ministry, he actively sought the integration of the whites and the blacks, even when segregation was a norm and even mandated. The second is his passion for God's word, which guided him, among others, to pattern his healing ministry after Jesus'. As he tried to imitate him in healing, he discovered that at heart is the deep love and compassion for people who suffered.[20] His devotion to the study of the Bible was evident not only in his preaching but also in his publications, such as the three-volume New Testament

commentary.[21] The third is the boldness or even audacity that he developed theological concepts and ministry methodologies. The next section elaborates on three theological topics he often preached. His understanding of anointing (as discussed below) represents his unique spirituality in ministry. The fourth is his radical decisions of ministry, always with a strong conviction of God's specific directives. His groundbreaking TV enterprise was an example.[22] With his foresight and swift adaptivity, he once made a transition from the tent meetings to radio preaching, which was aired over one hundred radio stations throughout the United States. When television became more common in American households, he took a massive financial risk by beginning his TV preaching in 1952, eventually reaching out to every household with "the excitement and spiritual anticipation of a Pentecostal healing revival."[23] As Roberts became a household name in America, he radically propagated his message beyond the Christian circles.

Anointing

Perhaps the most frequently used concept for his ministry would be "anointing." He defines it as he had heard from the Lord: "The anointing is when you're separated from yourself and filled with My glory, so that when you speak it's like I am speaking; when you act, it's like I am acting."[24] This crucial element was at the center of his life and ministry. He once confessed that his biggest mistake in his early ministry was "overlooking the power of anointing for me."[25] His prime example for anointed ministry was, as expected, Jesus: "Jesus never attempted to preach—or do anything in His call—without the Spirit of the Lord being upon Him and the power of anointing flowing through His words and actions. When I first saw this, I knew I had been on the wrong track as a young preacher."[26]

He reasoned the essential role of anointing as he, a stuttering country boy, faced the overwhelming number of people with challenging diversity of illnesses and needs:

> By July 1950, some three years after I had begun the healing ministry, I knew beyond all doubt that facing thousands of people in my crusades as the mere man I was, without having the anointing, would cause me to fall on my face and, worst of all, would cause serious harm to one of the greatest moves of God in our generation. Upon feeling God's anointing, I felt I could carry out God's call on me as I stood before the people. God placed me before the types of people which few men of God had faced in such increasingly large numbers, and with

> such diverse diseases and sins, since the days of Jesus and His early disciples during the first century. I had to fight against an overwhelming sense of being engulfed by the enormity and seriousness of it all and quitting and returning home.[27]

Therefore, he refused to preach when he did not feel God's anointing. For instance, he conducted a revival meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in July 1950 at the old Metropolitan Auditorium. In his hotel room on that day, he did not have the assurance of what to preach. He could not sense God's Spirit flowing through him while he was praying and reading the Bible. He waited for God's anointing to come, but as his driver hurried in with anxiety, stating, "If we don't go now, you will be late," Roberts responded, "Just wait. I'll either come or let you know I'm not coming."[28] While he continued in prayer, he heard the unmistakable voice of God. "The Spirit of the Lord came all over me in an instant, down my right arm into my right hand. My mind was illuminated. The message I had been worrying with all day became as clear as the noonday sun. I jumped up, grabbed my Bible and dashed out the door."[29] When he entered the auditorium, the audience sensed God's presence filling the entire place. Many started to cry. When he moved to the stage, he felt the Holy Spirit take over him. The outcome of the revival service was indescribable.

The way how he recognized God's "anointing" involves both spiritual confidence and sensory "sign" in his right hand, which could activate his own faith and the people's.[30]

> The difficulty I have had with the anointing when it comes in my right hand is twofold. One, the presence of God is so forceful in my hand that if I am not extremely careful, I will touch the person I am praying for too hard. In the heat of this experience I have an insatiable desire to literally drive the sickness or disease or demon or fear or poverty or any other destructive power out of the person. I confess it is a driving force possessing me far beyond any powers of my own. My normal confession appears to be multiplied a thousand times. My urgency to rid the person of the tormenting power of Satan almost consumes me.[31]

This unusual pattern may reflect his initial encounter with God's presence, such as "something like an electrical shock" and a "strong warming sensation." Although he recognized the sovereignty of God in granting his special anointing, he

also earnestly prayed and sought this special presence of God. His university has the futuristic prayer tower at the center of the campus, in which he spent time on a regular basis.

Three Unique Theological Themes

Out of innumerable messages he preached, I will present three themes that were primary to him. They would best represent his creative theological orientation, shaped by his understanding of the Bible, spiritual experiences, socio-cultural context, and his Pentecostal heritage. Admirable as they are, controversies also arose as he took their implications further.

Divine Healing

Healing is the flagship theme throughout Roberts' life and ministry. He started his devoted Christian life with his own healing and preached most sermons on the subject. In his massive tent meetings, without exception, there was a long prayer session for healing. As the famous image illustrates, he sat on a chair at the stage, laid his hands on each person (of a long line) for healing. Healing testimonies also flooded his magazines, which were mailed to his supporters. At the peak of his ministry, his monthly magazine had a circulation of more than one million.[32] Also, many of his more than 150 books included a generous amount of healing testimonies.[33] During his seventy-year ministry, he was known as a "healing evangelist."

There are several elements of his preaching of healing, and all of them were developed from practical perspectives. The first is the involvement of the sick in their whole person in the process of healing. As much as he longed for God's anointing, he emphatically stressed the role of the faith of the sick. He argued, "the only way to begin your journey to making you whole is to begin in your spirit," which God shaped in his divine and moral resemblance. With redemption through Christ, God's nature in our spirit has been restored. He thus urged the sick to "take on this spiritual reality in your being." "Through it, you can learn to respond to every situation you face by using your spirit—your inner self—then let this response flow up through your mind and body until your response is the whole-person response."[34] Implicitly, he identifies a disconnect between one's spirit and his or her Creator and Redeemer as one common cause for illness or conflict. This spiritual root of physical and even material problems is based on his understanding

of human beings (or anthropology). According to him, this spiritual response is required because "your whole life is spiritually based."[35] The cause and resolution of human problems, according to him, is found on the spirit level. And here he made a pneumatological connection: to resolve this spirit-level problem, we need to go back to "God's Spirit" working in our spirit. As God re-creates us when we repent of our iniquities and trust in Jesus as our personal Savior, then we experience the work of the Holy Spirit in our daily life.

Roberts specified that God begins with our "will," elaborating the viewpoint of Jesus: "when any part of you is ill, you are ill." It is right when it is "psychosomatic or organic or both." Our will functions through our "mind and body" but initiates in our inner being, our spirit.[36]

Roberts illustrated the involvement of the whole person with an episode of wheelchair victims. After his talk, he invited the attendees to come forward for prayer for healing. As a group on wheelchairs and crutches came for healing, Robert challenged:

> You have been in that wheelchair for some time, maybe years. It is your intention and your will to come out of it through prayer, then you must *do something first.* For example, *if you can move any part of your body, do it—if it's only a finger or a toe.* Deep inside is your spirit, your inner person. Your spirit is the only one who can cause your inner man to respond. . . . By responding through your spirit first, your mind will feel the stimulation, including the faith of your soul, and your body is much more likely to feel it too.[37]

While he stressed the role of the sick in the healing process, implicitly featured is the vital role of the mediator who connects God and the sick through admonition to encourage human faith in God.

The second is the partnership between God's power and the gift of medicines and medical knowledge. As a practical man, from the early days of his ministry, Roberts embraced both divine and medical healing: "I think the key issue for a doctor or one praying for healing is to accept all healing as coming from God." He pointed out the "mismatch" in many believers' minds that healing comes through prayer or medicine as if they are mutually exclusive. But God uses both of them, according to Roberts.

This conviction led him to envision a medical school that incorporated prayer and medical knowledge. He announced to his supporters and university that the Lord had told him to

> build me a medical school at Oral Roberts University. I want a stream of my healing power to constantly flow out of ORU through prayer and medical science as well. I want you to raise up Christian doctors who will accept my healing power in its fullness. They will do all they can through prayer, and they will do all they can through medicine.[38]

Against harsh oppositions from the established medical institutions and schools, he succeeded in securing necessary approvals to open the medical school in 1978. Then the three-tower medical complex was constructed to house the school, hospital, and research facilities called the City of Faith. The integration of God's healing power and medical knowledge was visibly illustrated by the massive statue of two hands folded together in front of the City of Faith medical complex. Now relocated to the entrance of Oral Roberts University, it is the "healing hands," signifying God's supernatural healing and healing through medicine: or Paul and Luke.[39]

The third is his desire and plan to expand the healing movement and multiply God's healing servants. Roberts spread his healing message beyond the United States. His international meetings were held in Latin America, Asia, and Australia with success. When he established Oral Roberts University in 1965, his original plan was to train evangelists with healing ministry from all over the world. Thus, the university was initially called the School of Evangelism.[40] When the institution became a fully functioning liberal arts university, Roberts' idea was to prepare the students to reach every section of the world, or "every man's world," as ministers, educators, journalists, artists, engineers, business people, and medical professionals![41] A founding faculty member of the medical school recalled that Roberts had a clear missional purpose for the school: to become a medical missionary training school.[42]

Fourthly, related to the preceding discussion, he decided to organize a mobile evangelistic team to reach many parts of the world through the "healing teams."[43] He shared his reasoning in *Abundant Life*:

> In 1969, as I stood on the soil of East Africa and preached to as many as 100,000 people a day, God began to give me a burden and vision for sending healing teams back there someday. Teams of young doctors, dentists, nurses, lawyers, business people, singers, and others could take God's healing power to the world in an even greater way than I, being one, could ever do. Since that time, my soul has been on fire to do what God has called me to do. And, in faith, we at Oral

> Roberts University have been preparing in every way we know for the time when God would open the doors for the Healing Teams to go into all the nations of the world.[44]

Roberts' vision was to have a minimum of 1,000 healing groups working everywhere in the world by the twenty-first century. He was placing the chief fundraising labors at ORU to send these teams to impact world missions and implement an excellent commission task.[45]

Although only one full-scale team was sent, the concept continued to the present day in various forms. The last is the development and expansion of his healing theology. I already observed his understanding of the "whole person" in the healing process. Roberts often preached that Jesus is the rebuilder of human life and healer of the full person—body, mind (mental and emotional), and spirit. Subsequently, the ministry of healing was expanded to include marriage, finances, business, and even various relationships.[46] For example, Oral Roberts University opened the state-of-the-art aerobic center in 1965. All the students, including doctoral ones, are required to fulfill physical exercise requirements. As mentioned above, healing was applied to racial struggles.

Seed Faith

The second central theme in Roberts' preaching is that that of "Seed-Faith." Roberts argued that faith is the seed, crucial to experience God's miracle. He based this life principle on two passages: Galatians 6:7, "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows"; and Matthew 17:20, "if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there, and it will move.'" Once the seed or faith is sown, it will multiply countless times.[47]

He then developed three principles of the "Seed-Faith" rule. The first is God is the total source for his children's needs, often referring to Philippians 4:19, "And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." Despite the common human tendency to search for answers from fellow human beings, he stressed, God is the ultimate source. However, he recognized human instrumentality.[48]

> In looking for your needs to be met, remember it's not what is your source, but Who is your Source? You may think it's the man you are dealing with but he is only an instrument. You are dealing directly with God as the loving Being who is THE Source of your supply. By

looking to Him, you are confident, you are positive, you are expectant that He will provide.[49]

The second principle is to "give that it may be given to you." He used Luke 6:38 to support this principle: "Give, and it shall be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." He not only preached on this principle of generosity but also practiced it. For example, he once gave little money to his ministry amid a financial struggle, but, after he offered to God, he sensed a warm radiance come all over his body, and he had a delightful heart. Not long after this, a man knocked at his door at two o'clock in the morning and expressed God's irresistible urge to give to Roberts' ministry. That day, Roberts received from him seven times more than he earlier offered to the Lord.[50] When he thanked the man for his generosity, he responded, "Don't thank me. I'm a wheat farmer, and I know by experience that the yield I get from my land is in direct proportion to the seed I plant." He went on, "Brother Roberts, this is just seed I've been needing to plant for a long time."[51] Roberts stressed the importance of giving: "If you want God to supply your financial needs, then give SEED MONEY for Him to reproduce and multiply. If your need is not money but something else, let the seed you give represent it. Use it as your point of contact to release your faith for God to meet this need."[52] This was the beginning of his controversial "blessing-pact covenant."

The third principle is the anticipation of miracles. Using the illustration of farming, the expectation of a harvest, much larger than the seed, is natural and essential. Once the seeding is done, according to him, his children should expect God's miracle. This emphasis of expecting and eagerly yearning for God's miracle culminated in the publication of *Expect a Miracle* (1995), which has sold more than 100,000 copies. Although he began the Seed-Faith teaching with material blessing in mind, he soon expanded the rule to every aspect of life.

While this teaching became popular, it also received extensive criticism, both from media and academics. One of its theological challenges is the sovereignty of God, as the teaching was presented as a "rule," almost obligating God to bless in return to the seed. As a tangible expression of this belief, he devised the "blessing-pact covenant."

He argued, "Your Blessing Pact giving is a higher law of faith. You give BEFORE you have received, you give as seed money for God to multiply back to you."[53] The emphasis on giving out of your need was a crucial step that fueled the

idea of the prosperity gospel. Rather than giving because one has prosperity, one gives as a way to achieve prosperity. The financial demands of the university led him to emphasize that "sowing" into God's ministry through the "blessing pact" was a way to "reap a harvest" for a person's own need.[54] This was the basis of his intense fundraising campaign to develop the 500-acre campus of Oral Roberts University in the 1960s through the 1980s.

"The Fourth Man"

The third key theme in his preaching is the "Fourth Man." Although neither original to him nor controversial among his theological themes, he was best known for his signature statements such as "God is a good God" and "Something good is going to happen today."[55] The topic of the "Fourth Man," therefore, was one of Roberts' favorite messages based on the experience of Daniel's three friends. He began his message with the might of Babylon, its invasion of Jerusalem, the destruction of the city and the nation, and the devastation of the temple. The exile of the elite population followed, and among the hostages were Daniel and his three friends. The core of his message was their unrelenting faith, rebuffing worship to the Babylonian god. They were well aware of the deadly consequence of their refusal (Dan 3:15). In the middle of the blazing furnace, they were fully protected by God with the presence of the "Fourth Man."

Roberts emphatically declared that the "Fourth Man" was not accountable for Nebuchadnezzar's notorious act of flinging the young men into the burning furnace, but he became responsible for taking them out: "he did not stoke the furnace, but he did rob the fire of its violence, he did not bind them, but he did liberate them from their bonds, he did not send them into the furnace, but he did bring them out."[56]

The message of the "Fourth Man," whose identity was assumed to be the pre-incarnate Christ, provides significant lessons. Firstly, when God's people want to live a godly life by practicing faith, surroundings and environment will have no control over them. Their faith will open up a trail for them in the desert, make an "oasis," and will make them feel life as "running through a troop and jumping over a wall."[57] It is what Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego experienced. Secondly, it teaches the almightiness of God: he can make all things possible. The three men were confident that their God was able to protect and redeem them. Nebuchadnezzar successfully locked them in the furnace, but he was unable to lock their God out. He could separate them from their surroundings but could not

isolate them from their God.[58] Thirdly, Roberts used this passage to stress the importance of uncompromising faith and obedience to God. He put the lesson this way: "If you bow, you will burn. But if you will not bow, you cannot burn. God will take care of you."[59]

The overall message of the "Fourth Man" is God's enduring presence among God's children, especially in their difficulties and hardship. Roberts found the entire account readily applicable to modern listeners, finding themselves in the difficulties, trials, and suffering of the fiery furnace. He particularly focused on the suffering of God's people for their faith: "Millions of people have been thrown into fiery furnaces heated seven times hot. You have been thrown into the furnace for your testimony, your integrity, and conviction. You would not bow."[60] This message assured God's abiding presence to be with his people to the end of the age, protecting, providing, and guiding.

Conclusion

As a way of introduction to the spiritual and theological world of Oral Roberts, I investigated three key experiences that contributed to the formation of his spirituality and theology. His resolve to be an "original" opened his mind to the limitless possibilities, his own healing experience set his primary ministry, and "anointing" set the mode of his spirituality. The three theological themes were the manifestation of his spiritual and theological orientation in his life and ministry. As expected, his understanding of healing occupied the center of his attention, while it was progressively expanded to include all forms of restoration. Seed-Faith, perhaps the most controversial, set a simple "rule" for God's people to avail of his miraculous provision. He also brought the promise of God's presence through the "Fourth Man" from a passive expectation to an active pursuit.

Through the course of the research, I also stumbled into other unique themes of his theology. For example, the "point of contact" was a concept he used repeatedly. It could be a tangible object or gesture that would mediate a spiritual experience.[61] Using Moses' action to lift up his rod and stretch his hand over the sea so that it would be divided (Exod 14:16), a physical action, such as touching the TV set as one watches his preaching, would activate and release his or her faith for God's miracle.[62] This may suggest that there is much to investigate on Roberts' theology.

While I tried to fathom the how, why, and what of his spiritual and theological world, the underlying passion of Roberts was the suffering of human beings. Everyone agreed that he was a persuasive communicator, having overcome

the challenge of stuttering and low esteem. However, the root of his passion was that Christ has the answer to all human suffering. Indeed, Christ is the answer! He was well acquainted with suffering and grief. Poverty was part of his daily life, and so was illness. He lost a son to drugs and depression and a daughter in a plane crash. He knew miracles as well as failures. But through his seven decades of ministry, his message did not change: "God is good" and "He brings miracles." With this deep sense of a divine call, it is natural that Roberts was deeply committed to maintaining the "anointing" of the Holy Spirit.

He brought Pentecostal healing from the church pulpit into living rooms of ordinary households, regardless of their religious orientation, through his TV preaching.[63] His influence is also global. Riding on the wave of mass media, he left hundreds of audio and video recordings, available on YouTube and ORU's Digital Showcase.[64] When I traveled to Lusaka, Zambia, several years ago, his preaching was aired on a public TV station. And his impact will continue as his material is readily available.

There will not be another Oral Roberts, but the legacy of his preaching lives on. And his passion for God's healing is ever more relevant in today's broken world. This study explored only one aspect of his preaching: the message with underlying theology. Preaching is a live oral communication, which involves various elements to form Pentecostal preaching. The ultimate outcome is persuasion: strengthening one's faith, moving to action (such as coming forward for prayer), and surrendering oneself to God's grace and power. In this process, the role of the preacher is crucial. Roberts' preaching, therefore, remains a fruitful and rich area of research.[65]

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Notes

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[5] Roberts, *Expect a Miracle,* 32–33.

[6] Roberts, *Expect a Miracle,* 36.

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[25] Roberts, *Still Doing the Impossible*, 70–71. See also, Roberts, *Expect a Miracle*, 107–109.

[26] Roberts, *Still Doing the Impossible*, 70.

[27] Roberts, *Expect a Miracle,* 103.

[28] Roberts, *Still Doing the Impossible*, 78.

[29] Roberts, *Still Doing the Impossible*, 78. See also, Roberts, *Expect a Miracle*, 104.

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[31] Roberts, *Expect a Miracle*, 108.

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The Name of Jesus in Luke-Acts with Special Reference to the Gentile Mission[1]

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Keywords *holy name of God, name of Jesus, Gentiles, salvation, nomina sacra*

Abstract

Peter declares "There is no other name . . . by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12); yet later he says, "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation, anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (10:34–35a). Are there then those among the Gentiles who follow God without hearing the name of Jesus, or are all who have not heard the name lost? The question, often posed in "either/or" discourse terms, fails to understand the meaning and scope of the name of Jesus and the urgency of the mandate to proclaim the gospel to every person. God is able to reveal himself to whomever he wills; yet every culture and creature therein need Jesus in his fullness. This divine-human synergy can only be approached as a mystery, a paradox juxtaposing sovereignty and the missional mandate given to the church.

Introduction

"There is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved," Peter tells the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem (Acts 4:12). But later, he says to the Gentile Cornelius, "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34–35a). Are there then those among the Gentiles who follow God without hearing the name of Jesus, or are all who have not heard the name lost?

How Luke presents the name of Jesus throughout Luke-Acts—one-quarter of the New Testament—sheds light on the question of the state of the Gentiles who

have not heard the name. The name of Jesus is more than a mere moniker for the gospel message proclaimed, for it involves divine workings that are not solely dependent upon the witness of the church. It is a divine name that expresses divine presence and essence. Nevertheless, the urgent state of the masses of humanity compels the church to proclaim the name and message of Jesus all the more. How Luke understands "the name" provides a solution to the either/or impasse.

The name of Jesus figures prominently in the Acts of the Apostles, and its function has varied applications. Its meaning, however, is seated in the authority, power, and person of Jesus, the Christ, in both his humanity and his divinity. Like other humans, Jesus relies on the power and direction of the Holy Spirit, but he is more than a Spirit-empowered human being. His presence, emblematic in his name, is also a divine enabling. This name, will, and authority play an essential role in the gospel that is for all people. The name transcends the divide between those who have heard the name and accepted salvation through it and those who have never heard the name. The way the question has been posed suffers from a too narrow understanding of the power of the name of Jesus and the person behind it and a too broad and vague assessment of those who know nothing of him.

A second question arises: What is the significance of the name of Jesus in the mission of carrying the gospel to the nations? What does the authority of the name demand from them and their cultures? To use Niebuhr's terms, what does the name of Jesus say of Christ "in culture," and what does it say of Christ "against culture"?[2]

To understand what Luke means when he uses the name of Jesus, one must look at uses of the concept of name in contemporary Hellenistic literature, in the Old Testament, and in the rest of the New Testament, especially in Luke's Gospel, which is the prequel to Acts. Most significant is the concept of the name of God.

Greek Use of the Concept of Name

An exhaustive analysis of *name* in the Greek literature will not be offered here, but concepts and uses that shed light on Luke's understanding of "the name of Jesus" will be considered. The name was a constituent part of a person.[3] The Greek word for *name* (*onoma*) could mean "to have a reputation," because to know a name was to know the person.[4] It could also refer to the rights and obligations of an individual in a contract.[5] The practice of using the name of a god, spirit, or demon in magic stretched far back in antiquity and persisted in the era contemporary with the early church.[6] Names had a binding or controlling quality on a spirit or god, obligating or forcing it to do what the petitioner wanted. The name made the

signified spirit/divinity and its power accessible to humans. Magic, though prohibited by Roman law,[7] was pervasive in the Empire.[8] As Luke describes in Acts 19:13–20, practitioners readily used names from various cults and religions. Magicians often relied on foreign names (*onomata babarika*) and readily used the Jewish and Christian *nomina sacra*.[9] Luke makes a clear distinction between Hellenistic magic and supernatural activity in Christianity.

The Concept of Name in the Old Testament

The primary Hebrew word for *name* is *šm,* usually translated as *onoma* in the Septuagintal Greek. It implies ownership; the giving of a name "establishes as relation of dominion and possession" towards the one receiving the name. For example, God the Creator "determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names" (Ps 147:4).[10] Similarly, God says to his people, "He who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name, you are mine" (Isa 43:1). Adam in his exercise of delegated dominion gives names to the animals (Gen 2:19).

In the Ancient Near East, the names of gods were used to leverage favor or control of the deity; however, the God of the Hebrews does not give his name to be manipulated and answers such demands with "Why is it that you ask my name?" (Gen 32:30; Judg 13:17–18). Manoah's request of the name receives the added answer, "It is too wonderful." Even when Moses asks for God's name, the response is elusive (*Yhwh*), referring to God's undeniable presence in the wake of astounding, fearful miracles. Clearly, God is in charge. Though God does give a name for himself, the power resides with him. He reveals himself in his miraculous intervention (Gen 17:1; Exod 3:14; 6:2). Clearly, the initiative and prerogative lie with God; it is he who gives his name in revelation (Exod 6:1–2). "Thus the name of Yahweh is not an instrument of magic; it is a gift of revelation."[11] In revealing his name, he reveals himself, his will, and his power; he does not self-identify to allow humans to control him.

"The name" is often qualified by "holy" (*qdš*). By inference, the holiness refers to separateness, that is, not being profane.[12] "His holy name" is used in the context of worship, in parallel with the name, *yhwh*, as reverential deference to the Tetragrammaton (e.g., 1 Chron 16:35; Ps 145:21). Profaning the name involves improper behavior and disobedience; the goal of this sacralizing is reciprocal: "You shall keep my commandments and observe them: I am the LORD. You shall not profane my holy name, that I may be sanctified among the people of Israel: I am

the LORD; I sanctify you" (Lev 22.31). The holiness does not lie in utter separation between God and his people but in their covenant relationship.[13] To use God's name implies a covenant relationship by which the user honors God's sovereignty and will. It follows that false prophets and diviners who used God's name in magical ways or swore falsely by the name of the Lord for gain would be condemned (Ezek 13:1–16, esp. vv. 6, 9). One dare not speak in the name of the Lord something contrary to God's will.[14] God gives his name to the Hebrews, a name that simultaneously gives access to his aid and requires accountability to his will. This name is based on his ultimate beingness, which cannot be vitiated by human will.

God's name signifies God's presence and is similar to the concept of his "face" (*pānîm*), the presence of God (*penê yhwh*), God present in person (e.g., Jer 10:6; Mal 1:11; Ps 54:8; Prov 18:10). The name and the face of the Lord appear together; to profane the name of God in ritual is to risk being cut off from the Lord's presence, *pāni* (Lev 22:2–3). In even stronger language, the name and face appear in a prohibition of infant sacrifice: "I myself will set my face [*pānî*] against them, and will cut them off from the people, because they have given of their offspring to Molech, defiling my sanctuary and profaning my holy name [*šēm qādĕši*]" (Lev 20:1–3).

The holy name is often paired with the glory and might of God (e.g., Isa 12:4; Zech 14:9; Ps 8:1–9; 20:1–9). God's manifold power is evident in his name: "Our Redeemer—the LORD of hosts is his name—is the Holy One of Israel" (Isa 47:4). He is the Lord of armies, (*ṣĕbā'ôt,* see also Isa 48:2; 54:5) "The name of God," then, should be interpreted as "the God gloriously manifest in history and creation."[15]

The name sometimes appears somewhat distinct from God, approaching something akin to a distinct presence since God builds a temple to house his *šm* (2 Sam 7:13; 1 Kings 3:2; 8:17). According to Schmidt, "The presence of the *šm* in the temple denotes it terminologically distinctive from the proximity of God from the standpoint of salvation history. The *šm* guarantees God's presence in the temple in clear distinction from Yahweh's throne in heaven."[16] The name speaks of God's immanent presence.

The name of God is so close to "the hypostatization of the *šm* standing over against Yahweh in greater independence," it is as though God and his name have become two distinct things.[17] This distinctness of the name connotes the immanence of God. Yet Besnard cautions, "It is vain for us to ask if we are in the presence of '*Deus revelatus'* or '*Deus absconditus.'* We are before a divine dialectic

more profound than this alternative." When God *reveals* his name in theophany, one must acknowledge the noetic nature of the intervention. "[O]ne must do justice to the *mystery* with which God always surrounds his theophanies" (italics mine).[18] The name and the revelation of the same are mysteries revealed but not mysteries completely comprehended; his sovereignty is always intact.

The name is God present replete with his power. For example, the revelation of the name to Moses at Horeb not only presents the inscrutable mystery of the name, but also the presence of God's power in the miracles of the burning bush, the rod turned into a snake, and the leprous hand healed (Exod 3:1–4:7). In this theophany, the angel of God (*ml'k yhwh*), God, and the name of God are all present (3:2, 4, 13–14). The name works like the "hand of God," in that it creates, works miracles, defends, and destroys (e.g. Exod 6:1; 9:15; 15:3; 1 Sam 5:6, 7, 9, 11; Ps 78:42; Isa 41:20). Often the hand of the Lord and his name appear together: "The Lord is a warrior; The Lord is his name . . . Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power—your right hand, O Lord, shattered the enemy" (Exod 15:3, 6). In Exodus 9:15–16, hand, name, and power are linked together as the means of the Hebrews' deliverance and the destruction of Pharaoh's lands and people. His name, *yhwh,* refers not only to his existence but also to his actions.[19] Often the arm of God and his hand are mentioned together as the powerful agent of both creation and destruction, with the latter bringing simultaneously judgment and salvation (e.g., arm: Exod 6:6; Ps 136:12; Jer 27:5; Isa 30:30; 59:9; hand: Isa 48:13; Exod 7:4; 9:3; 1 Sam 5:6, 11; Ps 145:16; Isa 51:16).

The Name of God/The Lord in Luke-Acts

The title Lord (*kyrios*), which occurs 205 times in Luke-Acts, almost always refers to God or Jesus.[20] Luke follows in the OT understanding of the name of God. In the *Magnificat,* Mary's hymn in response to the Annunciation, she repeats the worshipful phrase, "holy is his name," which is frequently found in praise to God in the OT (Luke 1:49). Mary is praising the God of Israel. The context provided in Mary's hymn (1:46–53) reflects the aspects associated with the "name of the Lord" in the OT. She calls God "Lord" (*kyrion*) in verse 46, "God, the savior" (v. 47), and the mighty One (*ho dynatos,* v. 49). In verse 50, Mary proclaims that the Holy One is merciful yet to be approached with reverential fear, leaving no room for presumption. God reveals his strength in his arm (*kratos en brachioni autou*, v. 51) to judge the haughty and powerful, raise the humble, and mercifully provide help for the needy (vv. 52–53). In the *Magnificat*, "the Powerful One" (*ho dynatos*) does

great things for Mary. "Holy is his name" (*kai hagion to onoma autou*) means that God's name is unique and powerful and accomplishes his will. Mary describes God's program of salvation, which is the will of God inherent in the name of the Lord, as resulting in a miraculous deliverance and great reversal, shaking the foundations of the world order.

Luke uses similar language in his version of the Lord's Prayer (11:2–4). The name of the Father is hallowed (*hagiasthētō to onoma sou*). Here the parallelism shows how to hallow the name of God: to call for and work for the coming of God's kingdom. His sovereignty must be acknowledged. Matthew's version equates "hallowed be thy name" with "thy will be done" (Matt 10:6b). One cannot presume to invoke the name of the Lord apart from carrying out his program and agenda (similarly with God's will, Luke 22:14).

The next use of the name of God in Luke occurs in 13:31–35 in the context of Jesus' prophecy that Jerusalem would reject him and that he would die there: "I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord'" (13:35). Jesus says it to the Pharisees. His words have an eschatological ring of judgment.

In the previous context Jesus answers the question as to whether many or few will be saved by indicating the latter (13:23–24). At his Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, we hear again the refrain, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord" (19:38). But the adulation is short-lived, for after being rejected by many, Jesus will die, and the destruction of the city will follow in a few decades. For Luke, for Jesus to "come in the name of the Lord" means that he is the acknowledged agent of God, particularly at the Triumphal Entry, as the messianic king as per Matthew, Mark, and John (21:9; 11:9–10; 12:13, respectively). Luke notes that the people acclaim, "Peace (*eirēnē*) in heaven and glory in the highest," the latter, a *passivum divinum,* the former reflecting the meaning inherent in the Hebrew, *šālôm* of "completeness." The divine will and plan begin their completion with the arrival of King Jesus into Jerusalem: "As Jesus enters the city he presents himself as the king who brings the nation's eschatological hope."[21] In Luke his message and miracles are also affirmed "in the name of the Lord," for of the Gospel writers only Luke says that "the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen" (19:37b). His works confirm his words (5:24).

A Calculated Ambiguity

"And it shall be that all who should call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21).[22] Here, in Luke's account of Pentecost, Peter is quoting from Joel (2:28–32) who relates that God will pour out his Spirit on "all flesh" in the midst of an eschatological apocalypse, culminating in salvation (Acts 2:17–21). On the face of it, Peter's audience would understand "the name of the Lord" (*onoma kyriou*) as referring to God. Here God promises to pour out his Spirit, even as he did upon Jesus (Luke 3:21–22; 4:1, 14, 18; Acts 10:38). Here God empowers, enlightens, and saves.[23] As Peter concludes his Pentecost sermon, he refers to the name of Jesus: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (2:38). Between verses 21 and 38 Luke quotes from Psalm 110:1, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.'" So, in effect, there are two "Lords." Next, Peter identifies Jesus as the one whom God has made "both Lord and Messiah" (2:35), who is also the dispenser of the Holy Spirit (v. 34). Between verses 21 and 38 Luke creates a calculated ambiguity between the name of God and the name of Jesus. This subtle shift makes a crucial point: the prerogatives of God the Lord are the prerogatives of Jesus the Lord; they are the same. Larry Hurtado does think the "Lord" refers to Jesus: "[T]he exalted Jesus is identified as (or associated with) the 'Lord' in places in the biblical texts where God (Heb. *Yahweh*) was the original referent (vv. 20–21, 25)"[24]; but he does so cautiously.[25]

In the first account of Paul's conversion in Acts, Luke emphasizes Jesus and his name and his title as Lord (9:5, 13–17, 27). On the road to Damascus, when overcome by intense light, Paul asks, "Who are you, Lord?" and receives the response, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (v. 5). Ananias relates to Paul that *Jesus* sent him to pray for Paul's healing and infilling with the Holy Spirit (v. 17). But the interaction between Ananias and the Lord before he visits the afflicted Paul resembles the structure of an Old Testament theophany. The Lord approaches Ananias in a vision calling his name, and Ananias answers, "Here I am, Lord" (v. 10). This vision and Ananias's response are reminiscent of Samuel's encounter with God as well as those of Abraham, Moses, and Isaiah (2 Sam 3:4–8; Gen 22:11; Exod 3:4; Isa 6:8). "Here I am" is the appropriate response to a divine visitation. Saul had set out to eliminate in Damascus those "calling upon the name of Jesus" (v. 14). But the words that Ananias hears next sound like divine language: "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before the Gentiles, and

kings and before the people of Israel." Here the wording is similar to Jeremiah's calling: "I appointed you a prophet to the nations" (Jer 1:5). Eventually Luke lets his readers know that it is Jesus who appears to Ananias as "Lord" when he visits Paul later (v. 17). Again, the line between God and Jesus is not so clear.

The pattern of ambiguity continues in the account of Peter's precedential visit to Cornelius, a devout Gentile who feared God and "prayed constantly to God" (10:1–2). In a vision, an "angel of the Lord" appears to Cornelius. *Angleon tou theou* is theophanic language, and Cornelius addresses the celestial visitor as "Lord." While the visitor does refer to God in the third person in calling Cornelius' prayers and alms a "memorial before God," the visitation still has the markings of theophany even though the visitor is called a holy angel (v. 22), and could be seen as weakening a theophanic interpretation.

The following day, Peter sees the vision in which he addresses the voice from heaven as "Lord" (v. 14). The voice responds, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane" (see also 11:7–9). This does sound as though a personage other than God is addressing Peter, but when he relates the event to Cornelius the next day, he says, "God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean" (v. 28a; see also v. 34). With the Spirit directing Peter to go with Cornelius' messengers (v. 19) and Peter calling Jesus "Lord of all" (v. 36), the delineation between Jesus and God remains unclear.

Later, at the Jerusalem Council, James says, "Simeon has related how God first looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take from among them a people for his name" (15:4). Here James is describing the message to Peter as coming from God and for the sake of his name; next he cites Amos 9:11–12 and Jeremiah 12:15 as evidence for the inclusion of non-Jews: "so that all other peoples may seek the Lord—even all the Gentiles over whom my name has been called" (15:17). Yet these Gentiles were "baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (10:48). Luke does not always clearly delineate the roles and identities of Jesus and *Yahweh* not by error but by design. Jason Staples has identified the double use of "Lord, Lord" ("*Kyrie, Kyrie*") as specifically addressing *Yahweh.*[26] For Luke, Jesus' identity is inextricably bound up in God's. This will be especially significant when we answer the questions we initially raised.

Nomina Sacra

Jesus' name was treated as divine even in the earliest parts of the New Testament, notably the early Pauline letters, which, by most accounts, predate Luke and Acts.[27]

Jesus' divinity, even his heavenly pre-existence, appears to be accepted among Christians thirty years after his Ascension, well within living memory of Jesus. Luke presents a similar Christology, which suggests that his work was produced close to the time of Paul or later, yet still faithfully represented the primitive expressions of the church.

In the earliest extant manuscripts of the New Testament (second to fourth century) the scribes appear to honor this early high-Christology in the use of *nomina sacra* or "sacred names." They frequently abbreviate God (*Theos*) as *ThS*, Lord (*Kyrios*) as *KS*, Christ (*Christos*) as *XS*, and Jesus (*Iēsous*) as *IS*, which were the earliest attested *nomina sacra* among the texts,[28] some of which can be dated to AD 200 or earlier.[29] These abbreviated forms consist usually of the first and last letter with a line over the top. Some of the earliest artifacts of Christianity, these texts show what appears to be a deferential reverence for these words. Eleven other abbreviated words later appear in the texts, but the four named earlier appear early and with greater frequency.[30] Most relate in some way to Jesus.

Schuyler Brown identifies the first four not only as *nomina sacra,* but more specifically as *nomina divina*, names for divinity.[31] This Christian deference for sacred names is similar to the avoidance of the Tetragrammaton in Jewish scribal practice and in ritual reading and may be the inspiration for the Christian reverence of the name; however, the *nomina sacra* also appear to have come from an earlier practice of revering the name of Jesus because of its close association with the name of God.

Jason Staples notes that the doubled vocative "Lord, Lord" (*Kyrie, Kyrie*) corresponds to *Yahweh, Yahweh* in the Old Testament (e.g. Ps 109:21[LXX 108:21]; Ezek 37:21; Deut 3:24 of eighty-four times in LXX). The expression appears as *Kyrie, Kyrie* in the Septuagint and is addressed to God. The three times "*Kyrie, Kyrie*" appears in the Gospels (Matt 7:21–22; 25:11; and Luke 6:46) it is addressed to *Jesus*.[32] This doubling of the vocative is not merely emotive address or "a rudimentary 'sir.'"[33] Rather the Matthean texts present Jesus as the eschatological Lord and Judge.[34]

In Luke 6:47 Jesus asks, "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I tell you?" Here the stress is on obedience rather than judgment, which is more remotely placed in the following parable of the houses built on rock or sand where safety or ruin is a result of obedience (6:47–49).

> The Lukan construction of the saying also makes it even clearer than the Matthean examples that the doubling of κύριε does not signal

> pathos. . . . Instead, Luke 6.46 uses καλέω with direct object and complement (the vocative taking the place of the usual accusative complement), which is a construction for addressing or designating a person by a title or name. . . . Coupled with the fact that in the Lukan version Jesus demands the obedience one would expect to be directed towards God (contrast Matt 7.21–2), Luke's treatment of κύριε κύριε as a specific form of address . . . [is] best understood as an application of the divine name to Jesus.[35]

According to Staples, Matthew and Luke use the double *Kyrie* "to represent the Name of YHWH in the Greek texts," and readers of the Septuagint would recognize the expression as such. "Such applications of the name to the exalted Jesus amount to calling him God, a figure to be obeyed and worshipped alongside God the father."[36] Matthew and Luke clearly understand that Jesus himself uses the emphatic "Lord, Lord" to refer to himself.

The Name of Jesus in Luke-Acts

Having looked at the frequent overlapping of the name of God and the name of Jesus, we will now look at the name of Jesus on its own, which will shed much light on our original questions of who is saved and what demands are made of the Gentile convert. In the Gospel, the angel announces the heaven-given name of Mary's child, who will also be called great as well as Son of the Highest, and to whom the Lord will give an eternal throne of David (1:31–33; see also 2:21).[37] Later Elizabeth addresses Mary as "the mother of my Lord" (1:43); again, we see Lord used for God when Jesus is in proximity. Then, in 9:48, Jesus teaches that if his followers receive a child in his name, they receive him and God. Here power and authority are cloaked in merciful humility. Again, to act in Jesus' name is to act in God's name and will.

When the seventy (-two) disciples return, they address Jesus as "Lord" (*Kyrie*), rejoicing that the demons are subject to them through Jesus' name (10:17: see also 9:49–50). Jesus' authority and power are extended to others, but he warns against being enamored by power at the expense of one's soul. The name of Jesus reflects the will of Jesus. His power cannot be co-opted. This anticipates Jesus' later warning against imposters who will mislead by presuming upon his name (21:18).

In Luke's Gospel, the name of Jesus calls for repentance and effects forgiveness of sins (24:47). John's baptism accomplished this as well (3:3 with Mark 1:4); but

Jesus' baptism also cleanses and empowers through the Holy Spirit (3:16–18; Acts 1:5, 8).[38] In Acts, baptism in the name of Jesus stands in contrast to John's and other washings in Judaism. At the beginning of Acts, Jesus himself links baptism with the action of the Holy Spirit and inspired witness (1:5–8). This baptism, initially in Acts, is not simply an occasion of washing in water. Presumably, the disciples had already experienced water baptism at the hands of Jesus and/or the early disciples (John 3:22, 26). This new baptism, or infilling of the Holy Spirit, resulted in the xenoglossic witness on the day of Pentecost (2:4–11); however, in his following sermon Peter juxtaposes the water baptism in the name of Jesus with the reception of the Holy Spirit: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you in (*epi*) the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (2:38). Since Jesus is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit (2:33), it was necessary to baptize the disciples of John in Ephesus "in (*eis*) the name of the Lord Jesus" to receive the Holy Spirit as those at Pentecost had (19:5–6). For the Samaritans, there is a longer time between water baptism and Spirit reception (19:14–17).

The prepositions Luke uses in the baptismal formulae, "because of" (*epi*), "into" (*eis*), "in" (*en*), and "upon," do seem interchangeable;[39] yet the different expressions shed light on the significance of baptism. Ziesler suggests that the use of *epi* could refer to the authority of Jesus in the formula in 2:38.[40] Heitmüller notes that "*eis* [into] the name of" was used in the papyri as a banking term for crediting funds to the account of someone.[41] Thus, the baptizand becomes the property of Jesus.

Others suggest that the expression originates from the Hebrew *lšm,* meaning "into the name of someone" or "in behalf of someone," or as an offering to the "Name," as suggested in the Mishnah (*m. Zeb* 4.6), thus giving it a cultic nuance.[42] In Acts, the apostles baptize in the name of Jesus, Jesus Christ, or the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; see also Pauline practice, Rom 6:3; 1 Cor 1:13; Gal 3:27). For Jews, the confession of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, would be significant, for when Peter calls for his *Jewish* audience to repent and be baptized, he uses the formula "in the name of Jesus Christ" (2:38).[43] But ultimately "'Lord Jesus' is the fundamental referent,"[44] for the Jews it acknowledges the authority of *Yahweh* invested in the risen, ascended Jesus. The overlap between the name of the Lord and that of "Lord Jesus" made this confession crucial, for the Gentiles confessing Jesus as "Lord" would require a major paradigm shift, as we shall see (9:15).

While there is some reason to consider baptism "in the name of Jesus," or similar variations, as the most ancient, the tripartite baptismal formula—"in the

name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"—appears to have an early pedigree as well (Matt 28:19). The Didache, or *The Teaching of the Lord to the Nations by the Twelve Apostles,* calls for baptism "into the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit" (7:1, 3).[45] The traditions behind the Didache date back as far as AD 50–70. Early canonical benediction and other formulations have references to "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" together (2 Cor 13:13; 1 Cor 12:4–7; 2 Thess 2:13–14). Thus, such triadic groupings had widespread use in the early church. Furthermore, the Didache equates the preferred baptism be done according to the triune formula rather than simply "in the name of the Lord" (comp. 7:1–3 with 9:5). Opinion is divided as to whether "in the name of the Lord" refers to God or to Jesus in 9:5. Since Lord may refer to either God or Jesus in the Didache, and sometimes it is not clear which is intended, Lord may refer either to God the Father[46] or to Jesus (4:1; 8:2; 9:5; 10:5; 11:2, 8; 14:1, 3; 16:1). That "in the name of the Lord" does refer to Jesus in some cases demonstrates that the early Christian community, reflected in the Didache, considered both types of baptismal formulae to be referring to the same God.[47]

Converts, i.e., those baptized, repent, and in renouncing much of the world order embrace a new lifestyle. Forgiveness now comes through *this* name (10:43), the name they call upon at their baptism (22:16). They go into the water as individuals, but come up as members of a community with a new allegiance, a new family in submission to the teaching of the apostles (2:42–47). Invoking the name brings the convert into a covenant with the Lord in his kingdom, and this confession sets the repentant apart from old allegiances (15:14).

The Name of Jesus and Miracles

The name of Jesus is the primary agent for miracles in Acts (3:6–10, 16; 4:7, 10, 30; 16:8; 19:11–20; also, Luke 10:17–18). In Acts, the Holy Spirit also effects miracles. For example, at Pentecost the Holy Spirit manifests the sound of a great wind (*pnoēs*),[48] fiery tongues, and the miraculous glossolalia (Acts 2:1–4). The Spirit kills Ananias and Sapphira (5:1–11).[49] The Spirit also directs the mission, but Luke focuses on the role of the Spirit in inspired witness.[50] While Jesus delegates the authority, he is the causative agent in all healings and miracles.[51] Luke stresses the lordship of Jesus, for Jesus bestows the Holy Spirit. The name cannot be used apart from submission to his lordship, for the name is not a mere lever of magic to be manipulated by anyone. The sons of Sceva attempt to use the sacred name as a mere lever of magic with disastrous results. The demons acknowledge the

Person of the name. As a result, many come to believe in Jesus, publicly confessing and disclosing their magic practices, rendering them ineffective. Magic books are burned, and the name of the Lord Jesus is praised (19:11–20). Jesus the Lord can have no rivals. Further, to accept the name of Jesus is to accept his teachings (4:12, 18; 5:28, 40–41).[52]

The Name of Jesus and the Gentile Mission

Salvation apart from the name? Having examined Luke's understanding of Jesus' name, we can now address our initial questions, the first being, "Must all hear the name of Jesus and his message to be saved, or are there godly folk in systems devoid of Christian evangelization?" Frequently, one hears the argument that all religions and worldviews are equally valid and good, and salvation is available in any of them. Do Peter's words to Cornelius support this: "In every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34–35a)? Cannot God speak to non-Christians in their own systems? Is not the good in other religions from God (Jas 1:17)? Do Christian missionaries risk introducing bad principles and practices from their own culture into another society?

Bruce Olson, apostle to the Motilone (Bari) people of Venezuela and Columbia, entered a culture that internally did not have many of the problems inherent in Western culture. He wondered what the gospel had to offer them and whether his presence would corrupt them. One day a tribe member said he heard the "voice of the tiger" saying that evil spirits would come and take some of their lives. It was then that Olson knew that they needed to be delivered from fear and that the message of Jesus would protect them.[53] God gave Olson the wisdom to use Motilone structures and beliefs to communicate his good news. Apparently, every person and every people group need what Jesus has to offer. The Jerusalem Council, too, came to realize that the gospel was transcultural although some tenets and practices were non-negotiable (Acts 15). Furthermore, according to James, God "looked favorably on the Gentiles, to take *from among them* a people for his name" (Acts 15:14, emphasis mine). God does not intend to leave the Gentiles in their former state.

Nowhere is there a "No Trespassing" sign that applies to God; he can and does invade all domains. Such is the nature of sovereignty. Mark Wilson relates an account of his conversion that started in the middle of a Native American peyote cult service:

> [The leader] began to sing a peyote song in Lakota Sioux, "Wakantanka, waonsila yo**;** Wanikiya, waonsila yo," which means, "God, have mercy on me; Jesus, have mercy on me." Suddenly I heard another inner voice, which I would later identify as the Holy Spirit, also speaking to me, "But *I have* had mercy on you through the death of my son Jesus Christ." I was stunned by this revelation because I had thought the peyote church was the ultimate means to spiritual peace and joy. But doubts had emerged in recent months that had shaken that idea. I now realized that there was no salvation through eating peyote and this so-called sacrament would not lead me to faith and eternal life.
>
> With the conclusion of morning water and the resumption of the service, I stepped outside the church house and looked up into the clear, star-lit sky. "High" on peyote and without any altar call or organ playing "Just As I Am," I thanked God for his mercy on me through Jesus' death. I also told the Lord that I would follow him no matter where that path might lead.[54]

There are numerous accounts of Christophanies to non-Christians prior to significant exposure to the Christian message. Such visitations are mentioned in Acts. God can meet anybody on any path, but he meets them only to redirect them to the Way. The Lukan description of the name of Jesus is not limited to the lips of missionaries. Given the deliberate overlap of the authority in the name of God and in the name of the Lord Jesus, no one receives such an encounter apart from the name of Jesus, for he is the cosmic Lord. He proclaims his own name (Acts 9:5). The encounter with the divine is never apart from Jesus. The name is never apart from any divine act, for such acts always carry the authority, compassion, and presence of the name of Jesus the Lord.

What is the state of those who have never heard the gospel message? Are they doomed to eternal loss? God is just, but he is also merciful. In a conversation with I. Howard Marshall, he suggested that these cases be put on "God's suspense account."[55] As the Eastern Church says, "We know where the Church is, but we cannot be sure where it is not."[56] Some talk of the possibility of the "noble pagan" being spared hell and either being admitted to heaven or relegated to Dante's limbo: "After those who refused choice come those without opportunity of choice. They could not, that is, choose Christ; they could, and did, choose human virtue, and for that they have their reward."[57]

But rather than speak of a hypothetical possibility, the probability is more pressing, one of eternal loss. All need something from Jesus. According to Luke, Jesus himself has mandated that his message of salvation be proclaimed to "all nations" through Christian witnesses (Luke 24:46–48).[58]

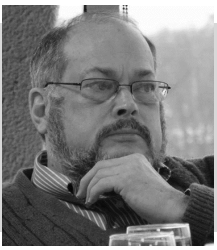
The second question asks, "What does the name of the Lord Jesus in Luke-Acts say about the mission to the Gentiles?" First, the gospel transcends cultures, and the church is cosmopolitan in composition; yet Christ in Gentile cultures affirms, leavens, sanctifies, prohibits, and transforms. The incarnation of Jesus demands simultaneously a yes and a no from every tribe and culture. For the Gentile to call upon the Lord Jesus at baptism is to embrace his lordship and become his servant. To be baptized in his name is to become the property of Jesus and to offer oneself as a sacrificial offering acceptable to God.

Calling Jesus Lord in the world of Caesar was a counter-cultural act, potentially deemed to be treason. To pray for God's kingdom to come sometimes meant saying "no" not only to the petty fiefdom of self but to the empire: "One must obey God more than man" (Acts 5:29). Christians prayed the Lord's Prayer three times a day: "Thy kingdom come" (Did 8:2–3). This, in Roman eyes, was a daily dethronement of their divine emperor and a declaration of allegiance to a foreign king. They could pray for the emperor but not to the emperor; blind obedience was not an option.

The Gentiles witnessed miraculous power through the name of Jesus that convinced them of the truth. In the sons of Sceva incident, they saw a power that trumped all other supernatural forces. Attempts to manipulate God's power ultimately ended in disaster; with the power came a unilateral, non-negotiable sovereignty. One could not participate in God's power while bargaining for favors from lesser spirits; accordingly, the Ephesians burned their magic books (19:19). The Gentile convert adopted a new counter-cultural cosmography, "Jesus is Lord of all" (10:36). No longer were religion and spirituality manipulation of the deities but now a realm of ethics in submission to the ultimately good Sovereign who is to be obeyed, not manipulated. This God is not a mere demon with which to curse one's neighbors, for even the evil spirits acknowledge the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus (19:13–17; Luke 4:33–36, 40).

The good news to the Gentile is once again offered in our day. Jesus offers release from the spirits of materialism, spirits that vainly promise to fill the longings of the human spirit with physical things. The Lord of life forbids the death of the unborn as much as *Yahweh* forbade the sacrifice of infants to grim idols for convenience, success, and prosperity (Lev 18:21; Deut 12:30–31; 18:10; see also

Did 2:2). He calls for compassion on the destitute. He demands an allegiance that leaves no room for blind obedience to any world government. Again, Jesus offers to exorcize the *mal du siècle*—the spirits of post-modernity—if we but bow the knee and say yes to his yes for our life and no to what would destroy it. The West, which once claimed to be the center of Christendom, has essentially become Gentile once more; only the Lord Jesus can save it: hallowed be the name.



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Notes

[1] An earlier version of this study was published in *Proclaiming Christ in the Power of th e Holy Spirit: Opportunities and Challenges*, eds. Wonsuk Ma, Emmanuel Anim, and Reb ekah Bled (Tulsa, OK: ORU Press, 2020), 11–30.

[2] H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (San Francisco: Harper, 1996).

[3] Hans Bietenhard, "ὄνομα," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, eds. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 5:243.

[4] Bietenhard, "ὄνομα," 5:244.

[5] Bietenhard, "ὄνομα," 5:249.

[6] Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 571.

[7] For Roman actions against magic and the like, see Fritz Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World,* trans. Franklin Philip (Cambridge, Mass.: HUP, 1997), 236n.9.

[8] Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* XXVIII, 19; Tacitus, *Annals* II, 69; IV, 22, 52; XII, 65; XVI, 31.

[9] Graf, *Magic in the Ancient World,* 201–2.

[10] All biblical citations are from NRSV unless otherwise noted.

[11] Bietenhard, "ὄνομα," 5:255.

[12] H. -P. Müller, "קדש/qdš," *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament,* eds. E. Jenni and C. Westermann, trans. M. Biddle (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1979), 3:1104.

[13] Müller objects to the notion that God is "wholly other" as proposed by Rudolf Otto in *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and Its Relation to the Rational*, trans. J. W. Harvey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1943), 25–30. "[T]he experience of the holy as the 'wholly other' presupposes, for the most part, a point of

departure in an understanding of the profane that has been suggested only by the absence of the numinous in modern concepts of normalcy" (1104).

[14] Note the primordial account of Balaam's attempt to pronounce a curse contrary to the will of the Lord (Num 22–24).

[15] S. van der Woude, "שֵׁם/šēm," *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, 3:1366–7.

[16] M. Schmidt, *Prophet und Tempel. Eine Studie zum Problem der Gottensähe im Alten Testament* (Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1948), 93. Cited in Bietenhard, "ὄνομα," 5:256.

[17] Friedrich Giesebrecht, *Die Alttestamentliche Schätzung des Gottesnamens und ihre religiongeschichtliche Grundlage* (Königsberg: Thomas & Oppermann, 1901), 123–26. Summarized in Bietenhard, "ὄνομα," 5:257.

[18] Albert Marie Besnard, *Le Mystère du Nom* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1962), 37. Translation mine.

[19] Anne Marie Kitz, "The Verb **yahway*," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 138:1 (2019), 39–62. "[The] aspectual meanings of the two verbal forms yields insight into the divine character behind the name YHVH."

[20] There are 202 and 203 uses in the Gospel and Acts, respectively, out of 719 uses in the New Testament.

[21] Darrell L. Bock, *Luke,* Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 1559.

[22] Translation mine.

[23] Keener, among others, assumes that Peter takes "the name of the Lord to be referring to Jesus, especially in light of 2:38." Craig Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 1:920–922 and n.643. Verse 22 starts a distinct section of the speech and is Christological in focus. See Donald Juel, "The Social Dimensions of Exegesis," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 43 (1981), 443–56, esp. 444–5; and Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic* (London: SCM, 1961), 36–48.

[24] Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 181.

[25] Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ,* 181n.44.

[26] Staples, "'Lord, Lord': Jesus as *YHWH* in Matthew and Luke," *New Testament Studies* 64 (2018), 1–19.

[27] Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 98–153.

[28] Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ*, 626.

[29] In the fragment, Rylands Library, 𝔓52, dated as early c. 125, there is reason to believe that the original, whole manuscript contained *nomina sacra;* see Charles E. Hill, "Did the Scribe of P52 Use the *Nomina Sacra*? Another Look," *New Testament Studies* 48 (2002), 587–92.

[30] Larry Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 2–4.

[31] Schuyler Brown, "Concerning the Origin of the Nomina Sacra," *Studia Papyrologica* 9 (1970), 19.

[32] Staples, "'Lord, Lord,'" 1–19.

[33] Staples, "'Lord, Lord,'" 15.

[34] Some manuscripts have "*Kyrie, Kyrie*" in an eschatological context in Luke 13:25 such as A, D, W, θ, and the Majority Text; while 𝔓75, ℵ, B, L have the single *Kyrie*, which N-A/28 and USB/5 follow.

[35] Staples, "'Lord, Lord,'" 18.

[35] Staples, "'Lord, Lord,'" 19.

[36] Staples, "'Lord, Lord,'" 19.

[37] In Matthew the angel explains Jesus' name, *Yehoshuah* ("God saves"): "for he shall save his people from their sins" (1:21).

[38] For more on the absorption of Johannine baptism into the message of Jesus, see my *Mighty in Word and Deed: The Role of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2000), 33–45, esp. 43–45.

[39] Lars Hartman, *"Into the Name of Jesus": Baptism in the Early Church,* Studies of the New Testament and Its World (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 37. Similarly, in Paul, comp. 1 Cor 1:3, 15; 6:11.

[40] J. A. Ziesler, "The Name of Jesus in the Acts of the Apostles," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 4 (1979), 29.

[41] Wilhelm Heitmüller, *Im Namen Jesu: eine sprach- und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum Neuen Testament, speziell zur altchristlichen Taufe,* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903), 100–109, esp. 104–107. Note the use of business metaphors: *in der Geschäftssprache, auf den Nam hinein = auf das Konto.*

[42] Heitmüller, *Im Namen Jesu*, 113; Hartman, *"Into the Name of Jesus,"* 40–41; Hub van de Sandt and David Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 284–85.

[43] Hartman, *"Into the Name of Jesus,"* 39.

[44] Hartman, *"Into the Name of Jesus,"* 49.

[45] See also Justin, 1 Apol 61:3b.

[46] Aaron Milavec, *The Didache: Faith, Hope, and Life of the Earliest Christian Communities, 50-70 C.E.* (New York: Newman, 2003), 270–72. Given the relative brevity of the document *Pais,* "Servant," will not bear too much weight as the preferred title for Jesus in the community that penned it. Further, the title Lord cannot be divorced from Jesus in the Didache.

[47] See also van de Sandt and Flusser, *The Didache*, 283–91.

[48] A play on words with *pneumatos hagiou* in verse 4? *Pnoē* can also mean breath, and here Luke elected not to use "*anemos*, wind" which he uses elsewhere in Luke-Acts seven times. *Pnoē* is only found elsewhere in the NT in Acts 17:25: "God gives to all mortals life and breath (*pnoēn*) and all things."

[49] Here the primal meaning of *ruach* in the OT seems present; when the Spirit enters or leaves, life begins or ceases. Note Luke's description of both Ananais' and Sapphira's sudden deaths: they breathed their last or expired (NAB 5:5, 10, from *ekpsuchō*).

[50] Shelton, *Mighty in Word and Deed*, 74–84, esp. 80.

[51] The name of Jesus does not take the place of Jesus on earth (Ziesler, "The Name of Jesus in the Acts of the Apostles," 31, 38).

[52] Ziesler, "The Name of Jesus in the Acts of the Apostles," 31–32.

[53] Bruce Olson, *For This Cross I'll Kill You* (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1973), 65.

[54] Mark Wilson, "Conversion Story" and "The Night I Met the Devil," in *The Spirit Said Go: Lessons in Guidance from Paul's Journeys* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2017), 4–6 and 142–45.

[55] In a conversation at Tyndale House, Cambridge, 1981.

[56] Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (New York: Penguin, 1997), 308.

[57] Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy.* Part 1: *Hell*, trans. D. Sayers (New York: Penguin, 1977). Notes on Canto XI, 139.

[58] "Although in ways known to himself God can lead those who, through no fault of their own, are ignorant of the Gospels to that faith without which it is impossible to please him, the Church still has the obligation and also the sacred rite to evangelize *all men*." *Ad gentes divinitus*, 7, in *Documents of Vatican II*, ed. A. Flannery (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 821.

Global Poverty and Transnational Pentecostalism in the Middle East[1]

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Abstract

Driven by the impact of global poverty, large numbers of documented and undocumented workers from Eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa have migrated to countries in the Middle East. Many of these migrant workers are Pentecostals. The article provides a survey of Pentecostalism in the Middle East and reports on the findings of ethnographic research on transnational Pentecostals in the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula. Compelled by the pressures of globalization, these migrants find better economic prospects as contract workers than they could as free laborers in their home countries. Transnational Pentecostals in the Middle East derive spiritual, social, economic, and political benefits from their churches. Church members help new arrivals find housing and work, explain the bus routes, teach housecleaning skills, and share tips about wages, hours, and work conditions. These churches afford migrant workers with support, community, and agency, functioning as a means of resisting domination by oppressive local employers. Pentecostal churches have created a safe space for migrant workers, creating a counterculture of mutual support and empowering their members to navigate the underground world of undocumented workers.

Introduction

Driven by the impact of global poverty, large numbers of documented and undocumented workers from South Asia and Africa have migrated to countries in the Middle East.[2] The highest share of the migrant population is located in the

Middle East. Many of these workers are Pentecostals. Migrants tend to alter the religious makeup of the countries in which they settle and construct new forms of transnational family life with global chains of care. The article will provide an overview of Pentecostal evangelization in the Middle East and report on the findings of ethnographic research on transnational Pentecostals in the Maghreb, the Levant, and the Arabian Peninsula.

Global Poverty and Transnational Migration

Today we are witnessing a heightened consciousness concerning transnational migration as a driving force of globalization. Transnational migration has increased exponentially in response to the pressures of global poverty.[3] As a means of escaping poverty, millions in the Global South are migrating to wealthier nations in search of more gainful employment as domestic workers.

According to Diana Myers, global economic forces in countries with a large deficit of decent work force people to choose between staying in place with every expectation that deprivation will worsen over time, or, opting for transnational migration despite its attendant risks in the hope of gaining a secure livelihood. Myers holds that globalization like its colonial antecedents condemns people to severe lifelong poverty.[4] Extremely poor people migrate out of desperation. In their study of migration from Egypt and Ghana, Rachel Sabates-Wheeler, Ricardo Sabates, and Adriana Castaldo found that for the poor in these countries migration was an effective strategy for mitigating or escaping poverty.[5] Yet severe poverty is not the only reason why people migrate from Large Deficit of Decent Work (LDDW) countries. Few would migrate if it were not for demand for certain types of labor in destination nations.

Migration research has demonstrated that migration involves inherent tensions. On the one hand, migration can be seen as an expression of agency. Migration decisions, choice of destination, adaptation and incorporation, and transnational relations are linked with family ties and bonds. Migrants bring higher income and more opportunities. Migration is often grounded in one's sense of responsibility to the family. Migration scholars observe the emergence of a new transnational form of family life. They define transnational family life as social reproduction across borders. Transnational families live separated from each other much of the time, yet remain together united by collective welfare and unity, a process termed "familyhood across national borders." On the other hand, migration can also lead to disconnection. Family separation can lead to disruption,

and emotional and psychological costs for children, spouses, and the elderly, causing a plethora of social problems and breakdown of social norms. In the place of an absent mother or father, someone has to fill the gap. Fathers rarely take over child-rearing responsibilities when mothers migrate. Instead, other family relatives often step in to address the care deficit.

There is little doubt that voluntary migration from a poor to a rich country almost always benefits the individual migrant, who may easily find himself or herself earning in an hour what he or she earned in a day in the country of origin. International migrants typically send remittances to family members in their country of origin. Nonetheless, many experts believe that labor migration does not significantly improve the development prospects of the country of origin. Far from being productive, remittances may increase inequality, encourage consumption of imports, and create dependency. They are often delivered with stunning inefficiency; as much as 20 percent of their value is said to disappear, commonly through high transfer fees and poor exchange rate offerings. Source countries have had great difficulty in converting remittance income into sustainable productive capacity. Remittances may not constitute a rising tide that raises all boats, but they do have a very important effect on the standard of living of the households that receive them, constituting a significant portion of household income. They are an important social safety net for poor families, possibly reducing additional out-migration in particularly difficult times.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), there are 11.5 million migrant domestic workers in the world. Most of these workers are transnational migrants occupied with household labor. Domestic work includes a wide range of jobs typically dominated by men, such as gardeners, drivers, and security guards. However, the majority of migrant domestic workers are women, leading scholars to characterize this phenomenon as the "feminization of migration." In the Arab States, six in ten women are employed as migrant domestic workers. Labor migration and domestic work are intimately tied in the Arab states, which host 17.6 million migrant workers, representing 35.6 percent of all workers in the region.[6]

Normally there are three ways in which domestic workers migrate to the Middle East: (1) via connections with relatives and friends; (2) through recruitment agents; and (3) as refugees smuggled by boat. In the absence of a livable wage in their countries of origin, migrants come seeking job opportunities abroad. Since the 1970s the employment of foreign women as domestic workers has rapidly grown, first in the oil-rich Gulf States and later among the new middle class in Lebanon,

Jordan, and Yemen. As indigenous Arab women enter the workplace, the need for domestic help has been met through migrant workers. In the Middle East migrant women face a number of restrictions. Migrants cannot work and reside legally without having a "sponsor" (*kafil*), who is in most cases their employer. In most cases migrant domestic workers are required to reside in the house of their sponsor/employer. The drawback is that the home is considered the private sphere, not covered by local labor law. They may be confined to homes in which they work, have their passports confiscated, their residency status downgraded, and suffer harsh treatment such as no day off or sexual harassment. In return they hope to acquire sufficient money with prospects of a better standard of living. In many cases the harsh treatment impels a worker to escape and find work on her own as a freelancer without a contract. Legally, migrants in the Middle East cannot work as freelancers and if they are caught they face detention and a hefty departure fee. Despite the risks, a large proportion of the migrant workers in the Middle East have opted for freelancing.

From the point of view of migrant domestic workers, being legal is not seen as a great advantage. The move toward freelancing needs to be seen in terms of the context in which being legal entails limited agency and burdensome obligations. Freelancers benefit materially from freedom of movement. They can exercise agency in finding access to networks of friends, educational opportunities for language acquisition, financial resources, means of communication, and support of a church community. Such networks are a dominant feature of Pentecostal evangelization in the Middle East, to which we now turn.

Pentecostal Evangelization in the Middle East

The presence of Pentecostalism in the Middle East is significant, among other reasons, because this region includes the lands of the Bible. The beneficiary nations listed in Acts 2 include residents of two countries in North Africa—Egypt and Libya—as well as Arabs (Acts 2:9, 11). Although the earliest Christians might not have used the expression "Pentecostal," they perpetuated the dynamic of the Christian Pentecost as the source of the growth and empowerment of the church.[7] The primary stimulus of the growth of Pentecostalism today is to be found in its recipients' experiences of the Holy Spirit, resulting in a capacity for cross-cultural transmission and cross-cultural transplantation, a phenomenon that Lamin Sanneh calls the "translatability of the gospel."[8]

We can distinguish at least two categories of Pentecostalism in this region: indigenous Pentecostal groups that operate under a veil of secrecy due to constraints imposed by Islam, and those founded as branches of Pentecostal groups from abroad. The indigenous Pentecostal groups are largely constituted as house churches and do not hold publicly announced meetings. Those planted by missionaries and expatriates include the Assemblies of God, the Church of God (Cleveland), the Foursquare Gospel Church, the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International, YWAM (Youth with a Mission), and Christ for All Nations. Churches in the former group are typically independent and hardly ever rely on external assistance, while many groups in the latter category rely on outside funds, literature, and sometimes personnel from mission headquarters in the West. The indigenous Pentecostal groups have embarked on their own mission activities, planting branches in host countries and in other parts of the world by means of a reverse mission process.

Albeit in relatively small numbers, people in the Middle East are attracted to become Pentecostals by two common features, namely, emphasis on a personal religious experience of spiritual rebirth and manifestations of charismatic gifts such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, healing, and miracles. Most Pentecostal groups emphasize "holiness" (moral purity). Across the board, they are intensely interested in religious experience rather than in ritual or formal liturgy. Pentecostals in this region as elsewhere are noted for preaching a "prosperity gospel." Some have assimilated prosperity ideas from North American Pentecostalism. Yet, the commitment to the gospel of prosperity fits in well with values of indigenous cultures, where talismans such as the evil eye are displayed in plain sight to ensure prosperity, health, and protection from malevolent spiritual forces. Expatriate African Initiated Christian groups, such as the prophetic churches, have expanded in the Middle East as part of the new African Diaspora. These Pentecostal groups attract people because they are seen to be helping people in their everyday lives.

Modern Pentecostalism was introduced to the Middle East by missionaries associated with classical Pentecostalism.[9] According to Michael Wilkinson, "Pentecostal mission work is animated by a pneumatology that emphasizes the calling and empowering of the Spirit, the ongoing leading of the Spirit, and signs and wonders to authenticate the work of the Spirit."[10] As with other Western missionaries, Pentecostals in North Africa and West Asia largely failed to gain adherents from non-Christian peoples and gained most of their converts by proselytizing Orthodox and Catholic Christian communities rather than by evangelizing non-Christians. Even today leaders of the historic indigenous churches

of the Middle East express resentment toward Pentecostals and Evangelicals for weakening their communities against Islam. At present there is no formal cooperation between the Middle East Council of Churches and any Pentecostal body in this region of the world.[11]

Pentecostalism came to the Arabian Peninsula later than to the Maghreb and the Levant. Currently, the presence of Pentecostalism in the region has increased due to economic migration related to globalization. Many countries in this region, especially the Persian Gulf countries, have great wealth from oil but acute labor shortages, which they have met by means of foreign workers. Transient migrant workers make up two-thirds of the labor force in these countries. South Asians constitute the largest non-Arab expatriate community in the Gulf States. Temporary migrants are accorded no political representation. Their wages are less than their Western or Arab counterparts. Compelled by the pressures of globalization, these migrants find better economic prospects as contract workers than they would as free laborers in their home countries. In the 1960s and 1970s multiple Christian congregations were established in several Gulf States, primarily in urban centers. The rulers of the Gulf States have been very tolerant toward expatriate Christians, even donating land for the construction of church edifices. Every Friday thousands of Christians gather to worship the God of the Bible, often at the same time as Muslims meet for Friday prayers in their mosques. Pentecostal churches are among the several expatriate groups of Christians in the Arabian Peninsula.[12]

Regional Survey

How transnational Pentecostals relate to the Islamic states and societies of the Middle East can be surmised from a survey of the Pentecostal presence in selected regions. Like all branches of Christianity in this part of the world, Pentecostal evangelization has had to contend with the obstacles imposed by Islamic hegemony.

Maghreb (North Africa)

In terms of visible appearance, Pentecostals are few and far between in the Maghreb, aside from Egypt. In Algeria there is only one officially recognized Pentecostal congregation affiliated with the Assemblies of God. However, the Pentecostal presence in Algeria might be more robust, judging from a 2006 law establishing "conditions and regulations for the practice of non-Muslim services."

This law was aimed specifically at Evangelical and Pentecostal preachers who had gained conversions among indigenous Berbers. Many of these converts remain "secret believers."[13]

Prior to the outbreak of war in Libya in 2011, more Christians lived in Tripoli and Benghazi than in any other city in North Africa, aside from Egypt. Since Muammar Qaddafi's fall in 2011, Islamist groups have harassed Christians and forced them to convert. A small indigenous Christian community does exist. However, most of the Christians in Libya are foreigners working in the country. A sizeable number of the Pentecostals in Libya are migrant workers in the oilfields from sub-Saharan African countries.[14]

The Assemblies of God have a substantial presence in Egypt. These churches continue to support the orphanage established by the pioneer Pentecostal missionary Lillian Trasher in Asyut and a small prenatal clinic in a poor section of Cairo. Febe Armanios reports that in the past fifty years a charismatic renewal movement has emerged among Egypt's Copts "especially within communication outlets, narratives of healing and the miraculous, prayer and worship styles, evangelization and social services. Coptic believers have been actively searching for multiple ways to harvest the redemptory powers of the Holy Spirit and to feel directly connected to/touched by the divine."[15] Coptic clergy and laity have turned to charismatic Christianity, mostly couched in familiar Orthodox terminology, in order to strengthen belief, spirituality, and communality.[16]

Levant (Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq)

Pentecostals occupy a small yet vital and growing sector of the Christian space in Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq. Pentecostal churches in Israel include local branches of international denominations (the Assemblies of God, the Church of God, the Church of God of Prophecy), independent charismatic ministries (Cornerstone, Voice of Healing, Congregation of the Lamb on Mount Zion, House of Bread Church, Christ to the Nations), African Initiated Churches (Church of Pentecost, Resurrection Power, Living Bread Ministries International, Beth-El Prayer Ministry), independent local churches in the West Bank (Immanuel Church), and Messianic churches in Israel (King of Kings Assembly). Of these churches, the two most vital indigenous congregations are King of Kings Assembly in Jerusalem and Immanuel Church in Bethlehem.[17]

Large numbers of non-indigenous Christians, compelled by global poverty, have migrated to Israel. Many of these workers from Eastern Europe, Asia, and

Africa are Pentecostals. Much to the dismay of the Israeli government, a growing number of African migrant Pentecostals have established themselves in Israel. They found their way to Israel between the late 1980s and early 2000s, coming mostly from Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria.[18] The opportunity for migrant labor emerged as a result of the first Palestinian *Intifada* (Uprising) in 1987–91. In response, the Israeli government retaliated by erecting checkpoints in order to control the movement of Palestinian workers into Israel. This resulted in a wholesale exclusion of non-citizen Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza from working in Israel, causing dramatic changes in the Israeli labor market. Whereas Palestinians constituted 4.5 percent of the Israeli labor force in 1993 and migrant workers accounted for 1.6 percent, by 2000 the proportion of Palestinians had dropped to 3.3 percent and that of migrant workers had risen to 8.7 percent. By 2003 the number of migrant workers had increased to 10–12 percent of the labor force. About half of the migrant workers came to Israel as documented laborers, the other half as undocumented. The number of government permits issued to employ overseas workers increased from 4,200 in 1990 to 9,600 in 1993 and then tenfold to 103,000 in 1996. By 2000 the Israeli economy had become heavily dependent on transnational workers.[19]

In the same period other pathways were available for African migration to Israel, some legal and others illegal. Large numbers of Ethiopians came to Israel seeking asylum from political and military conflict and others came under the right of *aliyah*.[20] In addition, growing streams of undocumented migrants made their way to Israel by means of what has been termed the "tourist loophole."[21] Given Israel's profound archaeological, biblical, and religious significance for several world religions, the Holy Land attracted pilgrims, some of whom extended the period of stay allowed by their tourist visas and slipped unnoticed into the Israeli economy as undocumented workers. This loophole facilitated the entry of tens of thousands of migrants from West African and other countries. The African migrant workers replaced the newly excluded low-paid, low-skilled Palestinian workers from the West Bank and Gaza, cleaning houses and offices, serving in restaurants and hotels, caring for children and the elderly, and performing other low-wage, physically demanding jobs. The majority of the African migrant workers settled in the most affordable neighborhoods of Tel Aviv, especially around the old Central Bus Station, where they found relatively cheap housing, discount shops and food markets, good bus transportation to all parts of the city and country, and the company of other migrant workers, including Africans.[22]

Most African migrants to Israel joined a church made up of fellow Africans. These churches tended to be Pentecostal and/or affiliated with the African Initiated Christianity (AIC) movement. The Africans in Israel derived spiritual, social, economic, and political benefits from their churches. In fact, the African churches became the center of the lively African community in Israel. At their peak, more than forty such congregations were meeting in the southern part of Tel Aviv. Theologically, the African churches in Israel can be identified with all three types of AIC churches: African-Ethiopian churches, Prophet Healing churches (also called Spiritual or Zionist churches), and neo-Charismatic churches. Most of the Africans interviewed by Galia Sabar in her ethnological research described their churches as "Pentecostal."[23] The African migrant churches emphasize the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit; the experience of the Holy Spirit in trances, healing, and deliverance; the existence of witches and spirits; narrative theology; and the prosperity gospel. As with Pentecostal churches worldwide, the services in these churches provide release and a feeling of community and togetherness. The churches functioned as an extended family in providing support for members by means of rites of passage for marriage and death. Most African churches maintained their connection with Africa by offering lectures and seminars on political issues in home countries. Church leaders assumed a political role in lobbying for improved living conditions and legal status. The churches provided not only a sense of belonging but also practical assistance. Church members helped new arrivals find housing and work, explained the bus routes, taught housecleaning skills, and shared tips about wages, hours, work conditions, and how to get along with Israelis. Finally, the vitality of the African churches in a Jewish state with a small Christian minority augments the importance of the African churches.[24]

In Lebanon there are three Assemblies of God congregations and a Muslim Background Believers church with fifty congregations. Many of the Pentecostals in Lebanon are migrant workers from Africa and the Philippines, some of whom are undocumented. In her research on Ethiopian Pentecostal churches in Lebanon, Bina Fernandez found that these churches afforded migrant female domestic workers with a sense of support, community, and agency that functioned as a means of resisting domination by oppressive Muslim employers. More than 5,000 people from many nationalities attend an annual festival of Pentecostal churches in Lebanon for a weekend in March. According to Fernandez, the Pentecostal churches have created a safe space for migrant workers, in which forms of mutual support create a counterculture, empowering their members to navigate the underground world of undocumented workers.[25]

In Jordan there are sixteen Assemblies of God congregations. Emphasizing conversion and baptism of the Spirit, these congregations are concentrated in the Amman area and are foreign-led. They operate a healthcare clinic in Amman. One Pentecostal congregation with 100 adult members is affiliated with the Church of God (Cleveland). This congregation is Holiness-Pentecostal, emphasizing conversion, sanctification, and baptism of the Spirit. It is expatriate-led.[26]

In Syria, the only known Pentecostals are a network of house churches that meet secretly. Prior to the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 there was a substantial Pentecostal community in the country. However, the unintended consequences of the invasion have been devastating for all the Christian communities and many Pentecostals are among those who have fled from the country.[27]

Arabian Gulf

Many who come to the Gulf States for work as domestic workers are Pentecostals. In Saudi Arabia they play a conduit role in connecting other domestic workers with Pentecostal fellowships. Pentecostals have excelled at attracting expatriate workers of Chinese, Ethiopian, Korean, Filipino, and South Asian extraction. In many instances Saudi employers confiscate the passports and identity papers of their domestic workers and allow them to leave the home only once a week to go to church. In these cases, Pentecostal churches function as sanctuaries for undocumented workers who have freelanced to escape oppressive conditions.[28]

More than half of Kuwait's population does not hold citizenship. Of these, most are foreign workers from the Levant, South Asia, the Philippines, and Ethiopia. Foreign workers comprise a large part of the membership of the churches in Kuwait. Two Arab Pentecostal churches in Kuwait are known for effective evangelism.[29] The government of Bahrain allows expatriate Christians to worship freely as long as they do not evangelize Muslims, which is illegal. No Bahrainis admit to being Christians, but there are a considerable number of secret believers. Most of the Christians are expatriate workers from India, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, and the USA. House churches are active, particularly among Filipino expatriate workers.[30] Although no outreach to the indigenous population is officially permitted in the United Arab Emirates, religious freedom is enjoyed by Christian groups. The ruling families have loaned land to Christian communities and allowed the construction of compounds for church meetings. Immigrant workers constitute the strength of Christianity in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).[31] Oman tolerates (and is mildly supportive of) the religions of its foreign

workforce. Christian proselytism of Muslims is forbidden; therefore, virtually all of Oman's Christian population is foreign. Since 1973, expatriates have been freely allowed to worship according to their religious affiliations, build religious compounds, and proselytize among other expatriates.[32] In Qatar the government recently adopted a policy of allowing expatriate Christians to worship in public and construct church buildings. Qataris who accept Christian faith outside of Qatar have faced ostracism by their families when they publicly acknowledge their conversion. There are practically no indigenous professing Christians in Qatar. Almost all of the Christians in Qatar are expatriate workers.[33]

The Yemeni constitution stipulates that proselytizing Muslims is strictly prohibited. If a Muslim seeks information from another religion, this is considered apostasy, punishable by death. Nonetheless, it is thought that there are some secret believers in Yemen. The national Christians that exist are crypto-Christians. Although churches are not officially recognized in Yemen, non-Muslims are allowed to practice their religion under strict restrictions. Most Christians in Yemen are migrant workers of Middle Eastern, Ethiopian, Indian, and European extraction. An Ethiopian Cultural Center is located in Sana, where Ethiopian domestic workers can make connections, celebrate cultural and religious occasions, and find help with housing and work.[34] There are no known Pentecostal churches in Yemen.[35]

Conclusion

A growing number of African migrant Pentecostals have ensconced themselves in the Maghreb, the Levant, and Arabian Peninsula, coming mostly from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and the Philippines. Compelled by the pressures of globalization, these migrants find better economic prospects as contract workers than they could as free laborers in their home countries. Every Friday thousands of Christians gather for worship, often at the same time as Muslims meet for Friday prayers in their mosques. Pentecostal churches are among the fasting growing expatriate groups of Christians in the Middle East.[36]

Most African migrants affiliate with a church made up of fellow Africans. The African migrant churches emphasize the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit; the experience of the Holy Spirit in trances, healing, and deliverance; the existence of witches and spirits; narrative theology; and the prosperity gospel. As with Pentecostal churches worldwide, the services in these churches provide an emotional release.

African transnational Pentecostals derive spiritual, social, economic, and political benefits from their churches. Church members help new arrivals find housing and work, explain the bus routes, teach housecleaning skills, and share tips about wages, hours, and work conditions. These churches function as a matrix of the lively African community in Diaspora, affording migrant workers with support, community, and agency, functioning as a means of resisting domination by oppressive local employers. Pentecostal churches have created a safe space for migrant workers, creating a counterculture of mutual support and empowering their members to navigate the underground world of undocumented workers.

Pentecostalism in the Middle East does not share the bright prospects for growth projected for the movement worldwide.[37] The demographic status of Pentecostalism in this region corresponds to that of other segments of Christianity. According to the Pew Research Center, the Middle East-North Africa region is home to less than 1 percent of the world's Christians. Only about 4 percent of the region's residents are Christian.[38] Although Christianity began in this area, it now has the lowest overall number of Christians and the smallest share of its population that is Christian. Christians are a minority in every country. Almost half of the Christians in the region live in either Egypt or Lebanon. Pentecostals represent a relatively small segment of the Christian population in this region and are faced with formidable obstacles to the growth of their movement due to the spread of Islamic extremism. Yet we can conclude based on our findings that at the margins of the societies of this region a growing number of people continue to encounter the Spirit of God and experience profound transformation, evidencing the markers of Pentecostal spirituality.

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Notes

[1] An earlier version of this study was presented at the Scholars Consultation of Empowered21 in Tulsa, OK, June 2020. The final version will appear in *Good News to the Poor: Spirit-Empowered Responses to Poverty*, eds. Wonsuk Ma, Opoku Onyinah, and Rebekah Bled (Tulsa, OK: ORU Press, 2021 forthcoming).

[2] For current literature on migrant workers in the Middle East, see Bina Fernandez, "Household Help? Ethiopian Women Domestic Workers' Labor Migration to the Gulf

Countries," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 20:3–4 (2011), 433–57; Bina Fernandez and Marin de Regt, "Making Home in the World: Migrant Domestic Workers in the Middle East," in *Migrant Domestic Workers in the Middle East: The Home and the World*, eds. Bina Fernandez and Marin de Regt (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 1–26; Ninna Nyberg Sorenson and Ida Marie Vammen, "Who Cares? Transnational Families in Debates on Migration and Development," *New Diversities* 16:2 (2014), 89–108, http://newdiversities.mmg.mpg.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2014_16-02_07_Sorensen_Vammen.pdf (31 May 2020).

[3] Kathleen Newland, "Migration as a Factor in Development and Poverty Reduction," *Migration Information Source, Migration Policy Institute*, 1 June 2003, n.p., https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/migration-factor-development-and-poverty-reduction (31 May 2020).

[4] Diana Tietjens Myers, "Rethinking Coercion for a World of Poverty and Transnational Migration," in *Poverty, Agency, and Human Rights*, ed. Diana Tietjens Meyers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), ch. 3.

[5] Rachel Sabates-Wheeler, Ricardo Sabates, and Adriana Castaldo, "Tackling Poverty-Migration Linkages: Evidence from Ghana and Egypt," working paper, Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, https://issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9780821384367/30.

[6] Maria Gallotti, *Migrant Domestic Workers Across the World: Global and Regional Estimates* (Geneva: International Labour Organization, 2015), http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---migrant/documents/briefingnote/wcms_490162.pdf (31 May 2020).

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[8] Roswith Gerloff and Abraham Ako Akrong, "Independents, 1910-2010," in *Atlas of Global Christianity, 1910-2010*, eds. Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 76.

[9] Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2017), 4.

[10] Michael Wilkinson, "Charles W. Chawner and the Missionary Impulse of the Hebden Mission," in *Winds from the North: Canadian Contributions to the Pentecostal Movement*, eds. Peter Althouse and Michael Wilkinson (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 52.

[11] Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "Christian Unity and Pentecostal Mission: A Contradiction," in *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, eds. Wonsuk Ma, Veli-Matti Karkkainen, and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books International, 2014), 206.

[12] T. V. Thomas, "South Asian Diaspora Christianity in the Persian Gulf," in *Global Diasporas and Mission*, eds. H. Chandler Im and Amos Yong (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2014), 119–21.

[13] Tom Pfeiifer, "Christian Missionaries Stir Unease in North Africa," *Reuters*, 15 December 2008; Matthias Riemenschneider, "The Situation of Christians in North Africa and the Middle East," *KAS International Reports*, June 2011, 12.

[14] Paul-Gordon Chandler, "Turmoil in Tripoli," *Christian Century*, 3 May 2011, 11; Fredrick Nzwili, "Christians in Libya Uneasy about Move to Sharia Law," *Christian Century*, 5 February 2014, 216; Riemenschneider, "The Situation of Christians in North Africa and the Middle East," 7.

[15] Febe Armanios, "The Coptic Charismatic Renewal in Egypt: Historical Roots and Recent Developments," International Association of Coptic Studies Quadrennial Congress, Rome, Italy, 15–22 September 2012, unpublished paper, http://www.orthodoxchristianity.net/forum/index.php?topic=55503.40;imode (30 January 2016).

[16] Allan Heaton Anderson, "'Stretching Out Hands to God': Origins and Development of Pentecostalism in Africa," in *Pentecostalism in Africa: Presence and Impact of Pneumatic Christianity Postcolonial Societies*, 57.

[17] Christians represent a mere 2 percent of the population of Israel. Christians in Israel amount to 177,000 out of a total population of 9,291,000. Of these, most are Arab Christians. About 45 percent are Catholic, 40 percent are Orthodox, and 20 percent fall under the category of "other," including non-Arab Christians, Baha'i, Jehovah's Witnesses, Karaite Jews, Messianic Jews, Samaritans, and Seventh-day Adventists. Immigrants from the former Soviet Union, who identify themselves as Jewish, but do not satisfy the Orthodox Jewish definition of "Jewish" that the government uses for civil procedures, make up 5 percent of the population (456,000 people). Jewish Virtual Library, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Society_&_Culture/newpop.html (8 March 2021). It is estimated that from 6,000 to 15,000 Israelis are adherents of Messianic Judaism, some of whom are Pentecostals. See Paul A. Pomerville, *The New Testament Case against Christian Zionism* (Seattle: CreateSpace, 2015), 150. In Palestine there are about 50,000 Christians in the West Bank and 1,000 in Gaza out of a total population of approximately 4.5 million. Christians comprise approximately 2 percent of the population of the West Bank and 1 percent in Gaza. These estimates cannot be verified because the Palestinian Authority does not use a census to obtain population statistics. Christian groups in the West Bank and Gaza include Eastern Orthodoxy, Oriental Orthodoxy, Catholicism (Eastern and Western rites), Anglicanism, Protestantism, and Pentecostalism, concentrated mainly in East Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, and Bethlehem. See also "Palestinian Christians in the Holy Land," *Institute for Middle East Understanding*, 17 December 2012, n.p., http://imeu.org/article/palestinian-christians-in-the-holy-land (9 May 2015).

[18] Sarah S. Willen, "Introduction," in *Transnational Migration to Israel in Global Comparative Context*, ed. Sarah S. Willen (New York: Macmillan Palgrave, 2013), 9.

[19] Willen, *Transnational Migration to Israel*, 11.

[20] Steven Kaplan and Hagar Salamon, "Ethiopian Jews in Israel: A Part of the People or Apart from the People?" in *Jews in Israel: Contemporary and Cultural Patterns*, eds. Uzi Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman (Lebanon, NH: Brandeis University Press, 2004), 118.

[21] Willen, *Transnational Migration to Israel*, 12.

[22] Dafnah Strauss, "The Black Diaspora in Israel, 1965–2011," *Blackpast*, 14 December 2011, n.p., http://www.blackpast.org/perspectives/black-diaspora-israel-1965-2011 (30 April 2015).

[23] Galia Sabar, "African Christianity in the Jewish State: Adaptation, Accommodation and Legitimation of Migrant Workers' Churches, 1990–2003," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 34:4 (2004), 419.

[24] Galia Sabar, "The Rise and Fall of African Migrant Churches: Transformations in African Religious Discourse and Practice in Tel Aviv," in *Transnational Migration to Israel*, 190–96.

[25] Bina Fernandez, "Degrees of (Un)Freedom: The Exercise of Agency by Ethiopian Migrant Domestic Workers in Kuwait and Lebanon," in *Migrant Domestic Workers in the Middle East: The Home and the World*, 51, 57–61, 64–68.

[26] Mission Atlas Project: Jordan, n.d., n.p., http://www.worldmap.org/maps/other/profiles/jordan/Jordan--Country%20Profile.pdf?PHPSESSID=93e90d72fb5dafa9fa00d51b97cd0afc (31 January 2016).

[27] J. Boozee, "Syria," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. Stanley M. Burgess, and Eduard M. Van Der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 9–10.

[28] Pardis Mahdavi, "Immobilized Migrancy: Inflexible Citizenship and Flexible Practices among Migrants in the Gulf," in *Migrant Domestic Workers in the Middle East*, 75–93.

[29] David B. Barrett, George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., The World by Countries (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1:437–38.

[30] Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, *Operation World* (Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Lifestyle, 2001), 92–93.

[31] Johnstone and Mandryk, *Operation World*, 647–49.

[32] Johnstone and Mandryk, *Operation World*, 498; Barrett, Kurian, and Johnson, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 1:568–69.

[33] *Mission Atlas Project: Middle East—Qatar*, n.d., n.p., http://www.worldmap.org/qatar.html (29 December 2015); Johnstone and Mandryk, *Operation World*, 532–33.

[34] Marina de Regt, "Ethiopian Women in the Middle East: The Case of Migrant Domestic Workers in Yemen," Paper for the African Studies Centre Seminar, University of Amsterdam, 15 February 2007, 7.

[35] Barrett, Kurian, and Johnson, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 1:810–11.

[36] Thomas, "South Asian Diaspora Christianity in the Persian Gulf," 119.

[37] Gina A. Bellofatto and Todd M. Johnson, "Key Findings of Christianity in its Global Context, 1970–2020," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 37:3 (2013), 158; Julie Ma and Allan Anderson, "Pentecostals (Renewalists), 1910-2010," *Atlas of Global Christianity, 1910-2010*, 102.

[38] Joseph Liu, "Global Christianity—A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population," *Pew Research Center*, 19 December 2011, 63, http://www.pewforum.org/files/2011/12/Christianity-fullreport-web.pdf (30 January 2016).

Towards a Pentecostal Conscientizing Praxis of Mass Culture Engagement

Contrasting Pneumatologies of Amos Yong and Simon Chan

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Abstract

This essay notes promises and problems with Pentecostal cultural engagement through its dualistic "spiritual warfare" cosmology. I propose a promising foray by forging Amos Yong's and Simon Chan's theologies of cultural engagement. For both employ their Asian particularities towards addressing cultural phenomena in manners that distinguish their contrasting yet I shall argue, complementary pneumatologically themed theologies of culture. Yet neither have engaged methodological disciplines of cultural analysis and critique. In response this essay suggests a Pentecostal *conscientizing* praxis of mass culture engagement, in conversation with Amos Yong and Simon Chan. This essay concludes by suggesting need for discerning possible prophetic elements operative within contemporary global populism, notwithstanding its identified ignoble themes.

Introduction

Pentecostal spirituality makes Pentecostals highly adept at appropriating "glocal"[1] cultural artifacts to ministry aims.[2] Allan Anderson has long defined this appraisal as Pentecostalism's "contextual pneumatology,"[3] which he links to the tradition's stress on experiencing the Spirit through oral- and narrative-driven "spontaneous

liturgy."[4] In his more recent research, Anderson thus stresses how Pentecostals characteristically approach their local and global networks as a missiologically tuned, global "metaculture."[5]

Birgit Meyer's and André Droogers' respective anthropological research clarifies this interface. Meyer explores links between world Pentecostalism, globalization, and neoliberal capitalism while Droogers assesses Pentecostalism in relation to global cultural and social processes of modernization, globalization, and transnationalization.[6] Interestingly, both describe Pentecostal cultural engagement through two facets. First, Pentecostal cultural engagement operates within a cosmology that construes the world with its glocalization dynamics, as an arena of spiritual warfare between God and demonic powers.[7] Second, Pentecostals negotiate this cosmology through two contrasting, cultural engagement modes. Droogers call these "rupture" and "continuity,"[8] which parallels Meyer's "world-breaking" and "world-making" or "world-embracing" categories.[9] I suggest locating these along a continuum comprising three ways of Pentecostal cultural engagement: 1. world-rupture; 2. world-embracing; and 3. world-making.

At this point, several observations on Pentecostal cultural engagement emerge. First, significantly fuelling the world-rupture/embracing/making continuum is the Pentecostal embodying drive towards sensory experience with spiritual realities. Meyer calls this "sensational form": a process whereby Pentecostals use cultural artifacts, mainly in the form of media technologies, for rendering God's presence "sense-able," while also striving to show themselves as culturally relevant.[10] Second, Meyer notes that notwithstanding Pentecostal other-worldly rhetoric, the "world embracing" and "world-making" modes imply that Pentecostals generally embrace a consumerist oriented lifestyle, fostered through global market economies and neo-liberal capitalism,[11] which contributes to the contemporary appeal of Pentecostalism.[12]

Third, I suggest these analyses demonstrate an interface between the Pentecostal contextual adeptness that grants a liturgical freedom attuned to cultural items availed through the glocalizing dynamics of world Pentecostalism, and its missiologically tuned posture towards local, popular, and mass cultures operative through the global economic complex. Roughly drawing from Jacques Ellul's notion of modern "technology as a system," I am using this phrase to signify the systemic elements of local/transnational profit-driven, mass-consumer aimed, and technologically evolving production of information knowledge and culture.[13] I particularly refer to mass produced culture. Fourth, substantiating the Pentecostal cosmological framing of the global economic complex is Graham Ward's thesis that

this complex comprises a cosmologically framed "religious ideology"[14] rooted in metaphysical forces that purport teleological aims for humanity.[15] Ward however does not suggest that we should deem this metaphysics as entirely antithetical to a Christian vision of human and creational flourishing. He rather argues that Christian discipleship involves acting (praxis)[16] in manners that orientate these forces and their issued cultural products towards the moral curve of Christian eschatology.[17] Finally, I thus suggest that Pentecostal cosmological dualism comprises salient resources towards a relevant Pentecostal theology and praxis of cultural engagement.

However, much research suggests that the continuum I earlier suggested (comprising the world- rupture, embracing, and making Pentecostal practices of cultural engagement) generally operate rather superficially. Harvey Cox noted that while Pentecostal cultural adeptness may be the tradition's greatest "strength," it sometimes functions as "its most dangerous quality," recalling South African Pentecostalism's earlier failure "to exorcise" the "evil demon" of "racism."[18] Meanwhile, Amos Yong notes that too often Pentecostals approach cultural engagement "instrumentally, as a means toward an end," usually in terms of world evangelization.[19] Mirroring Cox's assessment, he notes "subtle ways" that varied ideologies, political agendas, and consumerist-oriented market forces highjack this instrumental approach.[20]

I propose a foray through these challenges by forging together Yong's and Simon Chan's respective theologies of cultural engagement. What makes this alluring is that both employ their Asian backgrounds for addressing cultural phenomena, in manners that distinguish their contrasting, yet I shall argue complementary, pneumatologically themed theologies of culture. I suggest for instance that foremost informing Chan's ecclesial-centered pneumatology[21] is his lifelong reflection on negotiating the religiously pluralistic, polytheistic, and animistically rooted conceptions of "spirit" that characterize his Southeast Asian Chinese context.[22] Aimed for the Asian setting and secondarily for the "global church," Chan has thus constructed a theology of cultural engagement that stresses the contextual effectiveness of Pentecostalism within Asian "folk" culture.[23] He credits this to three features of Pentecostal spirituality; its "spirit world/warfare cosmology,"[24] its stress on paradigm shifting "conversion" experiences that effects social-economic empowerment through life style changes,[25] and its tapping into "the *vestigia dei*" (footprints of God) that Pentecostals intuitively discern within "folk" religious practices and cultural resources.[26]

Conversely, I surmise that foremost funding Yong's creation-charged pneumatology[27] is his lifelong reflection on his "hybridized identity,"[28] forged through his diasporic life experiences. For though he started life as a Malaysian born Southeast Asian Chinese, he later became an Asian-American, resulting from his family's migration to the United States when he was still a young child.[29] His theology of culture comprises one part of a broader political theology developed from the Pentecostal fivefold Christological motifs (Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit-baptizer, Healer, and Coming King).[30] Similar to Chan, he too retrieves the traditional Pentecostal spirit-world/warfare cosmology for constructing his political theology. He begins this through the "savior" motif, from which he constructs a "cosmopolitical liturgics of resistance."[31] Then through the "sanctifier" motif, he posits a theology of culture issuing in a "redemptive cultural praxis"; hence, a sanctified politics of cultural redemption."[32] Biblically drawing from the Acts narrative and Pentecost imagery[33] Yong funds this praxis through a constructed "pneumatological (and ecclesiological) theology of culture"[34] that stresses the Spirit's redeeming aim towards the "many tongues, many cultures" of humanity.[35] He then delineates how for this purpose the Spirit empowers us to a praxis of "cultural discernment," comprising a growing "sanctified imagination."[36]

Two problems, however, challenge this hypothesis. First, while Chan and Yong have both constructed sophisticated theologies of cultural engagement, neither have actually specifically engaged the methodical disciplines of cultural analysis and critique. Second, both operate from very contrasting premises and methodologies: Yong's creation-charged versus Chan's ecclesial-centered pneumatologies. Yet I believe that Yong's work comprises a far more promising response to the twenty-first-century "post-"context,[37] broad enough to assimilate helpful features from Chan's ecclesially-informed pneumatology.[38]

What I shall therefore attempt is this. Working from Meyer's and Droogers' shared construal of Pentecostal cosmology while also responding to Pentecostal contextual adeptness of mass cultures operative through the global economic complex, I shall build on Yong's "redemptive cultural praxis"[39] to construct more specifically a Pentecostal conscientizing praxis of mass culture engagement and culture-making. But to do so we should define three different kinds of contemporary culture: folk (or grassroots), popular, and mass culture. For brevity sake, I will do so as they emerge through this discussion. Vis-à-vis Yong's and Chan's contrasting pneumatologically-themed theologies of culture, I have also developed the praxis by employing Australian Roman Catholic theologian Tracey Rowland's critique on the *Gaudium Et Spes* Constitution that fostered Vatican II's

aggiornamento agenda. Engaging Rowland's work thereby directed me to another vital resource that proved critical towards the constructed praxis: namely, methodical insights derived from the Frankfurt/Birmingham schools of cultural critique.

Emerging from these main resources, I shall outline four integrated features of the praxis. The first frames the Yong/Chan synthesis against Rowland's critique of the Vatican II *Gaudium Et Spes* and *aggiornamento* agenda. The second appropriates to the praxis Rowland's argument that culture engagement within modernity requires a strong moral forming ecclesial culture. This feature proceeds by complementing features of Yong's theology of culture with Chan's Eastern Orthodox-informed, "hypostatizing"-purposed ecclesiology. The third informs Yong's and Chan's guidelines towards Pentecostal grassroots cultural engagement with insights derived from the Frankfurt/Birmingham culture critique methodologies. The fourth frames the praxis within apocalyptic-themed Pentecostal dualistic cosmology, by appropriating Cheryl Bridges Johns' "conscientization" notion of Pentecostal formation, integrated to James K. A. Smith's practice of apocalyptic culture reading. The appendix visualises the praxis-model.

Rowland's Critique of the Vatican II *Gaudium Et Spes*

This first feature frames the Yong/Chan synthesis within Rowland's critique of the Vatican II *Gaudium Et Spes*, and broader *aggiornamento* agenda, which she deems woefully inadequate for guiding Roman Catholic cultural engagement. Rowland outlines her critique and prescriptive trajectories in her 2003 book, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition: After Vatican II*. Identifying herself within the Radical Orthodoxy movement, Rowland describes her work as a "postmodern Augustinian Thomism" critique, substantially drawing on the "Communio" movement and MacIntyrian themes.[40] She explains that the purpose of the *Gaudium Et Spes* was to ground theologically the aims of Vatican II, conceptualized through the Conciliar slogan *aggiornamento*, meaning, "an updating . . . of theological resources."[41] Crucial to this aim was a renewed openness towards contemporary culture.[42] She does not mention this, but it seems that the crucial aim of the *Gaudium Et Spes* and its corresponding *aggiornamento* theme was to serve Vatican II's greater concern for evangelization in the modern world.[43]

Rowland argues, however, that the *Gaudium Et Spes* articulated a woefully weak theological posture towards contemporary culture, particularly referring to "mass culture." A crucial element she uses is the German term "*Bildung*," which

means "culture" as an ethos where "self-formation" occurs.[44] Hence, she argues that the document's main progenitors presumed the "culture of modernity" as a "neutral" ethos for the "flourishing of Christian practices," thus believing that ecclesial culture as "*Bildung*" for moral formation can be adequately transposed into the idioms and ethos of modern culture,[45] specifically mass culture.[46] Rowland rebuts this understanding. She does so by following John Paul II's description of mass culture as a "culture of death," which he juxtaposed with his envisioned "culture of love."[47] She especially faults the *Gaudium Et Spes*'s pronouncement that "everything must be done to make everyone conscious of the right to culture and the duty one has of developing oneself culturally."[48] She thus faults the "Conciliar fathers" for not defining "the substance of this 'right to culture,'" or "what it means to 'develop oneself culturally.'"[49]

Rather than tuned towards drawing supposed relevant resources from modern culture, Rowland thus argues that the "right to culture" needs to be specifically geared for enabling people towards an ecclesial culture as "*Bildung,*"[50] strong enough to counter rival *Bildung* conceptions operative within modernity; specifically, Enlightenment-Liberalism's stress on human autonomy apart from "tradition,"[51] and Postmodern Romanticism with its Nietzschean disregard for past tradition and stress on human "authenticity."[52] She thus argues for an "Augustinian Thomist conception of culture" that structures people's formation along the theological virtues (faith, hope, love) Trintarianly coalesced to the Transcendental Predicates and three soul faculties (Intellect: Faith/Truth; Will: Love/Goodness; Memory: Hope/Beauty).[53] This scheme thus follows the "'proto-typical' classical Christian model" that envisions Christ as proto-typical for formation towards "perfected humanity."[54]

Moral Forming Ecclesial Culture

The second feature appropriates to the suggested praxis Rowland's argument that culture engagement with modernity requires a strong moral forming ecclesial culture. Hence, an ecclesial culture in the *Bildung* sense of culture for the sake of moral formation. This feature proceeds by complementing features of Yong's theology of culture with Chan's Eastern Orthodox-informed "hypostatizing"-purposed ecclesiology. Yong has exemplified this direction while working from his "foundational pneumatology"[55] that posits the Spirit imbuing "the cultural dimension of human life."[56] Specifically, he argues for a "cosmopolitical liturgics of resistance" issuing in a "liturgical imagination."[57] Building on this trajectory, he

moreover posits a redemptive cultural praxis in conversation with "post-Constantinian" political theologies of cultural engagement, appreciating how each prioritizes ecclesial formation for a viable "post-Constantinian/Christendom" engagement with public culture.[58] He then argues for the purpose of "cultural discernment" this praxis requires liturgical formation of an eschatologically oriented "sanctified imagination."[59]

Two relevant features characterize Chan's ecclesiology. First is his ecclesial-centered pneumatology. In his 2011 *Pentecostal Ecclesiology* book, Chan warrants his second feature by asking, how can Pentecostalism continue into the future "without surrendering to the culture of this world"?[60] He then proffers a foray through the Eastern Orthodox church-creation interface that theologically integrates ecclesiology, anthropology, creation, and eschatology. For within this interface, Eastern Orthodoxy encourages fresh experiences of the Spirit albeit recognized as "ecclesial experience" shaped through the liturgical experiences of church life.[61] From this matrix he thereby reiterates his long stressed argument that "the church is . . . the special place where the Spirit is present on earth," and in "a way that he is not present in the world."[62] For as Eastern Orthodoxy stresses, "what God intends for creation can only be understood in terms of what He intends for the church and what the Spirit is doing in the church."[63]

Drawing from Eastern Orthodox theologian John Zizioulas, Chan describes his second feature as the *hypostatizing* aim of ecclesial experience. The patristic theological notion of *hypostasis* has played a crucial role in contemporary Eastern Orthodox theology. Zizioulas argues that comprising the dynamic of "*ekstasis*" ("out of" stasis ["being"]), *hypostatization* means "movement towards communion," or growth into rightly-formed existence.[64] While the term primarily refers to a person's "way of being," he appropriates it to God's aim for creation.[65] He argues that this occurs through a "'chain' of hypostatic existence," where all creation becomes rightly connected to God; hence, hypostatized.[66] As "images of God" within this chain, the vocational purpose of humanity is the hypostatizing of creation.[67] Priming this vocation is "ecclesial existence."[68] Chan clarifies Zizioulas' doctrine like this: "The indwelling Spirit 'hypostatizes' believers, and through the church creation too is 'hypostatized.'"[69]

While I find Chan's ecclesial-centered pneumatology far unnecessarily ecclesial bound, I believe there is profound insight to this basic dictum characterizing his ecclesiology: in the church, the Spirit is present in ways not present in the world. For this prioritizes the soteriological role of ecclesial culture towards priming us for non-ecclesial culture engagement. In his roughly analogous

comparison between the epistemologies of Yong's identified "correlationist" and James K. A. Smith's identified "postliberal" approaches, Simo Frestadius similarly suggests we may helpfully enrich Yong's epistemology with Smith's "notion of habits being formed through" ecclesial "liturgy,"[70] also benchmarked by a stronger "Christological framework."[71] Frestadius' analysis closely parallels mine, which I am addressing through engaging Rowland's work in tandem with Chan's hypostatizing purposed ecclesiology, and later, with Smith's "apocalyptic reading" of culture. I also believe that Chan's stress ultimately strengthens Yong's "sanctified imagination" notion. It does so by inferring that through liturgies of ecclesial experience, the Spirit primes our imagination with morally-shaped epistemic resources for the renewing and making of human culture.

Frankfurt/Birmingham Culture Critique Methodologies

The third feature informs Yong's and Chan's respective guidelines with insights derived from the Frankfurt/Birmingham culture critique methodologies.[72] Substantiating this direction is Rowland's biographical analysis on Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI), whose work she finds antidotal to her argued weaknesses of the *Gaudium Et Spes* and the Conciliar *aggiornamento* agenda. She stresses that Ratzinger's work complemented John Paul II's (Karol Wojtyla) envisioned "civilization of love" for countering the contemporary "culture of death."[73] She also argues that Ratzinger strove to rectify Vatican II's accommodative approaches to global mass culture.[74] For these reasons, he engaged the 1920–30's neo-Marxist-influenced Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany (the Frankfurt School of critical cultural analysis),[75] finding their resources helpful towards engaging modernity and mass culture.[76]

From analyzing 1930–40's European-American industrialized culture, Frankfurt founders Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer argued that profit-aimed dominant classes co-opt consumer masses to systemic compliance for the aims of capitalist industrialized productivity. They achieve these aims through their apparatus of culture industries and mass culture,[77] which satiate consumers with a "false-consciousness,"[78] thereby masking their impoverished human growth as they subordinate themselves to the system's productivity requirements.[79]

Adorno and Horkheimer also posited that culture industries produce cultural artifacts for mass consumption, thus generated not from grassroots/folk culture, [80] but "from above" as mass-produced culture; hence, mass culture.[81] Lacking the creativity of grassroots cultural production, what results is, as earlier mentioned, an

impoverished human development.[82] Among the ways that Frankfurt theorists identified how the culture industries/mass culture complex stifles authentic folk culture, one I particularly find relevant is culture industry manufactured "kitsch." This refers to mass-produced cultural art and entertainment that while readily accessible to the subordinate consumer populace, narcotically impedes their capacity to critique aesthetic, intellectual, or moral qualities of culturally produced artifacts.[83]

Particularly helpful to my argued praxis is the work of John Fiske, representing what we might call the Frankfurt/Birmingham school of culture critique methodologies. Diverting from Frankfurt cultural critique theory, Fiske argued that we recognize more proactive roles that the mass consumer populace practices in response to the culture industries' production of mass culture.[84] Fiske stressed a strong contrast he draws between "popular" and "mass" culture," though arguing their interwoven roles within profit-driven mechanisms of industrialized society.[85] He thereby argued that the consuming populace implicitly wields a formidable countering-power, though contingent to how skilfully they creatively utilize mass culture towards transfiguring their original meanings into new ones that foster social transformation.[86]

Fiske shares Birmingham founder Stuart Hall's thesis that popular culture involves "power relations" between subordinates functioning as consumers, and a dominant system maintaining its hegemony over them via culture industries.[87] He similarly posits that culture industries satiate the consuming populace by producing a "mass culture"[88] of standardized "cultural commodities."[89] Yet again reflecting Hall's work, he argues that the populace often exercises counter-resistance by creating a "hegemonic zone" comprising "popular culture."[90]

Fiske illustrates this power struggle through production and consumption of jeans: "Tearing or bleaching one's jeans is a tactic of resistance," followed by as "a strategy of containment," an industry's incorporation of the new consumer produced artefact back "into the culture industry's production system."[91] He thus defines *popular culture* not simply as consumption, but "the *active process of generating and circulating meanings and pleasures* [italics mine] within a social system."[92] Hence, these meanings and pleasures are not those originally handed down by the dominant system but rather generated from below.

We can now consider how Frankfurt/Birmingham culture critique methodologies help forge Yong's and Chan's respective theologies towards the proposed model of mass culture engagement. Pertinent here is Chan's 2015 book, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, where he argues that contextual theologies should begin with the "ecclesial experience" of "folk"/"grassroots Christianity" as a foundational

theological resource,[93] for engaging "primal"/"folk" religiosity.[94] This he contrasts with alleged "elitist" top-down approaches that prescribe theological agendas while sidestepping attention to grassroots experience and concerns.[95] Though I would fault Chan's broad dismissal of Tillichean correlationist methodologies and similar inter-disciplinary approaches to theologizing,[96] I find that his preceding trajectory confirms Fiske's thesis that the subordinate consuming populace is the true driver towards social transformation, thereby functioning as an apt theory for conceptualizing a Pentecostal praxis of mass culture engagement.

Fiske's notion of "counter-practices" aids the suggested praxis by locating it within the hegemonic zone of popular culture.[97] There, a populace *practices* the "art of making do" with what a culture industry avails,[98] yet thereby undermine its attempted "power" to dominate.[99] He broadly conceptualizes three "practices"[100] the subordinate consuming populace uses to counter the dominant system operative through culture industries and their produced mass culture. Namely, 1. "resistance" (or "evasion");[101] 2. "discriminate" use;[102] and 3. "producing meaning" (meaning making).[103] Fiske calls these "popular tactics,[104] whereby the subordinate consuming populace "resists"[105] the dominant system by discriminately changing, disordering, and transforming original functions and/or meanings of mass produced cultural commodities,[106] thereby leading to progressive social action and transformation.[107]

Meanwhile, Yong develops his theology of culture by merging two evangelistic-"empowerment" trajectories he observes in early North American "Pentecostal-holiness spirituality and piety." Namely, a "from"-the-world "sectarian" and "toward"-the-world mode of cultural engagement.[108] He thus extrapolates these into a "redemptive cultural praxis" comprising on one hand, "from" acts of rejection/cleansing/countering culture, and on the other, "towards" acts of redeeming/affirming/making culture.[109] Working from the Pentecostal dualistic cosmology that frames the mass-popular culture interface as more precisely a warfare zone, my suggested praxis thus integrates Fiske's and Yong's respective practices into two broad categories, namely, apocalyptic and sapiential practices of cultural engagement. The following chart visualizes these, which I further clarify in the praxis' fourth feature.

Resistance World-rupture	Discriminate use World-embracing	Meaning making World-making
From-culture praxis	Toward-culture praxis	
Apocalyptic	Sapiential	

Conscientizing Praxis of Apocalyptic Culture Reading

The fourth feature tightly frames the praxis within Pentecostal dualistic/apocalyptic-themed cosmology, by appropriating Cheryl Bridges Johns' 1993 "conscientization" notion of Pentecostal formation, integrated to James K. A. Smith's practice of apocalyptic culture reading. Drawing from South American liberationist educator Paulo Freire's original conscientization model, Johns defined conscientization as "the process whereby persons become aware of the socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives," yet also "their ability to transform that reality."[110]

She argued that Pentecostalism functions as a "movement of conscientization"[111] through its participatory "oral/narrative modes of liturgy," socially inclusive ethos, and grassroots empowerment through experiences of Spirit baptism.[112] These dynamics thereby effect an "unveiling" of unjust social realities.[113] Johns' conscientization notion thus reaches towards Smith's "theology of culture"[114] comprising a practiced "cultural exegesis,"[115] otherwise called an "apocalyptic reading" of culture.[116] He builds his model from biblical apocalyptic literature, stressing how we ought to appreciate the genre's aim as not about "prediction" but rather "*unmasking*—unveiling the realties around us for what they really are."[117] Apocalyptic literature thus trains us towards becoming awake, that we may see the "idolatrous character of the contemporary institutions that constitute our own milieu."[118]

Smith challenges us towards apocalyptic readings of "cultural liturgies," where liturgy means "formative practices" that shape us[119] through "pedagogies of desire."[120] Hence, that we may discern the "cultural liturgies" that pedagogically form us in manners counter to the desires and *telos* that authentically Christian liturgy forms within us.[121] Examples include the "cultural institutions of the shopping mall and sports/entertainment venues and mediums."[122] I suggest that Smith's apocalyptic culture reading steers the true prophetic hope of Pentecostal spirituality from both aberrations of apocalyptic nihilism and triumphalistic-fueled narcissism, by retrieving both the tradition's eschatological themes and apocalyptic imagery, along with the eschata-passioned psyche that has historically imbued Pentecostals with a firm sense of historical destiny. These features I stress should function as core epistemic resources for engaging mass culture.

Resistance World-rupture	Discriminate use World-embracing	Meaning making World-making
From-culture praxis	Toward-culture praxis	
Apocalyptic	Sapiential	

A final step within this feature classifies the toward-culture praxis as sapiential culture readings. Doing so roots it appropriately to the Old Testament sapiential tradition, cosmologically anchored upon a theology of creation.[123] For Old Testament scholarship has demonstrated how this theology evokes a "creation spirituality"[124] operative within Old Testament covenantal life that encouraged integration of cultural items from cultural contexts and knowledge domains far beyond the immediate liturgical context of faith formation.[125]

Conclusion

Working from Pentecostalism's dualistic/apocalyptic-themed cosmology and Yong's and Chan's contrasting pneumatologies, I have delineated a theological model for methodically guiding Pentecostal cultural engagement. The model suggests ways of doing so that are responsive to the metaphysical realities operative within and through the global economic complex that characterizes our twenty-first-century "post-" context. To recap, this model of Pentecostal conscientizing praxis of mass culture engagement and culture-making comprises four features. The first frames the Yong/Chan synthesis within Rowland's critique of the Vatican II *Gaudium Et Spes* and *aggiornamento* agenda. The second feature appropriates her argument that culture engagement with modernity requires a strong moral forming ecclesial culture. This feature thus complements Yong's creation-charged pneumatology with Chan's Eastern Orthodox-informed, "hypostatizing"-purposed ecclesiology. The third feature retrieves insights from the Frankfurt/Birmingham culture critique approach. The fourth feature tightly frames the praxis within Pentecostal dualistic cosmology by appropriating Johns' "conscientization" notion of Pentecostal formation, integrated to Smith's practice of apocalyptic culture reading.

This model warrants reflection on contemporary populism. As a "political force" often emerging from popular culture,[126] grassroots populism comprises an uncanny mobilizing power towards countering perceived hegemonic forces.[127] Contemporary populism worldwide has often demonstrated "three core features: *anti-establishment*, *authoritarianism*, and *nativism*."[128] One theory accounting for the xenophobic/mono-cultural nationalism that has commonly characterized it is the "cultural backlash thesis," which roots these drives to nostalgic longings for "retro norms."[129] So I often wonder how even amongst Pentecostals worldwide, contemporary populism has comprised what Miroslav Volf describes as the "deadly logic" of "politics of purity." By this he refers

to longings for "pristine purity of our linguistic, religious, or cultural past,"[130] thereby aiming for the removal of human "otherness."[131]

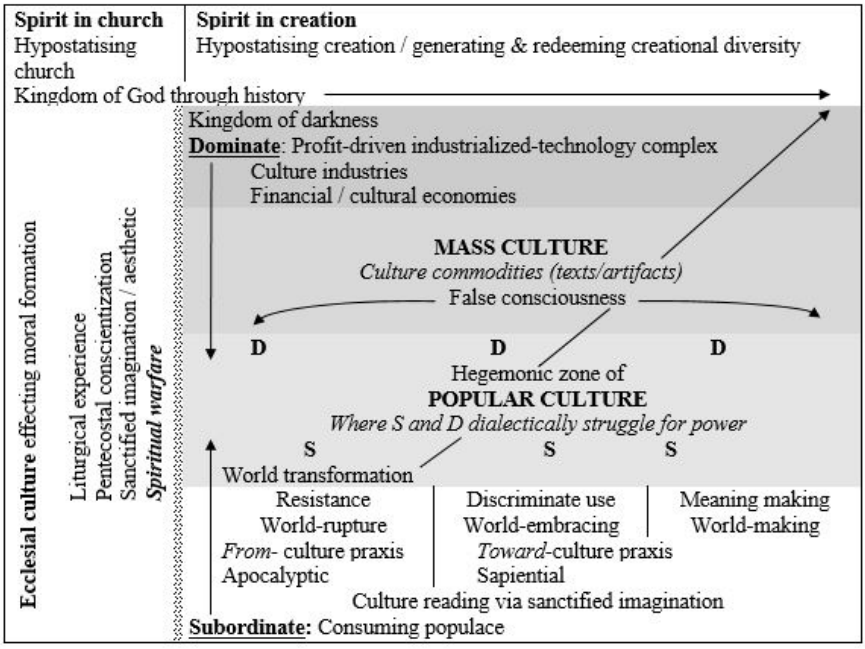
So how might the model provide us direction? Here I find help from Wolfgang Vondey's insistence that the "core theological symbol of Pentecostal theology" is, "Pentecost."[132] For as postcolonial theological readings have well-articulated, the "Babel-Pentecost promise-fulfilment" relation signified God's judgement against homogenization and mandated blessing towards differentiation—seminally displayed through the "many tongues" of Pentecostal outpouring.[133] Similarly, Frank Macchia stresses how the "tongues of Pentecost" functions as "*prodigium*" of our present "fragmentation," yet "promise of reconciliation," through which the Holy Spirit is calling us to encounter and embrace one another's cultural "diversity."[134] So as Daniella Augustine stresses, the "Spirit of Pentecost" wills nothing less than God's judgment against "the spirits of racism, sexism, tribalism/ethnocentrism, and nationalism" as "social pathologies." For through the "many tongues" of Pentecost, "The Spirit reveals the sacrament of the other, even the enemy . . . and the essentiality of loving them as the means to loving God."[135]

I would concede that a theologically robust model for popular culture analysis involves listening to prophetic elements operative through its varied expressions,[136] including contemporary populism. Yet this argued praxis of mass culture engagement urges a thick ecclesial and moral-forming culture that fosters reconciliatory acts of heterogeneous embrace with differentiated otherness. Herein lies the conscientizing outcome of Pentecostal spirituality.

So to conclude, how might we discern and hear what God's Spirit might somewhere within the chaos of grassroots populism speak resonating cries for new creation? Let me suggest some helpful themes emerging from forging together a Roman Catholic "eucharistic theory of culture"[137] and Pentecostal philosophical reflections on tongues speech as the language of resistance and subversion that is reaching beyond present age hegemonic regimes of social order.[138] This means seeking out even within present day populism some hard labored resistance against the dominant global economic complex, reflect on how we might remake it, and then epicletically offer it back to God within the prophetic cacophony of tongues that generates the subversive culture of his coming kingdom. Where speaking in tongues means the liturgical "language of resistance"[139] that prophesies a shared tilled land where not one but "multiple languages" flourish.[140] Where speaking in tongues prophesies a shared love-labored land; a land where we who through the Spirit of Jesus sojourn as healing hosts to "the other." Where on a welcoming land

as healing hosts to "the other," we give and receive the many gifts of Pentecost that makes holy the ground we walk on the way to peace.

Appendix: Pentecostal Conscientizing Praxis Of Mass Culture Engagement



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Notes

[1] I rely here on the common practice within Pentecostal scholarship that uses Roland Robertson's "glocalization" term (*Globalization, Social Theory and Global Culture* [London: Sage, 1992], 73) for understanding the closely bounded, Pentecostalism-globalization relation; moreover describing how localized and global expressions of Pentecostalism dialectically

engage one another; Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostalism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), 25–26.

[2] Grant Wacker described this as the Pentecostal "pragmatic impulse," whereby Pentecostals have shown themselves highly adept towards "working within the social and cultural expectations" or resources available within a setting; *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 10–13.

[3] Allan H. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 198.

[4] Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 283; idem, "The Dynamics of Global Pentecostalism: Origins, Motivations and Future," in *Spirit of God: Christian Renewal in the Community of Faith*, eds. Jeffrey W. Barbeau and Beth Felker Jones (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2015), 119–20.

[5] Anderson, "The Dynamics of Global Pentecostalism," 115–16, 119–21; idem, "The Transformation of World Christianity: Secularization, Globalization and the Growth of Pentecostalism," plenary paper presented at the Society for Pentecostal Studies 44th Annual Meeting, Southeastern University, Lakeland, Florida, 6 March 2015.

[6] Birgit Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Globalization," in *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, eds. Allan H. Anderson, Michael Bergunder, André Droogers, and Cornelis van der Laan (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010), 114; André Droogers, "The Cultural Dimension of Pentecostalism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Pentecostalism*, eds. Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., and Amos Yong (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 196.

[7] Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Globalization," 117–18; Droogers, "The Cultural Dimension of Pentecostalism," 196, 201.

[8] Droogers, "The Cultural Dimension of Pentecostalism," 203–8.

[9] Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Globalization," 120–21.

[10] Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Globalization," 123–24.

[11] This thus also accounts for why the prosperity gospel exists as an indelible aspect of world Pentecostalism; Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Globalization," 114, 118, 126.

[12] Meyer, "Pentecostalism and Globalization," 119.

[13] Jacques Ellul, *The Technological System*, trans. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: The Continuum Publishing Corporation, 1977, 1980), 76–121, esp. 92–93.

[14] Graham Ward, *The Politics of Discipleship: Becoming Postmaterial Citizens* (Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2009), 83, 97.

[15] Ward, *The Politics of Discipleship*, 79, 115–16, 232–33.

[16] Ward, *The Politics of Discipleship*, 181–84, 200–1.

[17] Ward, *The Politics of Discipleship*, 181–84, 279.

[18] Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (Reading: Addison Wesley, 1995; Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2001), 259–60.

[19] Amos Yong, *In the Days of Caesar: Pentecostalism and Political Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010), 180.

[20] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 181.

[21] Simon Chan, "Mother Church: Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology," *Pneuma* 22:2 (Fall 2000), 202–3; idem, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 21 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 109–14; idem, "The Church and the Development of Doctrine," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13:1 (2004), 74–75; idem, "Jesus as Spirit-baptizer: Its Significance for Pentecostal Ecclesiology," in *Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology: The Church and the Fivefold Gospel*, ed. John Christopher Thomas (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2010), 147–48; idem, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology: An Essay on the Development of Doctrine*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 38 (Dorset: Deo Publishing, 2011), 22–29; idem, *Grassroots Asian Theology: Thinking the Faith from the Ground Up* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2014), 133–56.

[22] Chan, "Mother Church," 202–3; idem, *Pentecostal Theology*, 111-–12; idem, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 30–33.

[23] Chan, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 30–31, 119.

[24] This cosmology resonates with "folk religion" worldwide and its primal assumption about a "spirit world" comprising actively opposing spiritual powers; Chan, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 31–32, 61, 149–50, 156.

[25] Chan, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 104, 119–20.

[26] Hence, reflecting the"world-embracing" mode towards culture; Chan, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 30–33, 41–42, 61–62, 95–96.

[27] Yong often conceptualizes his creation-charged pneumatology as a "foundational pneumatology"; *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2002), 109–12; idem, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 44–45, 130–32; idem, *The Spirit Poured Out*, 267–302; idem, "Poured Out on All Flesh: The Spirit, World Pentecostalism, and the Renewal of Theology and Praxis in the 21st Century," *PentecoStudies*, 6:1 (2007), 28–30; idem, "*Creatio Spiritus* and the Spirit of Christ: Toward a Trinitarian Theology of Creation," in *Spirit of God: Christian Renewal in the Community of Faith*, 168–82.

[28] Amos Yong, "From Every Tribe, Language, People, and Nation: Diaspora, Hybridity, and the Coming Reign of God," in *Global Diasporas and Mission*, eds., Chandler H. Im and Amos Yong, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series, vol. 23 (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2014), 253–61; idem, *The Future of Evangelical Theology: Soundings from the Asian American Diaspora* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2014), 17–31, 235–49.

[29] Amos Yong, "'As the Spirit Gives Utterance . . .' Pentecost, Intra-Christian Ecumenism and the Wider Oikoumene," in *The Dialogical Spirit: Christian Reason and Theological Method in the Third Millennium* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2014), 45–46 (originally published in *International Review of Mission* 92:366 [July 2003], 299–314).

[30] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 109–17.

[31] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 121–65, esp. 151–52.

[32] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 114. In this praxis, "politics" reflects the term *polis*, referring to the "public sphere" where Christian life is practiced; 1.

[33] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 195–99.

[34] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 201.

[35] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 201; he reiterates these themes in *The Future of Evangelical Theology*, 135–40, and "Pluralism, Secularism and Pentecost: Newbigin-ings for *Mission Trinitatis* in a New Century," in *The Gospel and Pluralism Today: Reassessing Lesslie Newbigin in the 21st Century*, eds. Scott W. Sunquist and Amos Yong (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2015), 158.

[36] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 114, 205, 208.

[37] See my book review: Amos Yong, *The Dialogical Spirit: Christian Reason and Theological Method in the Third Millennium* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2014); idem, *The Missiological Spirit: Christian Mission Theology in the Third Millennium Global Context* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2014), in *The Pentecostal Educator* 3:1 (Spring 2016), 42.

[38] Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out*, 116, 124–25; idem, *The Future of Evangelical Theology*, 54–56, 128–29. Chan meanwhile has long waged disapproval against "Creator Spiritus" pneumatologies; "Mother Church," 196–97; idem, *Pentecostal Theology*, 110–14; idem, "The Church and the Development of Doctrine," 74–75; idem, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 14–21; idem, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 131–36.

[39] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 199; see also idem, "Pluralism, Secularism," 159–70.

[40] Communio movement stressing the theological *ressourcement* ("return to the sources") methodology includes Balthasar, de Lubac, John Paul II, Benedict XVI; Tracey Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition: After Vatican* II (New York: Routledge, 2003), ix, 6–7.

[41] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 19.

[42] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 19.

[43] R. Jared Staudt, "Vatican II and the New Evangelization: The Importance of Culture and Dialogue," *National Catholic Register*, 15 May 2016, 1, http://www.ncregister.com/site/article/vatican-ii-and-the-new-evangelization (21 May 2016).

[44] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 20–21, 72–73.

[45] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 2, 11, 35, 159–61, 163, 168.

[46] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 26, 72, 83–84, 168.

[47] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 2, 39–42.

[48] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 72; citing *Gaudium Et Spes* ("Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World"), 7 December 1965, no. 60, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html# (16 June 2016).

[49] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 72, referring to her fourth chapter theme ("'Mass Culture' and the 'Right to Culture'").

[50] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 3, 5, 20–21, 32–34, 78, 80–84, 90.

[51] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 74.

[52] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 77.

[53] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 21, 80–81, 160–61.

[54] Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition*, 77–78.

[55] Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community*, 59–72, 300–5.

[56] Amos Yong, "Primed for the Spirit: Creation, Redemption, and the Missio Spiritus," in *The Missiological Spirit*, 193.

[57] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 151–65.

[58] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 186–94; see also idem, "The Church and Mission Theology in a Post-Constantinian Era: Soundings from the Anglo-American Frontier," in *The Missiological Spirit*, 178–79.

[59] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 210. Namely, John Howard Yoder's Anabaptist "political ecclesiology," Stanley Hauerwas' "church as colony" model, and the New Monasticism movement; 186–94. See also Amos Yong, "The Church and Mission Theology in a Post-Constantinian Era: Soundings from the Anglo-American Frontier," in *The Missiological Spirit*, 178–79.

[60] Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 2.

[61] Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 8.

[62] Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, 110; idem, "Mother Church," 197–98; idem, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 136–37, 144.

[63] Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 25.

[64] John D. Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, eds. John D. Zizioulas and P. McPartlan (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 214.

[65] Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, 23.

[66] Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, 67; Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 28.

[67] Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, 67.

[68] Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness*, 75–76.

[69] Chan, *Pentecostal Ecclesiology*, 29. Creation thus receives its redemption (Rom 8:21) through the active priesthood of hypostatized humanity (28–29). As Chan further stresses in his *Asian Grassroots Theology* text, it is thus through the Church that as people become hypostatized into true personhood, the Spirit pursues the "hypostatization" of "nonhuman creation"; *Asian Grassroots Theology*, 45, 143–44, 156.

[70] Simo Frestadius, "In Search of a 'Pentecostal' Epistemology: Comparing the Contributions of Amos Yong and James K. A. Smith," *Pneuma* 38 (2016), 103. Frestadius describes Yong's epistemology as a "pneumatological correlationism"; 99.

[71] Frestadius, "In Search of a 'Pentecostal' Epistemology," 113. Frestadius (103) notes however that Yong has been recently moving more in this direction, evidenced in Amos Yong with Jonathan A. Anderson, *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2014), ch. 12; see also Yong, *The Dialogical Spirit*, 285.

[72] Pamela Holmes ("Paul Tillich, Pentecostalism, and the Early Frankfurt School: A Critical Constellation," in *Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology: Spiritual Presence & Spiritual Power*, eds. Nimi Wariboko and Amos Yong [Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2015], 194–97) similarly argues the Frankfurt School's relevancy towards evoking the prophetic orientation of Pentecostal spirituality that can counter its too often uncritical accommodation to the contemporary "capitalist culture" status quo.

[73] Tracey Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith: The Theology of Pope Benedict XVI* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 9, 160; cf. idem, "Gospel and Culture after Vatican II: John Paul II

and Benedict XVI," *ABC Religion and Ethics*, 13 October 2012, n.p., http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2012/10/13/3610041.htm (6 December 2016).

[74] Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith*, 26–27. This resolve accounted for his selected papal name, Benedict, signifying "his belief that Western culture needs a new Benedictine moment, where the 'banality of mass culture' would 'be transcended by islands of spiritual excellence'"; 39.

[75] Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith*, 75. Ratzinger drew specifically from its notable figures such as Ernst Bloch (1885–1977), Max Horkheimer (1895–1973), and Theodor Adorno (1903–1969); 72.

[76] Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith*, 75. This is shown in his *Spe Salvi* ("Saved by Hope") encyclical, *Saved by Hope* (see nos. 22 and 42, and 43) where he dialogues with Frankfurt founders Max Horkheimer's and Theodor Adorno's work as he articulates his vision of Christian hope in contrast to mass culture versions of hope; *Spe Salvi*, 30 November 2007, n.p., http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi.html (6 December 2016). See Gerald O'Collins, "Saved by Hope: Insights from Pope Benedict's New Encyclical," *American Magazine*, 21 January 2008, n.p., http://www.americamagazine.org/issue/642/article/saved-hope (6 December 2016).

[77] Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception," in *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. by Edmund Jephcott (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002; originally published 1947), 94–136; Theodor Adorno, "Culture Industry Reconsidered," in *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, ed. J. M. Bernstein (London: Routledge, 1991), 96–97, 106.

[78] Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory: Selected Essays,* trans. by Matthew J. O'Connell et al. (New York: The Continuum Publishing Co., 2002), 198.

[79] Horkheimer and Adorno, "The Culture Industry," 94–136.

[80] "Folk culture, derived from the German word *volk* for 'people,' 'common people,' or 'the masses,' signals a form of culture thought to originate from the elusive category 'the people.' It is often regarded as the culture *made by* or *of* 'the people' and, for this reason, has been though to serve the needs and interest of its producers"; Omayra Cruz and Raiford Guines, "Entangling the Popular: An Introduction to Popular Culture: A Reader," in *Popular Culture: A Reader*, eds. Raiford Guins and Omayra Zaragoza Cruz (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 5. See also Kelton Cobb, *The Blackwell Guide to Theology and Popular Culture* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 46–47.

[81] Adorno, "Culture Industry Reconsidered," 98–99.

[82] Horkheimer and Adorno, "The Culture Industry," 94–136; Adorno, "Culture Industry Reconsidered," 106.

[83] Dwight Macdonald, "A Theory of Mass Culture," in *Popular Culture: A Reader*, 40–42, 44–46. Macdonald notes (40) that Clement Greenburg first coined the term *kitsch* in his essay, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review* 6:5 (1939), 34-49, while also citing (46) Adorno's famous analysis ("On Popular Music," *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science* 1 [1941], 42–49) on *kitsch* elements in mass culture music.

[84] John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture* (London: Routledge, 1989), 20–21; Cobb, *The Blackwell Guide to Theology and Popular Culture,* 54.

[85] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 23.

[86] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 21, 160–64, 177, 190–94.

[87] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 19.

[88] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 20; cf. 176–77.

[89] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 176–77.

[90] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 20–21. Stuart Hall theorized three methodological concepts integral to the Birmingham approach: the notions of "hegemony," "dialect of cultural struggle," and "containment/resistance"; "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular,'" in *Popular Culture*, 65. Hence, the Birmingham School theorized that whereas dominant societal groups persuade the mass consumer market through culture industries and its production of mass culture, the mass consumer populace exercises dissenting counter-resistance. This dialectic of negotiating processes creates the "hegemonic zone" that we can understand as "popular culture" (68–69). See also Cobb, *The Blackwell Guide to Theology and Popular Culture*, 54–56, 69; Gordon Lynch, *Understanding Theology and Popular Culture* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 11.

[91] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 29.

[92] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 23.

[93] Chan, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 7–8, 28–35, 45–46.

[94] Chan, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 15–18, 31–35, 47–48, 59–62, 95–96.

[95] Chan, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 7, 18, 26–28, 30–35.

[96] Chan, *Grassroots Asian Theology*, 7, 24–26, 30, 35.

[97] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 47.

[98] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 15, 27–28.

[99] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 47.

[100] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 45.

[101] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 26–47.

[102] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 129–30.

[103] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 26–47.

[104] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 20–21. Fiske often uses similar terminology, which he derives from Michel de Certeau (*The Practice of Everyday Life* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984], see 34–40), who describes the practices of popular culture through military metaphors, likening the actions of subordinate consumers to that of "guerrilla tactics," referring to those fighting from below a dominant force.

[105] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 19, 27, 33–33.

[106] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 26–27.

[107] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 163, 192–93.

[108] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 167–72, 177.

[109] Yong, *In the Days of Caesar*, 195, 201, 206–10.

[110] Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy among the Oppressed* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 13.

[111] Johns, *Pentecostal Formation*, 62, 108–10.

[112] Johns, *Pentecostal Formation*, 65–96, 138–39.

[113] Johns, *Pentecostal Formation* 13.

[114] James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, vol. 1, Cultural Liturgies (Grand Rapids: BakerAcademic, 2009), 91.

[115] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 89.

[116] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 23, 89–93*;* idem, *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2016), 27–46.

[117] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 92; idem, *You Are What You Love*, 39–40.

[118] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 92.

[119] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 24; idem, *You Are What You Love*, xii.

[120] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 24; idem, *You Are What You Love*, 21.

[121] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 24–25; idem, *You Are What You Love*, 22, 39.

[122] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 93–110; idem, *You Are What You Love*, 41–45.

[123] Walter Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1967), 2:111; Roland E. Murphy, *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids; Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), 114, 118; Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 680–81, 685.

[124] Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1962), 1:428; Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 2:111; Murphy, *Tree of Life*, 114, 118; Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 680–81, 685.

[125] Roland E. Murphy, "Wisdom in the OT," *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, 1992), 6:922, 925.

[126] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 159.

[127] Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 165, 177, 190–94.

[128] Ronald F. Inglehart and Pippa Norris, "Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash," *Faculty Research Working Paper Series*, Harvard Kennedy School, August 2016, 6–7, https://research.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/citation.aspx?PubId=11325 (28 December 2016). These features can be further described as belief in the virtue of "ordinary people" in contrast to a perceived corrupt/elitist establishment; authoritarian leanings towards charismatic leadership that provides resonance to their aspirations; "xenophobic nationalism" or "mono-culturalism over multiculturalism," "national self-interest over international cooperation," "closed borders over the free flow of peoples, ideas, labor, and capital," and "traditionalism over progressive and liberal social values."

[129] Inglehart and Norris, "Trump, Brexit," 14–15.

[130] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 74.

[131] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 130.

[132] Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostal Theology: Living the Full Gospel* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2017), 1, 11.

[133] J. Severino Croatto, "A Reading of the Story of the Tower of Babel from the Perspective of Non-identity: Genesis 11:1–9 in the Context of Its Production," in *Teaching the Bible: The Discourse and Politics of Biblical Pedagogy*, eds. Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1998); Hinne Wagenaar, "Babel, Jerusalem, and Kumba: Missiological Reflections on Genesis 11:1–19 and Acts 2:1–13," *International Review of Mission* 92:366 (2003), 406–21, esp. 411–13.

[134] Frank D. Macchia, "The Tongues of Pentecost: A Pentecostal Perspective on the Promise and Challenge of Pentecostal/Roman Catholic Dialogue," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 35:1 (Winter 1998), 1, 7, 14.

[135] Daniela C. Augustine, *The Spirit and the Common God: Shared Flourishing in the Image of God* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019), 9–10.

[136] Lynch, *Understanding Theology and Popular Culture*, 102–3.

[137] Peter J. Leithart, "A Eucharistic Theory of Culture," *First Things*, 13 April 2016, n.p., https://www.firstthings.com/blogs/leithart/2016/04/a-eucharistic-theory-of-culture (15 May 2016).

[138] Here I am bringing together Smith's philosophy of language stressing tongues speech as "resistance" ("A Pentecostal Contribution to the Philosophy of Language," in *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy* [Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2010], 123–50, esp. 146–50) and Ekaputra Tupamahu's similar proposed portrayal of tongues speech as "subversion": "Tongues as a Site of Subversion: An Analysis from the Perspective of Postcolonial Politics of Language," *Pneuma* 38 (2016), 293–311.

[139] Smith, *Thinking in Tongues*, 146–50.

[140] Tupamahu, "Tongues as a Site of Subversion," 310–11.

Pentecost*al* Culture, or Pentecost *of* Culture?

Transformation, Paradigms, Power, Unity

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Abstract

This article will explore the relationship between Pentecostals and the broader cultures we inhabit. It will acknowledge that, like all religion, Pentecostalism can tend to create a culture within itself (a "Pentecost*al* culture"), which at times effects a withdrawal of its adherents from the surrounding world. This necessitates a conscious decision, first to navigate away from that tendency where it exists, and then to define a positive role for Pentecostalism within culture, viz., the transformation of civilization (a "Pentecost *of* culture"). Thereby the article proposes a more extensive definition of the baptism of the Spirit, looks at how God is already impacting cultures through the contemporary Kingdom-transformation movements of neo-Pentecostalism, and finally, highlights and promotes the specific culturally-transformative contributions already within the essence of Pentecostalism—the ability to change paradigms, the manifestation of supernatural power, and the ecumenical modeling of unity.

Introduction

When I was in ministry school, three required systematic theology courses were offered also from a cross-cultural perspective. I eagerly chose that option because I have an interest in contemplating the economy of God from as wide an angle as possible—a viewpoint that certainly could not omit consideration of what H.

Richard Niebuhr called "the double wrestle of the church with its Lord and with the cultural society with which it lives in symbiosis."[1] Each of those courses included an exploration of exactly that; but that quest also uncovered the fact that all religion—Christianity included—can have a tendency to *create a culture within itself*, which at times effects a withdrawal of its adherents from the world around them. A conscious decision must thereby be made, first to navigate from that tendency where it exists, and then to define a positive role for our religion within culture, if Christianity is to offer the pathway of salvation to the world.

That is what this article will attempt to accomplish, as specifically applied to Pentecostalism.[2] It will first explore the inclination of creating a Pentecost*al* culture, then encourage us to decide for a "Pentecost *of* culture" in which Pentecostalism—like all of Christianity—has the specific assignment of transforming civilization around us. As corollaries, it will propose a more extensive definition of the baptism of the Spirit, look at how God is already impacting cultures through the contemporary "Transformation" movements of neo-Pentecostalism, and finally, highlight and promote the specific culturally-transformative contributions already within the essence of Pentecostalism—the ability to change paradigms, the manifestation of supernatural power, and the strength of ecumenical unity.

Religion and Culture

Let us start by exploring the general tendency of religion to form a culture of its own. Here we are indebted to the sociology, philosophy, and anthropology of religion; in this study the work of Peter Berger, a sociologist who has applied sociological theory to the phenomenon of religion, will be specifically helpful.[3]

Berger begins with the fact that human beings occupy a distinct position in creation. Unlike the rest of the "animal kingdom" we do not operate primarily on firmly directed drives called "instincts," nor (like animals) is our world made psychologically inhabitable solely because of instinctual drive. Human life takes shape only by our intentional activity—we participate in making the world inhabitable for ourselves. Humanly created "culture," then, is what provides the structures supporting the psychological and social stability we would lack if left to our biological instincts alone. Society holds a privileged position as a part of culture because of the anthropological fact that humans are essentially social beings.

This "world-construction" consists of three dynamics. First, because we are not self-made by instinct, "externalization" happens as we extend ourselves into the

world through products and activities, material and non-material. This is the "stuff" out of which culture is made, varying of course with the particular humans making it. "Objectivation" refers to the fact that this externalized product of humans called "culture" then has an existence of its own. Hence we can talk about an individual experiencing culture as other-than-self, and even of having a "relationship to" culture. "Internalization" is that very relationship-process by which individuals or groups integrate their culture into their own subjective identity. This is how we often can say that a human is "a product of" his or her culture. Externalization, objectivation, and internalization.

Because of these dynamics, material or non-material elements of culture, once produced, cannot so easily be changed by those in relationship with them. These elements can even be said to exert themselves upon adherents of that culture,[4] at times in ways unforeseen by their originators or not agreeable to some in that culture.[5]

Now given that culture is a construct of human beings, and human lives do in fact change, culture itself is ultimately unstable and needs its own back-up system of maintenance, or "legitimation." This is what protects it from the threat of chaos when life is altered. But, so important is this need, that

> . . . when the nomos [meaningful order] is taken for granted as appertaining to the "nature of things," . . . it is endowed with a stability deriving from more powerful sources than the historical efforts of human beings.[6]

And, "It is at this point that religion enters significantly into our argument."[7] Why? Because religion provides the ultimate stability to the two aforementioned functions of any culture, "world-construction" and "world maintenance." As to the first:

> Every human society is an enterprise of world-building. Religion occupies a distinctive place in this enterprise.[8]

> Religion is the human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established.[9]

In other words, it represents the deepest level of world-construction. How? It articulates the world's blueprints of meaning from the god(s)—the ultimate "more powerful source" of that culture. As to "world-maintenance" or "legitimation":

> Religion thus serves to maintain the reality of that socially constructed world within which men exist in their everyday lives.[10]

> . . . religion has been the historically most widespread and effective instrument of legitimation.[11]

It fulfills this function because it defines how the culture is supported by that same ultimate "more powerful source"—its god(s). Finally, in regard to both functions of world-construction and world-maintenance,

> Religious ritual has been a crucial instrument of this process of "reminding." Again and again it "makes present" to those who participate in it the fundamental reality-definitions and their appropriate legitimations.[12]

Now because of "internalization"—the fact that the aspects of culture become part of the very identity of its members—it is easy to see why there exists a built-in tension when the instability of human experience calls for culture to change with it. If, then, religion functions as the deepest aspect of an individual's internalized world and its maintenance, it is likewise easy to understand why religion is a candidate for becoming an end in itself, for taking on a life of its own, and even for being, as we spoke of above, an element of culture "exerting itself upon its adherents, at times in ways unforeseen by its originators or not agreeable to some in that culture."

> Religious legitimations arise from human activity, but once crystallized into complexes of meaning that become part of a religious tradition they can attain a measure of autonomy as against this activity. Indeed they may even *act back upon* actions in everyday life, transforming the latter, sometimes radically.[13]

Religion will even play the role of a built-in self-defense when culture is under external pressure that interrupts and threatens the "world" it constructed—whether literally, or in the subjective perceptions of its adherents.[14]

Simply put, religion can in fact be so identified with its culture that its adherents confuse one for the other. As definer of reality, it has become the social reality itself. The structures and processes that emerge because of religion evolve into a "plausibility structure"[15]—i.e., a sociocultural base for a meaning so fundamental to most that they would never think of questioning it, even

unconsciously. An offensive against religion becomes an offensive against its culture; an offensive against culture becomes an offensive against its religion. Religion has become a culture of itself.[16]

"Pentecost*al* Culture"

Pentecostalism is not exempt from this proclivity. To begin with, the nature of Judaeo-Christianity is one of distinction from the rest of the world and its systems ("holiness"). This heightens its tendency to create a *culture of its own*, with but a small step to then use it as a means of withdrawal from the dominant culture. At times throughout history Christians have been known to "live in their own little world," the "plausibility structure" of which was our religion; Pentecostal Christians are no exception.

Secondly, though Pentecostalism rightfully claims that it is a restoration of an aspect of original Christianity, one would be naive to ignore the fact that even a *re*appearance of biblical realities occurs within a flow of centuries of development, whether for good or bad. And each era carries its own "baggage"—even for a future restoration movement.[17] Revival though it was, the inbreak of Pentecostalism was nevertheless located in a history of Christianity in which there had been a centuries-old tendency to reject the surrounding culture altogether. Starting in the post-apostolic age with Tertullian, then flowering in the monastic movement, Christianity never totally discarded the belief that a solution to the dilemma presented by the world is for Christianity to isolate from it. Later on the Mennonites took up that same solution.[18] Any brand of Christianity has been susceptible to this historical trend lurking as a potential answer to be adopted in whatever degree seemingly suitable.

Pentecostalism adopted that answer as well, and has inclined toward creating its own culture as a "plausibility structure" through several behavioral, liturgical, and theological tendencies. As a result, the more Pentecostalism has settled in these and similar characteristics, the more it too can be said to have created a culture within itself, even to the point of effecting a withdrawal of its adherents from the world around them.

A Pentecost *of* Culture

Both Scripture and contemporary experience, however, show that the Holy Spirit is not, nor has ever been, satisfied being a prisoner of religious culture—even if it is

Pentecostal culture! Indeed, from the very beginning, it was God's design that human culture be aligned to his purposes, and that every bit of it be a reflection of his presence. Judaeo-Christianity reserves the position of "creator" to God himself. He is the only "world-maker"; humans are at best his delegated agents, and any "externalizations" which are "objectified" in the human process of world-making are meant to be inspired and governed by him. Even the variety of nations and their respective cultures were meant to be a manifestation of divine design (cf. Deut 32:8, and especially Acts 17:26–27). It was precisely and only because this design was resisted that the Babel affair occurred in Genesis 11 and God then had to select a man and call him *out of* his culture in Genesis 12. If human culture would have remained within its position of being the "externalization" and "objectification"—i.e., embodiment—of God's intentions, he would not have had to create a distinct culture out of Abram and his family.

Yet in the very words of Abram's vocation, God made it clear that he intended not to isolate this new culture, but to raise it up and use it for the benefit of all the rest:

> I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. . . .
> All the families of the earth will find blessing in you. (Gen 12:2–3, NABRE)

The same thought is reflected in Psalm 67, in which the blessing of the Lord is invoked "on us" (v. 1)—i.e., Abraham's nation—but then is followed by its immediate consequence:

> For then the earth will acknowledge your ways
> and all the nations will know of your power to save.
> Let the nations praise you, O God,
> let all the nations praise you! (vv. 2–3) [19]

Likewise, the Acts 2 moment that we Pentecostals celebrate as our trademark was not limited to an "Upper Room experience" or a personal spiritual blessing. No! It immediately flowed out of the Upper Room and began to accomplish its ultimate purpose by drawing the various cultures symbolically represented in Jerusalem for the Feast, and then prophetically manifesting the fulfillment of Genesis 12's vision—the reversal of the Babel crisis (prophetically exhibited through the supernatural understanding of glossolalia), and the assembly of all cultures unto the purposes of God by the people of Abraham.

Subsequent Christian reflection by the Apostle Paul would spell out even more directly that by means of Jesus' death and resurrection-victory, God intended to reconcile not only individual souls to himself and his purposes, but "every*thing* on earth" (Col 1:20). John writes with the same sweeping viewpoint. John 3:16 is so often associated with soul-winning that we miss its even more comprehensive scope. "The world" that God *so* loves is a place occupied by not only humans, but by the "externalized" and "objectified" cultures humans have need to create.[20] Likewise, "the world" can certainly mean the world "as a whole"—i.e., collectively instead of distributively (a perspective often missed because of Western emphasis on individuality). If we accept this interpretation, we can also rightfully posit that Jesus meant more than "souls" when he said, "for the Son of Man has come to seek out and save what was lost" (Luke 19:10). God's purposes will reach their fulfillment, then, not with the elimination of nations and their cultures, but by their integration, as the kings of those nations and cultures bring their treasures into the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:24), and the kingdom of this world has actually "*become* the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ" (Rev 11:15, italics mine). All the more amazing in that John minces no words about this world being under a rule of darkness, a darkness in which God's people must be careful not to participate. In simpler words, God is not puritanical; though sin repulses him, neither does he desire to "throw the baby out with the bath water" when it comes to the world he created and wants to save. Culture matters as much to God as the people who "externalize" it.

Christianity, then, has a role within culture. In answer to the question of the relationship between Pentecostals and the broader culture, a conscious decision must be made to steer away from contentment with our own Pentecost*al* culture, and dare to trail-blaze what we will here call "a Pentecost *of* culture."

But just how do we wrap our minds around that?

Transformation

The contemporary word coined by one neo-Pentecostal movement to describe the activity of Christianity upon and within culture is "transformation." This movement encourages us to decide that anything Pentecostal—like all of Christianity—has the specific assignment of transforming society and the world around us, and would propose that the relationship between the church (and thus Pentecostalism) and the surrounding culture is to be one of "Kingdom-transformation."

These assertions are biblically-based, and easy to understand. We pray so often in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, *on earth* . . . ." That means here and now, not only "in the sky, by and by." And lest we get lost in theological hair-splitting, the next phrase of that prayer defines what God's will looks like when it is done on earth: ". . . as it is in heaven." Jesus' movement is meant to bring as much heaven to earth as possible. That is what we mean by "transformation."

Jesus also called his followers the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt 5:13, 14). The purpose and nature of salt is to change anything with which it comes in contact. Jesus even goes so far as to say that if salt is not fulfilling this purpose, we regard it as useless enough to be discarded (5:13). Likewise, the nature of light is to replace darkness, and no one would think to hide it away when darkness needs to be replaced (5:15). In another familiar verse we are told that in the spirit realm, anything that is of light shines forth in such a way that it conquers darkness (John 1:5). "In the same way," Jesus said, "your light *must* shine in the sight of men" (Matt 5:16, italics mine).

By these pithy Scriptural statements, one can reasonably conclude that the transformation of the world is a defining characteristic for the identity of Jesus' disciples. And we need not relegate this way of thinking only to some recent movement. As far back as 1965 at the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church echoed these very thoughts at the beginning of its watershed document on the relationship between the church and the world:

> For the Council yearns to explain to everyone how it conceives of the presence and activity of the Church in the world of today. Therefore, the Council focuses its attention on the world of men, the whole human family along with the sum of those realities in the midst of which it lives. It gazes upon that world which is the theater of man's history, and carries the marks of his energies, his tragedies, and his triumphs; that world which the Christian sees as created and sustained by its Maker's love, fallen indeed into the bondage of sin, yet emancipated now by Christ. He was crucified and rose again to break the stranglehold of personified Evil, so that this world might be *fashioned anew* according to God's design and reach its fulfillment (italics mine).[21]

This bold statement goes so far as to suggest that transformation of the real world ("along with the sum of those realities in the midst of which" we live!) is so

central to Christianity and the identity of the church that this remaking is nothing less than the Creator's plan and destiny in light of Jesus' death and resurrection!

Yet the truth is that we have strayed far from this vision. Although Jesus Christ is the only hope for the world and he has set his mission in place in his body, the church, the world around the church has become less and less inclined to come to it for answers to real problems. The church is hardly ever thought about as world-changers—even by its own members! The Transformation movement is a restoration of that Christian identity as world-changers who pursue aligning "externalized" and "objectified" culture with the original intentions of God *by allowing the Holy Spirit to create in the surrounding culture something which, when "internalized," would fulfill the prophetically manifest purposes of Pentecost.*

Spirit-Baptism

A closer look at the Greek word for "baptize" (*baptizein*) will reveal some interesting nuances. *Baptizein* was simply a secular term meaning to dip repeatedly, immerse, submerge, clean, or wash by submerging, or (figuratively) to overwhelm.[22] It is employed in this secular meaning even in the Septuagint (where we find only four occurrences),[23] with three additional such uses in the Hexapla;[24] the only time it appears as part of a sacred ritual is in a Greek Old Testament version of an unknown source.[25] It is only in the New Testament that we find multiple uses of the word, and there mostly referring to what is assumed is the rite of baptism, or to the Jewish ritual ablutions. But not only to those: there are times when it is used also in the neutral sense of plunging, drenching, washing, or being "immersed" metaphorically, i.e., overwhelmed (viz., Jesus' passion in Mark 10:38/Luke 12:50).

Among New Testament uses of the word, of course, is in reference to the baptism of the Spirit. But the nature of this baptism occasions a deeper dig into the meaning of *baptizein* as applied here, for the New Testament evidence of what happens in Spirit-baptism suggests that we can rule out the use of "baptism" as a technical term for a ritual. The baptism of the Spirit is not even guaranteed by the ritual we usually associate with the word "baptism";[26] though it can "occur" through a laying-on of hands, it is primarily an inner experience (which is then usually manifest to the senses). So an argument can be made that by New Testament times *baptizein*, as with other Greek words, was used in the secular meanings mentioned above, as an appropriate metaphor to describe a dynamic of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus' disciples. The question then is, "What is that dynamic?"

The classic answer in Pentecostalism is, "that personal experience of first receiving an outpouring of the Holy Spirit." This answer, while not untrue, has nevertheless limited the meaning of the secular word *baptizein* primarily to a solitary event (even if not an external ritual) at a moment in time—an understanding that biblical evidence shows us is too narrow.

First of all, Old Testament individuals—including a pagan—had personal experiences in which it was said that the Spirit "fell on," "rushed upon," "came into" them (and the like), even to the extent that it caused them to prophesy, do extraordinary things, or become like another person;[27] and in the New Testament, Luke speaks of being "filled with the Spirit" even before Pentecost.[28] Yet in none of these examples—including those in Luke—is the happening called being "baptized in the Spirit." The phrase, then, must mean more than simply an experiential encounter with the Spirit of God.

There are, moreover, two New Testament clues illuminating a wider meaning of the baptism in the Spirit that takes seriously the full nuances of the secular Greek word *baptizein*.

1) We first hear of this reality through John the Baptist. In the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, however, we are given more information that is an important qualifier: what Jesus will offer will be a baptism with the Spirit "and fire" (Matt 3:11; Luke 3:16). There have, of course, been various interpretations as to what that means. There are those who think it not a qualifier but mere poetry, i.e., as an added descriptor, but nothing more substantial. Then there are those among Pentecostals who, not knowing what to do with "baptism" outside of an association with experiential encounter, make "fire" into another independent sort of baptism, so that now we have three—in water, in the Spirit, and in fire. Below we will see more specifically why there is no need for that; nevertheless the Matthew/Luke qualification suggests that the initial experience of Spirit-baptism is not all that the Spirit has in mind. "With the Spirit and fire" could be a hendiadys—"two sides of the same coin," so to speak. But whether or not, when "fire" is joined to the secular meaning of baptizein, we can only conclude that it means to be "immersed in fire." And the image of fire speaks for itself. It is of the nature of fire (a) to transform and consume everything with which it comes into contact, and (b) to continue to burn until either it is put out or completely consumes its host, both points at which it ceases to be fire! A baptism "with

the Spirit and fire," then, begins with a first experience, but is something that of its nature is meant to transform and perdure.

2) Luke, the gospel writer who gives featured attention to the Holy Spirit, also describes the Spirit-baptism with the phrase "clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49), another image that speaks for itself. Clothing clearly changes the appearance of a person until it is removed; and if the person allows that clothing to affect his or her self-consciousness, it can contribute to an internal change as well. Being "clothed with power," then, also connotes not only a singular experience of getting "dressed up" as it were, but something that perdures as long as it is allowed to, and can even transform.

These clues certainly challenge some *a priori* conclusions. Part of our Christian historical baggage is that we have absorbed as many uses of *baptizein* as we can into an immediate association-by-experience with the water-ritual only and that thereby, when applied to Spirit-baptism, the word seems to imply a single moment. Far better to recognize that for New Testament Christians there was no separate word "baptize" as we know it today: the use of *baptizein* or any of its derivatives probably sounded in New Testament ears more like our secular use of the word "immerse"; like the word "church" when used to translate the Greek word *ekklesia* (which in Greek simply means "called-out assembly" and was also used in secular society), "baptize" emerged as a historical result of Christians "creating their own culture." Though we cannot deny that *baptizein* was an appropriate word for that one-time water ritual in the New Testament, and that there it is used as such multiple times,[29] to limit its impact to that association alone misses important nuances of the Greek secular word that also appear in the whole of Scripture, particularly when applied to relationship with the Spirit.

If, however, we welcome *baptizein* in its full meanings, the metaphorical connections are even richer. Being "baptized" in the Spirit becomes something greater than a personal moment of encounter (as in the Old Testament), even if it is associated with New Testament salvation as a "Pentecost moment." This baptism is a plunging, a drenching, a saturation, an immersion into the reality and person of the Holy Spirit that results in a permanent state not unlike catching fire or wearing different clothing. I personally would "fight to the death" that we are meant to have an initial supernatural experience we presently know as the "baptism in the Spirit." But we have tended to limit the term to this. To be baptized in the Spirit means nothing less than to enter a process of full Spirit-transformation.

This understanding also allows us to make our way back from some of the spiritual and theological detours in which we have trapped ourselves. There would be, for example, no more of a need to insist on a separate water-baptism, Spirit-baptism, and fire-baptism experience, than there is to make a separate "baptism" out of being "clothed with power." Additionally, our explanation can be a healthy guard against any gnostic-like insistence by some Pentecostals on the need for a particular experience; it would also keep us humble before our non-Charismatic brethren who shy away from believing in the need for our Pentecostal experience, while preserving the fact that (as we mentioned above) an "immersion" is still meant for all followers of Jesus. It will likewise make sense out of the documented Christian record that in the first eight centuries of the post-apostolic church, the baptism in the Spirit with its accompanying charisms was a familiar event immediately following water-baptism. Though spoken of as two "baptisms" in Scripture, they were seen as separable only by exception.[30]

"Baptizing" a Culture

So let us put this all together. We have just concluded that when *baptizein* is applied to the Spirit, what is described in Scripture is more than a personal Pentecost moment, even if occurring together with the acceptance of the gospel and water-baptism: it is a moment that of its particular nature is to be integrated into ongoing and permanent transformation.[31] In this thinking, transformation and the baptism of the Spirit are synonymous. Add to this the fact that the ultimate objective of Christianity is not to form an isolated culture of our own, but rather to be agents of the "Kingdom-transformation" of the real world, and it can now be possible to speak not only of baptizing individuals in the Spirit but of, through them, baptizing an entire culture in the Spirit!

By this we are not relativizing the fact that ultimately no one comes into the fullness of God's plan except by a personal choice of salvation. But we are widening the final picture of his plan beyond "soul-winning"; we are saying that the Great Commission is not targeted at individuals alone. God wants to save and "baptize" not only the banker, but the bank; not only the teacher, but the educational system; not only the criminal, but the penal institution; not only the mayor, but the government—not just the actors in the culture, but the very culture itself. We are also taking seriously the fact that, as in Acts 10, the baptism of the Spirit can manifest before a conscious acceptance of salvation on the part of individuals who are nevertheless open to the Word of witness: so too can it manifest in their culture.

Jesus' agenda for his followers is that when we intermingle with "the kingdom of the world" (Rev 11:15), as in the chemistry of salt and the physics of light, a definitive transformation occurs by the Holy Spirit's presence and work—even to the extent that those who are not believers can be taken up into his purposes![32] A "Pentecost of culture" is *what happens when the Spirit-experience of Christians flows out to the surrounding culture, immersing it to the extent that it produces new "objectified externalizations" from God that can be "internalized," all toward the ultimate goal of the salvation of that entire culture.*

Mere theory? Only a Christian dreamer's proposition? No. Francis of Assisi, the founder of the Order of Friars Minor to which I belong, was known to be a cultural climate-changer in the thirteenth century. One of his contemporaries writes,

> And thus it happened that [because of Francis' influence] in a short time the face of the region was changed, and it took on a more cheerful aspect everywhere. . . . The former dryness was rooted and the crops sprang up quickly. . . . *Thanksgiving and voice of praise* resounded everywhere.[33]

Another account is told of how one of the friars was sent by Francis to cast out territorial demons afflicting a city to the point of its imminent destruction through civil war. "Soon after the city returned to peace and the people preserved their civic rights in great tranquility."[34]

A different time, only to be enshrined in history? No. We have already referenced the recently birthed neo-Pentecostal movement of "Kingdom-transformation."[35] Since the 1990s, participants in this movement have undergone the paradigm shifts described in this article. Its local church leaders are viewing their role as not only pastors of their congregations, but as "pastors" of their cities. Though not without trials and the difficulties inherent in extending the Reign of God, the results are nevertheless amazing as cultures and subcultures begin to be transformed through Christians who are baptized in the Spirit.[36]

In this movement, then, the "baptism" of the Spirit is contained neither in an individual soul, nor within the four walls of the church. A cultural climate change begins to take place where Transformational Christians have influence. They think biblically but when necessary speak and act secularly. They demonstrate the power of the Spirit by providing supernatural answers to "worldly" issues. They encounter modern-days Cyruses who are not part of God's people (yet!) but are willing to act

as God's anointed agent of his purposes on the earth. Some even invite believers to counsel them in advisory capacities as modern Josephs or Daniels. And like those biblical men, when asked the question of how or why these things have transpired, Christians have the opportunity to testify to the hand of our God, producing in many cases the "internalization" of personal salvation on the part of those who witness God's work. The result: in these places, the world is now looking to the church for answers, transformation is happening, the kingdom of this world is on its way to becoming the Kingdom of our Lord and his Christ (Rev 11:15) and cultures exhibiting new "objectified externalizations" are beginning to be "baptized in the Spirit."

A "Natural" for Pentecostalism

Finally, the good news for Pentecostalism in all this is that "baptizing a culture in the Spirit" is not something new that must be seemingly materialized out of nothing. Pentecostals already bring the tools necessary to this assignment. Planted in the essence of Pentecostalism are attributes that lend themselves to cultural transformation that, then, only need to be released! What attributes specifically?

The Ability to Change Paradigms

The essence of Pentecostalism is God moving "outside the box," and us yielding to the wind of the Spirit (John 3:8). Paradigm-shifts for a true Pentecostal, then, should not be as big a "jump" as for the average population. We are familiar enough with going beyond what is secure, and with risk-taking, even at the expense of our own egos—features necessary for paradigm changes and for the sometimes-clumsy learning curves that go with them. Our initial experience of Spirit-baptism was a quantum leap-of-faith orienting us to a faith for seeing God do even more and different things. The unknown dimensions of Pentecostal life consistently demand a position of humility—a quality also needed for paradigm shifts. Spontaneity, variety, and intuitiveness provide a steady diet of "mind-bending," another ingredient in paradigm changes. Being accustomed to hearing prophetic "dreams and visions" (Acts 2:17) positions us for "the new."

All these qualities predispose us to the paradigm shift of navigating away from the tendency to create a religious culture of our own, (back) to a mindset in which the church's purpose (not only its side-effect) is to change the surrounding culture and reorient it toward the Kingdom.[37] And for Pentecostals, since the down

payment we already personally received convinces us that the rest is not too far behind, it is not difficult to imagine dedicating ourselves to what God has already spoken as his plan for the nations, because we are already living in and experiencing the moment in which he said that would happen—the Day of the Lord.

The Manifestation of Supernatural Power

The power manifestations common among us have attuned us to God doing the impossible: so God changing a whole culture is not as unbelievable as perhaps for others. Also, the supernatural is the very means God will use not only to do the work, but for us to gain the trust of the culture. Solving social problems through supernatural revelation and/or a power-manifestation is a "language" everyone understands, and certainly passes the litmus test of relevance. This, then, gives us access to influence: those who provide effective solutions that escape even the experts will be the ones sought after for other problems. It is amazing how governments relax their "church-vs.-state" laws and ideologies when the answer to their issues is found by the inbreak of God's raw power—especially when they are desperate. And God's power is something true Pentecostals desire (if not used to) welcoming.

The Strength of Ecumenical Unity

Though we have not specifically mentioned it, it can well be imagined that this type of cultural transformation is rarely accomplished by one person, or even one congregation. The power necessary to shift the trends of a society must usually reside in a whole movement; and the success of that movement rests on its ability to accomplish its vision "as one"—i.e., in unity.[38] Transformation ministries typically press for a "church of the city," meaning that Christians need to see themselves first as members of the body at large in a particular locale, then as individual congregations. Oftentimes pastors will lead both special and regular gatherings for the whole church of their city. And participants in the movement repeatedly become aware of the delightful effectiveness this unity brings to their endeavors when it is present.[39] Likewise, unity and love are necessary to maintain the stability of relationships in the midst of change—and change is a synonym for "transformation."

Pentecostalism has been marked from its inception with characteristics of unity that can easily be transferred to a movement of transforming culture.[40] So unity is already in the DNA of the Pentecostal experience. We are acclimated to "talking the same talk" when in the Spirit, and are no strangers to a unity not of

human calculation. A considerable number of Pentecostals are already frontrunners of a unified church—often without even being aware of it! If any group in the church, then, is predisposed to the unity necessary to carry out Kingdom-transformation, it is Pentecostalism. It is no surprise that at the forefront of Transformation movements also one will always find Pentecostals.

Conclusion

It is exciting, even thrilling, to conceive that the Holy Spirit continues to expand and bring greater revelation to what he purposed through the early twentieth-century Pentecostal outpouring. A classic Protestant perspective on the Reformation is that here the Spirit began gradually restoring all that time had obscured in the body of Christ—first the gospel, then evangelism, then healing, then the charisms and baptism of the Spirit, then (for those who would adhere to it) the Ephesians 4:11–12 fivefold offices in the church. It is now possible to add to that list a restoration by which Pentecostal Christians, as in Acts 2, come out of our Pentecost*al* cultural and are used as agents of Kingdom-transformation and bring forth a Pentecost *of* culture. This would seem—and already is in some places—but the next step for Pentecostals, who by our own spiritual experience are already acclimated to the paradigm-shifts, power, and unity necessary to take up this move.

From my own Catholic perspective, a Pentecost of culture is nothing more and nothing less than an answer to the traditional prayer to the Holy Spirit invoked by Pope Leo XIII over the twentieth century—a prayer to which God responded the next day by the first manifestation of modern Pentecostalism on January 1, 1901, in Topeka, Kansas—and the same prayer invoked by a group of Catholics in 1967 at Duquesne University—to which God responded by another baptism in the Spirit that became the impetus for the "charismatic renewal" of the worldwide body of Christ —

> Come Holy Spirit,
> fill the hearts of Your faithful,
> and enkindle in them
> the fire of Your love.
> Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created,
> and You shall renew the face of the earth.

The prayer prophesies that by our re-creation God would renew not only the culture of the Church, but "the face of the earth"!

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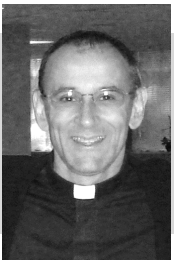

Notes

[1] H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), ix.

[2] This article was originally presented as a paper at the 46th Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies (Ecumenical Interest Group), St. Louis, Missouri, March 11, 2017, but has been edited for the purposes of this journal.

[3] What follows is a synopsis of his insights in Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy* (New York: Random House, 1990), 4–9. Quotations from other sections of the book will be footnoted.

[4] For example, the plow was invented at a stage in which it was deemed useful in its culture; but that invention has since compelled us to arrange our entire agricultural activity around it such that, over time, no one would attempt farming without one.

[5] As a non-material example, every human culture must employ a language, but in turn we find we are limited, even dominated, by that language's idea-structures. Another contemporary material example is the computer, which, for better or worse, has completely reshaped civilization! The issue of somehow being "stuck" in our culture has provided much fodder for philosophers and writers of literature down through the ages. The theme of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, for example, explores whether the scientific revolution in Western culture had not in fact "created a monster."

[6] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 25.

[7] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 25. It will be helpful here to define the term "religion." Synthesizing for our purposes all that can be said about it, religion is the human response to a revelation of transcendence within our existence and experience. That response includes the resultant beliefs, actions, and social organization of those who receive the revelation.

[8] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 3.

[9] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 25.

[10] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 42.

[11] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 32.

[12] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 40.

[13] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 41.

[14] Here we can see why religion becomes such a useful tool to power-mongers who employ it as a means of psychological or even physical coercion—especially when under duress from

other groups with which it must contend. People from his own culture were more eager to kill Jesus (and in Acts, his followers) than those outside of it.

[15] Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 45.

[16] A clear contemporary example is Islam. It has been so identified with Middle Eastern cultural forms that, for example, though the Quran itself does not say it must be read in Arabic, Muslims popularly believe so—some even claiming that salvation is limited to interacting with the Arabic original. (For a discussion of this issue, cf. http://progressive-muslim.org/is-it-compulsory-to-read-quran-in-arabic.htm.) This is but one internal and external conflict of Muslims attempting to conceive of their religion as other than completely identified with Middle Eastern culture.

[17] "There is no getting around the fact that such a process of rediscovery [of the essentials of Christianity] will entail a serious reconsideration about what the church's history means for today's church. Before we can responsibly go into the future, we must go back." D. H. Williams, *Retrieving the Tradition and Renewing Evangelicalism: A Primer for Suspicious Protestants* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdsman Pub. Co., 1999), 13.

[18] For a discussion of this tendency and its history, cf. H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 45–82 (Chapter 2), which entitles this stance, "Christ Against Culture."

[19] The first use of "nations" actually translates the Hebrew word *goyim*; the second and the third translate the Hebrew word *'amim*. (The Septuagint also follows the text literally and is faithful to using a separate term for each of these Hebrew words.) If one is to interpret *goyim* as it is mostly used ("gentiles") and *'amim* as it is mostly used ("people-groups," or "nations") there would be more than a Hebrew parallelism going on here: this may be a direct reference to Israel's received blessing specifically affecting outsiders (the earth, which includes those outside Israel, and the *goyim*) who, once their consequential blessing was received, would then join in with Israel (who is also an *'am* [nation]) to praise God!

[20] "'The world,' 'this world' in John invariably means the world of men *and their affairs*. . . . (italics mine)," referenced in his commentary on John 3:16 in Bruce Vawter, C. M., "The Gospel According to John," in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary, Vol. II*, ed. Raymond E. Brown, S. S., Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, S. J., and Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1968), 423; "Besides referring to the universe under man's direction, 'the world' can refer even more directly to the society of men. . . ." Raymond E. Brown, S. S., *The Gospel According to John* (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1970), 509.

[21] "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World," par. 2, in *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Walter M. Abbott, S. J. (New York: Herder & Herder, 1966), 200. In another citation of the same paragraph, "fashioned anew" is translated, "transformed" (John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, ed. Vittorio Messori [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994], 89).

[22] Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York: American Book Company, 1889), 94.

[23] 2 Kgs 5:14; Judg 12:7; Sir 34:25; and Isa 21:4.

[24] Job 9:31; Ps 69:3; and Jer 38:22.

[25] Lev 6:21; "an unknown source" as cited by Edwin Hatch & Henry A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 190.

[26] Cf. Acts 8:14–17. Likewise, in Gal 3:4–5 Paul the Apostle goes through pains to emphasize that his readers did not have or see these experiences because of some external observance.

[27] Num 11:25 and 24:2; Judg 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; and 15:14; 1 Sam 10:10; 11:6; 16:13; and 19:23; 1 Chr 12:19; 2 Chr 15:1; 20:14; and 24:20; Ezek 2:2; 3:14, 24; and 11:5.

[28] Luke 1:15, 41, and 67.

[29] In these cases the verb is in the aorist tense, denoting a simple completed action.

[30] Kilian McDonnell and George Montague, eds., *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991) presents an anthology of Patristic writings that validate this claim.

[31] This squares away even with those who want to identify the baptism of the Spirit with the Sacrament of Confirmation. Catholic and Orthodox sacramental theology sees ritual as an action that only makes sense when initiating in the recipient the divine activity it symbolizes.

[32] Even in the Old Testament, God was operating for his purposes in cultures not his own. Did not the people of Nineveh turn their faces toward him? Did not Nebuchadnezzar acknowledge the God of Israel? Did God not call Cyrus his anointed (Isa 45:1) irrespective of the fact that the king was not part of the Holy People? The Hebrew word in that verse is *limshihu*—a construct of the root word *mashiah*, which would refer to the anointed kings, priests, and prophets, and which we usually translate as "messiah"!

[33] Thomas of Celano, "The First Life of St. Francis," in *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies,* 3rd rev. ed., ed. Marion A. Habig (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973), 259.

[34] Thomas of Celano, "The Second Life of St. Francis," in *St. Francis of Assisi*, 451.

[35] The most prolific groups of this movement are Transform Our World (http://www.transformourworld.org), led by Argentine Apostle Ed Silvoso, and World Trumpet Mission (http://www.worldtrumpet.com), led by Ugandan Prophet John Mulinde. The movement also has gained great traction through the neo-Pentecostal "New Apostolic Reformation," particularly through the International Coalition of Apostolic Leaders, or "I.C.A.L." (http://www.icaleaders.com), led by Apostle John Kelly (successor to Apostle and Professor C. Peter Wagner), and through the International Prayer Council (http://www.ipcprayer.org/ipc-home), led by John Robb. For a more detailed introduction to the Transformation movement, cf. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transformational_Christianity.

[36] For examples and more information, cf. the websites listed in the previous footnote.

[37] In the movement "Transform Our World," the basic introduction to and training for Kingdom-transformation begins with the essential paradigm shifts that the founder Ed Silvoso has identified as necessary for the church to fulfill this mandate.

[38] In my own Transformation initiative in Chicago, we have come to terms with the fact that, with what we are facing in the culture around us (record-breaking violence, entrenched systemic politics and corruption, etc.), Kingdom-transformation will need an entire spiritual army, not just an isolated battalion. Therefore, we have begun a prototype intentionally asking the question of God, "What must we do together, that we *cannot* do apart?"

[39] A "Transform Our World" intercessor once wrote, "Seems so interesting and exciting to me, how in a global movement, global people-interconnections, experiences and insights are helping bring to light the need for/helping confirm/or suggest/the way of healing to occur as a step on the road to nation transformation, by the Holy Spirit's power, at every level." (Annita Maat, e-mail message to author et al., 27 April 2016). Likewise, when our five Chicagoland multi-cultural "battalions" (cf. previous footnote) have come together in intentional unity, the prayer experiences have been unprecedented in the Lord's inhabitation.

[40] "Charismatic renewal is inherently ecumenical." Peter Hocken, *Pentecost and Parousia: Charismatic Renewal, Christian Unity, and the Coming Glory* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013), 1. In context he uses the term "ecumenical" to refer to unity in the church, not to the unity of all religions.

The Limited Impact of Pentecostal Interracialism on Systemic Racism in the USA

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Abstract

The centennial of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre demands a careful review of the impact of systemic racism on Christian communities. This study starts by looking at early Pentecostal interracialism in the USA. There is a striking difference between those churches that founded the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA) and those who were not invited or even barred. The renewed ascendancy of white supremacy forces a review of black Pentecostal victims who suffered discrimination, violence, even death. Pentecostals who would extend Jim Crow laws into the heavenly realm need to revisit the founders' emphasis on repentance, reform, and restitution.

Introduction

Churches and scholars who are not only sensitive but proactive about responding to systemic racism know the value of looking back at the May 31—June 1, 1921, Tulsa (Greenwood) Massacre. The African-American community in Tulsa at that time celebrated what was known as the Black Wall Street. When one considers the plight of Greenwood, Oklahoma, African-American Pentecostals during this madness, the shroud of darkness that suppressed the victims and their families is evident in that the story was buried by whites for decades only to be rediscovered in recent years. Local activists in Tulsa, "60 Minutes," and the likes of LeBron James have put the spotlight where it belongs.[1]

Marking the centennial of this grisly event that witnessed a few Pentecostal survivors forces Classical Pentecostals in the USA to address systemic racism as this was not simply an outburst and certainly not an aberration. Christians ignore to their own peril the reality that while black prosperity surged during Reconstruction defenders of the "Lost Cause" narrative would dictate otherwise. White "redeemers" found countless ways to suppress the votes of African-Americans. Likewise, how is one to understand that a vagrancy conviction could lead to horrific atrocities suffered under the "convict-lease" system to be followed by the equally malicious "redlining"? The May 18, 1896, *Plessy vs. Ferguson* Supreme Court rule mandated "separate but equal." Systemic racism that is institutionalized extending to criminal justice, employment, housing, health care, political power, and education, among other issues, is not a binary issue, but with the focus on marking the Tulsa Massacre centennial this study will be limited in scope.[2]

It is claimed that no international group brings a greater church diversity to a common table than the Global Christian Forum. The same claim is made for related groups like Christian Churches Together USA (CT-USA) and Christian Churches Together UK (CCT-UK). All of these groups include Pentecostal leaders and ecumenists connected to the Pentecostal World Fellowship (PWF) and Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA). Several of the annual conferences run by CCT-USA have had sessions devoted to various forms of racism. These sessions have been driven by the Historical Black Churches and Sojourners, among others. One year the group watched the powerful 2019 documentary *Emanuel* and heard the daughter of the senior pastor of Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church who was slain by white supremacist Dylann Roof**.** During the October 2–4, 2019, conference, in Montgomery, Alabama, "Commemorating the Quad-Centennial of the forced transatlantic voyage of enslaved peoples to America," all in attendance had dinner and a service in the legendary Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church and also walked past the First White House of the Confederacy then went through the Legacy Museum of the Equal Justice Initiative and its Peace and Justice Garden.

In an October 14–15, 2019, Journey of Lament, the National Council of Churches of Christ USA (NCCC-USA), took Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and historical Protestant church participants to Old Point Comfort, Virginia. This is the place where the first slaves reached American soil in 1619.[3] In a parallel development, Bishop Charles Edward Blake, Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ, in February 2017 led a group of top Pentecostal leaders to visit Mother Emmanuel AME in Charleston, South

Carolina. Bishop Blake hosted the twenty-fifth anniversary of PCCNA at Mason Temple, Memphis, Tennessee. This is where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his last speech before being assassinated the next day. Bishop Blake, who had previously declared December 14, 2014, "Black Lives Matter Sunday" for the Church of God in Christ, compelled white Pentecostal leaders to address systemic racism

Early Pentecostal Interracialism in the USA

While mainstream white Holiness Pentecostals of the twentieth century in the USA were preoccupied with personal sins, structural sins were most often addressed as they impacted individual members of their churches. USA Pentecostals took on unjust structures through a variety of avenues like Jim Crow laws. The Pentecostal Assemblies of the World and Church of God of Prophecy excelled at this, which will be visited momentarily.

In its interracial character, the early Pentecostal movement also departed at times from larger cultural norms as seen in mainstream Christianity. Most Pentecostal denominations in the South originally had some degree of fellowship across racial lines, including not only the Pentecostal Holiness Church (PHC) and the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church (FBHC), but also the Church of God (Cleveland) and C. H. Mason's predominantly African-American Church of God in Christ. All of these groups derived the Pentecostal teaching through W. J. Seymour's African American Azusa St. Mission, where multi-ethnic worship services were the rule and where, in the words of Frank Bartleman, "the 'color line' was washed away in the blood."[4]

Historians have celebrated the Pentecostal movement's early interracialism as, in Edward Ayers' words, an example of how "religion could overcome, for a while at least, the worst parts of Southern culture." They have also noted the eventual decline of interracial worship, citing conformity to cultural mores, the waning of interracial worship as revivals gave way to increasingly organized forms of worship, and the relatively shallow nature of white Pentecostals' interracial commitment.[5]

The early PHC's experience suggests that a variety of these elements influenced the course of Pentecostal interracialism. White Pentecostals in North Carolina may not have completely believed in racial unity and equality nor were they, as Robert Anderson implies, subconsciously tormented by interracial contact. Perhaps they originally evidenced minimal concern with the social implications of interracial fellowship. Even before Azusa, interracial worship was not uncommon in the Southeastern holiness movement. The FBHC had interracial conventions and a

few congregations since 1898, and in 1905 the church listed African American William E. Fuller as one of three assistant general overseers.[6]

Outsiders criticized the interracial character of some of A. B. Crumpler's revivals, and in 1903 G. B. Cashwell reported preaching at "the colored" church near Goldsboro in a meeting also attended by whites. The language used by PHC leaders when they related accounts of interracial gatherings suggests that such meetings were the exception rather than the rule. In Cashwell's 1903 report, he mentioned the black churchgoers "seemed to be filled with the Spirit, and the white people of the community say they live it. God bless those people. I expect to meet many of them in the kingdom of Jesus."[7]

In 1906, Cashwell took the train to Los Angeles to find the Azusa St. Mission led by W. J. Seymour. During one of the times Clara Lum read letters to the group, she included a letter by T. B. Barrett at which time G. B. Cashwell broke out in tongues. Cashwell raced back to North Carolina to share this new message with the PHC, FBHC, and the Free-Will Baptist Church in and around Dunn, North Carolina.[8]

Alexander Boddy, editor of the respected British magazine *Confidence*, sets the scene for those unaware of societal mores at the time. While touring North America, he wrote about the 1912 sitting arrangements on the trains and the waiting areas at train stations. He tells that if a white minister does preach at a black church, he dare not go to the black minister's home because neither black nor white would accept him.

Boddy says that those in different contexts can appreciate the dilemma only while being in the "old slave states." To give an example he quotes a white minister talking about a time in Florida when he looked out his house windows and saw six black men lynched. Their crime? They had "insulted" some white women and with no trial they were lynched and shot repeatedly—he says even the wrong one—to which Boddy adds, "The whites are determined to keep their position as a dominant race." Further he says:

> Only a few white people has one heard speak kindly of the black ones, but one has heard from saintly white folks of those in the Negro race who had known and loved their Lord as much as they did.

Boddy elaborates on this point:

> One of the remarkable things was that preachers of the Southern States were willing and eager to go over to those Negro people at Los Angeles and have fellowship with them, and through their prayers receive the

> same blessing. The most wonderful thing was that, when these white preachers came back to the Southern States, they were not ashamed to say before their own congregations they had been worshipping with Negroes, and had received some of the same wonderful blessings that had been poured out on them. [9]

R. B. Hayes sponsored integrated services including integrated altars as early as 1898.[10] The June 1, 1907, issue of *The Holiness Advocate* spoke of a white minister, Rev. R. F. Wellons, who preached to "colored people at Fayetteville." Wellons also spent time in the home of Pastor Treadwell. G. B. Cashwell's inaugural *Bridegroom's Messenger* in October 1907 carried a letter, as does a February 1909 article from F. M. Britton about his ministry in Florida, which presumably included African Caribbeans.[11]

Elder G. T. Haywood had a letter published in *Bridegroom's Messenger* in December 1908. *Bridegroom's Messenger* in August 1909 carried a letter from Carrie L. Justice in Locust Grove, Georgia, with the heading "Pentecost Among the Colored People."[12] This was followed by similar reports.[13] In the early years of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW) prior to the white exodus in 1924, the two top leaders were black and white and the bishops were 50/50 black and white. However, the PAW did not surrender the notion that they should strive toward racial unity in their churches and leaders.[14]

The racial identity of W. J. Seymour and the Azusa St. Mission was not mentioned in *Bridegroom's Messenger* or G. F. Taylor's theological tracts. Influential periodicals like the *Bridegroom's Messenger* rarely addressed racial matters, and when they did so it was usually in the context of stories about charismatic revivals or testimonies specifically designated as those of "colored" churches or individuals. However, in light of the Pentecostal proclivity to imitate narrative theology, these testimonies should not be minimized. Occasionally Cashwell's paper did make bold racial statements, such as one in an article about Filipinos that denounced "the haughty Anglo-Saxon who regards all other races as his inferiors." Regardless of prevailing racial attitudes, though, Cashwell and other white Southern Pentecostals proved more than willing to incorporate the teaching they obtained from Seymour, whom they considered a vehicle of God just like themselves.[15]

Unlike other prominent Southern denominations such as the Church of God (Cleveland), the PHC was only loosely affiliated with black congregations or organizations. Its neighboring denomination, the FBHC, did maintain more explicit connections. The FBHC was interracial from 1898 to 1908, when its black

members left under William E. Fuller's leadership to form their own denomination. Notice that while the Wesleyan Holiness stream was strong enough to bring together W. E. Fuller with B. H. Irwin then J. H. King, the message of the Azusa St. Revival could not keep Fuller and King together.

Sometime soon before the 1911 merger between the PHC and the FBHC, a separate "colored convention" was formed, but in 1913 this black convention withdrew and became the autonomous Gethsemane Pentecostal Holiness Church. The North Carolina organizations' racial schisms paralleled those of other Pentecostal denominations, most of whom experienced separations during the 1910s and early 1920s. The PHC and other white denominations claimed that the decisions to separate were mutual and that the initiative often came from within the black groups. Additionally, both white leaders and black groups cited criticism of interracial meetings and the racial prejudice of outside whites (including potential but unrealized converts) in explanation.[16]

Regarding Church of God of Prophecy (CGP), like Church of God missionary to Palestine Margret Gaines' book suggesting that Palestinians are *Small Enough to Stop the Violence*, CGP was isolated and small enough not to be co-opted by all the mainstream religious trends in the USA, not even by mainstream Pentecostals, nor by Evangelicals, Protestants, and so on. They were marginalized while embracing an exclusive body ecclesiology that merged with a radical Pentecostal spirituality and as such could carry on shattering racial norms, which is not to say that racism was not present in CGP.[17] While their story merits a close examination, due to space limitations, research notes will be added in a footnote but here is one example.

In 1924, the CGP passed a resolution against the Klu Klux Klan.[18] While the published language emphasizes secret societies, correspondence to and from A. J. Tomlinson at the time makes clear that racial issues were central to this declaration. An enlarged photo of the 1924 CGP General Assembly shows that there was no segregated seating at that time. CGP would go on to become the most racially integrated of all the PFNA (Pentecostal Fellowship of North America) type Pentecostal churches in the USA for several decades.[19]

Figure 1: 1924 Church of God of Prophecy General Assembly in Cleveland, TN

While outside criticism and Southern mores certainly played a significant role in the demise of interracialism within Pentecostalism, many white Southern Pentecostals never sought to forge a completely integrated movement. The fact that they rarely addressed racial equality might suggest that they were less concerned with their violations of cultural strictures than the society around them, but also that they did not make a sustained effort to come to terms with the questions and meaning of interraciality. White PHC leaders did not fight to keep their organization interracial when separations occurred, nor did they push, even in the earliest years, for substantial consolidation across racial lines.

Most instances of interracial worship occurred either when whites visited black churches to hear white ministers like G. F. Taylor or G. B. Cashwell preach or, more frequently, in the less structured environments of revivals and camp meetings. The PHC's effort toward black churches was part of its overall proselytizing endeavor, though black Pentecostals embraced the doctrine of speaking in tongues for their own purposes and on their own terms. As the PHC and other groups became more centralized and denominationally formal, and

therefore more structured and less flexible, the interracial character of the movement declined.

White Pentecostals had to address interracial worship in formal denominational terms, rather than as a (largely unaddressed) aspect of the loosely composed early revivals that drew interdenominational as well interracial crowds. The striking interracial character of the early Pentecostal movements in the South was part of the broader departure from cultural norms, but it was often more ambivalent and not as deeply ingrained or theologically based as doctrinal beliefs and therefore could not withstand external pressure and internal transformations successfully.

"Black Jesus"

It is a sad fact that at the time this nation was being "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," 20 percent of its population was being held in slavery. Evangelical Christians were, for the most part, supportive of slavery. Southern Presbyterian J. H. Thornwell and even George Whitefield were among them.[20]

Why was this so? In the first place, African-Americans were not valued as persons. Second, there was not only an unwillingness but resistance to protecting black family rights. For those slaves who were brought to America it was not uncommon to sell a husband to one master and a wife to another. Children were frequently severed from their parents. Marriages between slaves were not even recognized by prevailing laws. In the third place, culture, customs, and history of the blacks were taken away from them. Slaves were forced to adopt the white man's religion, the white man's customs, the white man's mode of dress, the white man's value system.

Next, the slaveholders refused slaves access to any education. Some slaveholders were instrumental in passing laws that forbade slave education. Alabama, for example, levied $250 to $500 fines on anyone who taught a slave or even a free black to read or write. In Mississippi anyone who attempted to teach a black could be fined $30, be put in jail for ten days, or receive thirty-nine lashes. In North Carolina it was deemed a criminal act to distribute any pamphlet or book, not excluding the Bible, to blacks. Black history is still often looked upon as something outside USA history.

One way to unearth white supremacy regardless of how we camouflaged it is to consider the question of a "Black Jesus." Deane Ferm gives a good description of some of the 1970's black theologies that advocated for a black Jesus. Ferm[21]

singled out Albert Cleage's *The Black Messiah* (1968), which portrays Jesus as a revolutionary black leader whose purpose is to free black people from oppression, and Henry Turner's *God Is a Negro*. Ferm also mentions *Your God Is Too White* by Salley and Behm. This was published in 1971 by IVP and the revised edition came from IVP under the title *What Color Is Your God?*

Space does not allow a close look at a black Pentecostal who advocated for a black Jesus. This is Rev. Herbert Daughtery, previously pastor of The House of the Lord Pentecostal Church in Brooklyn, New York. This same era saw Pentecostal Bob Harrison's 1971 *When God Was Black*.[22] Consider these theological notes. The greatest artists in the West have portrayed the Christ principally in the tradition of the Salvator pictures—calm, serene, and dignified, and in the tradition of the Ecce homo pictures—stricken with grief and crowned with thorns.

Inasmuch as even the greatest pictorial creations reflect the culture of the artist and his or her times, black people who are victimized by a white racist culture understandably find it difficult to identify with a white, blue-eyed, golden-haired Jesus. There have been many black Madonnas with Child sculptured and painted in European and Central and South American cities. Throughout the regions of Christian Africa, Christ has always been depicted as a black man.

It is a scientific fact that Jesus was neither a blond northern European nor a forest Negro from the Congo. He was, no doubt, of dark complexion—not unlike today's Palestinians—as were the Semites and the peoples of North Africa. Secondly, the true meaning of his person and work transcends all differentiation of race, ethnicities, and culture.

When White Supremacy Gives Way to Violence against Black Pentecostals

The February 28—March 2, 2019, Society for Pentecostal Studies Annual Meeting (SPS) was hosted by W. J. Seymour College in Lanham, Maryland. During the African-American Archives session, Sherry DuPree said that some African-Americans who were lynched were Church of God in Christ members. DuPree drew attention to the mutilated body of falsely accused Emmett Till, who had a Church of God in Christ background. Till is one of a few singled out on a unique wall at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama. Unfortunately, the list of names from various counties at this memorial has not been researched to identify other Pentecostals who were lynched. In addition to oral

histories, DuPree pointed to FBI records that kept track of the largest black-led Pentecostal church in the USA starting in the late nineteenth century. DuPree has saved relevant FBI files at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City. The lynching of black Pentecostals was dramatized in another 2019 SPS session by Jacqueline C. Rivers.

On April 1, 1918, a headline in the Vicksburg Post read, "Draft Evasion in Holmes County Due to Pro-German Teachings among Blacks." The state adjutant general's office, the paper reported, had found it "virtually impossible" to get blacks to comply in Lexington because of Church of God in Christ founding Bishop Charles H. Mason's allegedly pro-German sermons and his advice to "resist" conscription. What made the situation seem all the more sinister was the fact that in the preceding two months only a small proportion of several hundred black registrants called up for service had reported for induction.

The story linking Mason and draft resistance was picked up by the national wire services. By April 18, Rev. Jesse Payne, a COGIC pastor in Blytheville, fell into the hands of a mob and was given a coat of tar and feathers—a public ritual usually done with hot tar on a naked or near naked body, with the victim being released in a public place where he could be seen, chased, laughed at, and mocked. Concluding its article, "Negro Preacher Tarred," the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* editorialized that the tar-treatment "will result in great good to demonstrate to not only blacks but some whites that it is time to get into the war work and quit talking such rot as is attributed to Payne."[23]

By contrast, a survey of early white Pentecostal papers like *Bridegroom's Messenger*, *Latter Rain Evangel*, *Church of God Evangel*, and *Apostolic Evangel* link lynching with white people being threatened for teaching holiness dogma and advocating a view of divine healing that meant no medication or physicians.

One can search for several relevant keywords on the web sponsored by the Consortium of Pentecostal Archives at https://pentecostalarchives.org/. A simple search for the "Klu Klux Klan" will return results that may surprise some. One quickly finds the story about the CGP minister Grady Kent who was beaten by the KKK. Another find is seeing the time that Aimee Semple McPherson allowed the KKK into Angelus Temple. Then there is a discussion by an IPHC editor that some unwarranted criticism of the KKK comes from elites from the North who safeguard the Knights of Columbus.[24]

Let us review a few things about the KKK. Tony Brown's *Journal*, televised on July 8, 1984, centered on interviewing Stetson Kennedy, who wrote *I Rode with the Klan* and *Klan Unmasked* (London: Arco, 1954). Kennedy infiltrated the Klan and

evidently turned over some evidence of their violent behavior. Kennedy said when he would give this to the FBI that often they would not respond to him, but would tell the leaders that a traitor was among them. Each Klan member took an oath that they will accept death if they reveal any Klan secrets.

Brown claimed the Klan began in 1864 in Pulaski, Tennessee, with four ex-confederate soldiers. The Klan used potent superstitions to scare blacks with their robes and burning crosses. In the 1880s they went underground because of the amount of violence. Jemar Tisby carefully documents the life and legacy of Nathan Bedford Forrest, the first Grand Wizard of the KKK. Tisby shows that the second incarnation of the KKK "fused Christianity, nationalism, and white supremacy into a toxic ideology of hate."[25] The third revival of the KKK in early twentieth century owed much to the son of a slave-owning Baptist preacher, Thomas Dixon, Jr.

The Ku Klux Klan arose in the aftermath of the Civil War, but not until after the release of D. W. Griffith's 1915 film, *The Birth of a Nation*, did the movement gain widespread support. A 2020 Netflix movie titled *Birth of a Movement* lays bare the real mission and impact of that 1915 movie. Filmmaker D. W. Griffith adapted Dixon's 1905 book *The Clansman* into a movie shown to President Woodrow Wilson in the White House.[26] The movie *The Birth of a Nation* romanticized the Klan and fueled racial fears so that by the mid-1920s, KKK membership had peaked at nearly 5 million members. During the next fifty years their activities were often violent—lynchings, murders, bombings. By the 1960s and 1970s, many members had gone underground, many had quit, and a few had remained. Splits and rivalries occurred among various Klan factions.[27]

In the early 1980s there were twenty-five different Klans. The three largest then were the United Klans of America, based in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; the Knights of the Klu Klux Klan, based in Tuscumbia, Alabama; and the Invisible Empire, based in Denham Springs, Louisiana, led by Bill Wilkinson. Their combined national membership reportedly amounted to less than 10,000 persons.

When one lives in Alabama and speaks out for social justice—as I did from 1979 to 1981—one is saturated with stories about the KKK. As I heard various conspiracies about the KKK, I wondered if the mainstream media was accurately representing them, so I drove to the Knights of the Klu Klux Klan headquarters in Tuscumbia, Alabama, to get original literature directly from the source. What I found in pamphlets like "The White Primer" and "NIGHTMARE: What Could Happen to White Americans in the Later 1980's" was beyond belief, but there is no space to elaborate in this article.

KKK public teachings have been and still are echoed in various Christian communities that not surprisingly had a negative impact on the legendary Azusa St. Revival. One of these views, based on the account of Noah and his three sons in Genesis 9:20–27, erroneously assumes that Ham was a Negro and Noah's curse of him therefore extended to the entire Negro race.[28]

Another prevalent view is that Eve had sexual intercourse with Satan in the Garden of Eden and bore Cain. Cain is identified as the seed of the serpent in Genesis 3:15, and the Jewish race descended from him. According to Klan teaching, the Jews then fled to the woods where they had sex with the animals and created all the other minority groups. Jews and non-whites are viewed as clearly inferior to the true chosen people, the white race, descended from Adam. Wasn't Jesus a Jew? Klansmen neatly skirted this problem by saying Jesus was descended from Adam.

Flogging, which became a trademark, was first introduced in 1921. When even murder could go unpunished, the strength of the local Klan was demonstrated to all. In 1926 when sensational raids, incidents of violence, intimidation, and murder were carried out, but no convictions were obtained, the greatest event of the year was the election of Klansmen to important state, county, and local political offices (at least in Alabama).[29] With a long history of influence in the South and particularly Alabama, it is not surprising that Alabama became a center for the Klan but also for black liberation in the form of freedom riders, the bus boycott, Martin Luther King, Jr., etc.

Dake's Annotated Reference Bible by Pentecostalist Finis Dake defends segregation in heaven and other positions taken by white supremacists.[30] Dake's Bible has long been used by ministers from PFNA type churches and was later seized on by prominent independent Charismatics.

My youth in CGP was dominated by "29 (Bible) teachings made prominent." The seventeenth such teaching based on Scripture, but often conveniently overlooked, was "restitution where possible." Although restitution was a hallmark of many early Pentecostal revivals in the USA, it has proven to have a short shelf life. The Pentecostal commitment for neighbors and communal well-being cannot be surrendered. It is to Jesus that we turn to lay on the altar our sins and seek forgiveness. Reform and restitution to those who have been wronged by us or our ancestors must follow our repentance.

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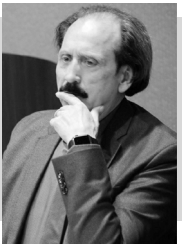

Notes

[1] Scott Pelley, "Greenwood, 1921: One of the Worst Race Massacres in American History," *60 Minutes* (New York: CBS, 14 June 2020). LeBron James with CNN Films is producing a documentary on the 1921 massacre. For Pentecostal stories, see Daniel Isgrigg, "Bishop Travis B. Sipuel: A Pentecostal Survivor of the Tulsa Race Massacre*," Daniel D. Isgrigg*, 3 May 2020, n.p., https://danieldisgrigg.com/2020/05/03/bishop-travis-b-sipuel-a-pentecostal-survivor-of-the-1921-tulsa-race-massacre/ (23 November 2020). Isgrigg is also devoting a chapter to this topic in a forthcoming book to be published by Seymour Press in 2021.

[2] David Michel, "Toward an Ecclesiology of Racial Reconciliation: A Pentecostal Perspective," (PhD diss., Chicago Theological Seminary, 2018); Jemar Tisby, *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019); Abram X. Kendi, *How to Be an Antiracist* (New York: One World, 2019); Robert P. Jones, *White Too Long: The Legacy of White Supremacy in American Christianity* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2020). During the "Memphis Miracle" that saw the transition from PFNA to PCCNA, the 1994 conference distinguished between prejudice and discrimination while the Racial Reconciliation Manifesto and a few presenters pointed to systemic racism.

[3] See the 1619 Project, *New York Times Magazine*, 2019, n.p., https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html.

[4] Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1980 [1925]), 54. A useful account of the presence and decline of interraciality in Southern Pentecostal denominations is found in Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 165–84. See also David E. Harrell, Jr., *White Sects and Black Men in the Recent South* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), 94–96; Harold D. Hunter, "Church of God of Prophecy," *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 208. But also see James S. Tinney, "Competing Strains of Hidden and Manifest Theologies in Black Pentecostalism," paper presented to the Society for Pentecostal Studies Annual Meeting, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, 14 November 1980.

C. H. Mason's Church of God in Christ ordained numerous white ministers until the formation of the Assemblies of God in 1914, but whites mainly sought its credentials because it was incorporated and so its ministers could legally perform marriages and obtain reduced railroad rates. See Synan, *Holiness Pentecostal Movement*, 169–70. Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "The Past: Historical Roots of Racial Unity and Division in American Pentecostalism," paper presented to Pentecostal Partners: A Reconciliation Strategy for 21st Century Ministry, Memphis, TN, 17–19 October 1994, 33, published in the *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-*

Charismatic Research 1 (May 2005), goes so far to say that the Assemblies of God is an "offspring" of Mason's Church of God in Christ. See Estrelda Y. Alexander, *Black Fire: One Hundred Years of African American Pentecostalism* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2011), 177–80. PCCNA President Jeff Farmer speaking at the twenty-fifth anniversary of PCCNA (2019) inside Mason Temple said he was amazed to learn that Mason's church still had white congregations. Farmer said this from the pulpit where Martin Luther King, Jr., preached the night before he was assassinated in Memphis, TN.

[5] Edward L. Ayers, *The Promise of the New South: Life after Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 407. Ayers also observes that "during the years that marked one of the lowest points in American race relations, the Pentecostal movement remained almost uniquely open to exchange between blacks and whites"; 407.

Iain MacRobert argues that the demise of interracialism resulted from white Southern Pentecostals' own bigotry and disinclination to challenge regional mores; Southern churches were only "fleetingly touched" before they "destroyed Seymour's [interracial] dream on the altar of racial supremacy." Iain MacRobert, *The Black Roots and White Racism of Early Pentecostalism in the USA* (London: Macmillan Press, 1988), 66–67, 94.

Robert Anderson's conclusions are marked less by Vinson Synan's retrospective disappointment than by incorporation into his larger deterministic "misdirected social protest" argument. The early interracialism of Pentecostalism represented a "radical criticism of prevailing race relations and a radical departure from them." But racial prejudices "glossed over in the first flush of revival constituted a latent source of frustration and, hence, aggression," which boiled to the surface as the early emotionalism waned and the basically conservative nature of Pentecostalism's social orientation became more evident. Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 154, 196.

[6] *Live Coals of Fire* 1:7, 1 December 1899, printed a sermon entitled "A Whirlwind from the North," which B. H. Irwin preached November 12, 1899, to the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Lincoln, Nebraska. In *Live Coals of Fire* 3:9, 11 January 1905, 3, edited by J. H. King, African-American W. E. Fuller wrote about trying to reach "his people" in Mississippi and of land promised by a white friend in Toccoa, Georgia, providing Fuller would open a school on the property. *Live Coals of Fire* seemed never to stray from paying some attention to African Americans. Listed in all issues were two such ruling elders—W. E. Fuller and Alice M. McNeil—and various ordained ministers like Isaac Gamble and Uncle Powell Woodbury. A number of stories highlight their specific contributions, which, more often than not, were in the Southeast. See: *Live Coals of Fire* 1:1, 6 October 1899, 8; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:4, 27 October 1899, 1; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:5, 3 November 1899, 1; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:6, 10 November 1899, 1; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:7, 1 December 1899, 2; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:10, 12 January 1900, 3; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:11, 26 January 1900, 1; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:15, 23 March 1900, 7; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:16, 6 April 1900, 3; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:20, 1 June 1900, 5, 8; *Live Coals of Fire* 1:21, 15 June 1900, 4. Cf. *Discipline of the Fire-Baptized Holiness Church of God of the Americas* (1978, n.p.). Not to be missed is the Irwin elder W. H. Fulford, who helped organize the United Holy Church of America. Similar stories can be told about those who went on to be a part of the Church of God in Christ. G. F. Taylor, "Our Church History: Chapter I," *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate*, 20 January 1921, 9, talks about pre-PHC Holiness type meetings in North Carolina that were avoided by "decent folks" so "nobody but poor folks and negroes would take any part in them. . . ."

[7] G. B. Cashwell report in *Holiness Advocate*, 15 October 1903, 8.

[8] Based on a late in life interview of IPHC minister L. R. Graham, Synan wrote, *Old Time Power: A Centennial History of the International Pentecostal Holiness Church: Limited Edition* (Franklin Springs, GA: LifeSprings, 1998), 97–98, that Cashwell's Spirit baptism was delayed due to racial prejudice that overtook him at the Azusa St. Mission. However, this narrative is not borne out in Cashwell's published reports at the time. A more substantial criticism has come from Michael Thornton in *Fire in the Carolinas: The Revival Legacy of GB Cashwell and AB Crumpler* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2014), 152–55, where the argument is advanced that Cashwell had a stronger ministry network with Seymour than with his own PHC.

Members of both races attended the monumental 1907 revival in Dunn, North Carolina, and Cashwell immediately informed the Azusa mission of this news. His letter noted that a number of black people had obtained their Pentecost and concluded that "all the people of God are one here." One theory is that some who made it to Dunn came from W. E. Fuller's Fire-Baptized Holiness Church of God. In his diary, G. F. Taylor recounted preaching to an interracial gathering once during 1908, also at a black rather than a white church. *Apostolic Faith*, January 1907, 1; Taylor 1908 diary, June 7 entry, Taylor Papers at the IPHC Archives & Research Center; Synan, *Old Time Power*, 73–74, 100–1, 148–49.

[9] *Confidence*, September 1912, 208–9.

[10] *Memoirs of Richard Baxter Hayes*, ed. W. M. Hayes (Philadelphia: by the Author, 1945), 35. Alexander, *Black Fire*, 85, singles out R. B. Hayes who in an 1898 revival in Carlton, Georgia, faced a "man with a stick" complaining that Hayes was "showing Negro equality." Hayes' tents were burned down several times, a Baptist minister punched him in the face, and he was shot at. Randall J. Stephens, *The Fire Spreads: Holiness and Pentecostalism in the American South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 241: "For Hayes's breaches of racial, social, and religious norms, his meeting tents were burned down several times, he was punched in the face by a Baptist minister, he was shot at, and he regularly faced belligerent crowds." Then page 310 note 79: "The white holiness evangelist AB Crumpler regularly held integrated meetings in NC. In 1896 the *Goldsboro Daily Argus* took notice of one such revival, reporting on a 'colored service' Crumpler held in a building 'filled with both races.' Unlike at other mixed race events, however, the African Americans in attendance, the reporter noted as a matter of fact, were 'given the right of way' and treated with utmost respects. 'The Crumpler Meetings,' *Goldsboro Argus* 24 (June 1895), 5."

[11] *Bridegroom's Messenger*, October 1, 1907; *Bridegroom's Messenger*, February 1, 1909.

[12] *Bridegroom's Messenger*, August 1, 1909.

[13] The page numbers for the cited references are as follows: 8, 4, 4, 3, 2. See: "Pentecost Among Colored People In Atlanta," *Bridegroom's Messenger* 2:45, September 1, 1909, 3; "Work Among Colored People" about Troy, Alabama, *Bridegroom's Messenger* 3:17, October 1, 1909, 3; "Work Among the Colored People at Biloxi, Miss," *Bridegroom's Messenger* 3:49, November 1, 1909, 3; report on Richmond, Virginia, under the title "Work Among the Colored People," *Bridegroom's Messenger* 3:54, January 15, 1910, 2; "Work Among the Colored People," *Bridegroom's Messenger* 3:60, April 15, 1910, 4; F. W. Williams, "Work Among the Colored People in Biloxi, Miss," *Bridegroom's Messenger* 3:64, June 15, 1910, 4.

[14] Alexander, *Black Fire*, 21, points to PAW saying it "remained biracial for the longest period, working to ensure that not only its congregations but also its leadership reflected racial equality." But in the 1930s, the racial lines were drawn.

[15] Charles Parham's *Apostolic Faith* 2:2, October 1908, 8, calls Seymour "an African preacher." Missing issues of *Live Coals of Fire*, *Holiness Advocate,* and the *Apostolic Evangel* might clarify this point. Scholars who focus on white supremacist Parham when searching for "roots" would do well to learn more about the nineteenth-century Gift Adventists. See Harold D. Hunter, "A Portrait of How the Azusa Doctrine of Spirit Baptism Shaped American Pentecostalism," *Enrichment Journal* 11:2 (Spring 2006), 78–90.

Bridegroom's Messenger, March 1, 1909, 2–3; *Bridegroom's Messenger*, November 1, 1907, 2. Bartleman's accounts of Azusa, which the *Way of Faith* carried, mentioned the interracial character of the revival but not Seymour's racial identity; see Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street*. Ayers claims that Cashwell did not initially tell his audiences of his baptism at the hands of blacks, but even when he did they still willingly accepted the message; Ayers, *Promise*, 407.

[16] Synan, *Old Time Power*, 100–1, 153; Synan, *Holiness-Pentecostal Movement*, 165–84; J. H. King and Blanche L. King, *Yet Speaketh: Memoirs of the Late Bishop Joseph H. King: Written by Himself and Supplemented by Mrs. Blanche L. King* (Franklin Springs, GA: The Publishing House of the Pentecostal Holiness Church, 1949), 125.

[17] See: Harold D. Hunter, "A Journey Toward Racial Reconciliation: Race Mixing in the Church of God of Prophecy," in *The Azusa Street Revival and Its Legacy*, eds. Harold D. Hunter and Cecil M. Robeck (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 2006), 277–96; Harold D. Hunter, "The Vision, Present but Not Realized in 1906," *White Wing Messenger*, April 2017; Harold D. Hunter, "Snapshots of a Spiritual Journey: A. J. Tomlinson," *White Wing Messenger 100 Years: Commemorative Issue*, June 2003, 14–18; Christopher W. Kinder, "'Let the Devil's Prejudice Forever Disappear': Race and Inclusion in AJ Tomlinson's Church of God," (Master's thesis, Graduate School Southeast Missouri State University, 2014); Harrell, *White Sects and Black Men in the Recent South*, 94–96; Alexander, *Black Fire*, 266–68; Stephens, *The Fire Spreads*, 240. One point of departure is that Kinder was perhaps not aware of data that showed CGP interracialism was not only part of national, state, and district conventions, but also some local churches. For a study in contrast, see Mickey Crews, *The Church of God: A Social History* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1990), 163–72, who published a revealing Civil Rights survey at Lee College.

[18] *Minutes of our Nineteenth Annual Assembly of the Church over which AJ Tomlinson is General Overseer Held at Central Avenue Tabernacle, Cleveland, Tennessee, September 10-16, 1924*, 42, for the resolution against the KKK. The 1924 minutes also show the elevated status of African American ministers like T. J. Richardson along with Stanley R. Ferguson from the Bahamas. Synan, *Old Time Power*, 172–74, reports that at the 1925 PHC general conference all general officials had to be able to say they were not in fellowship with or affiliated in any way with the KKK after King organized the short lived "Buffalo Conference" with R. E. Erdman as superintendent. But see p. 183n32. Further, the 1922 minutes of the PHC General Board show they would only accept a relationship with Erdman's multiracial United Pentecostal Holiness Association if they agreed to stipulate the following: "The colored element shall always be confined to a conference or conferences north of the Mason-Dixon line" and that "no colored person shall ever hold office in an annual conference" nor shall they "ever be a delegate to a

general conference." The original 1922 PHC general board minutes signed by general secretary L. R. Graham are held by the IPHC Archives & Research Center.

[19] See forthcoming article: Harold D. Hunter, "Dismantling Systemic Racism for the Common Good: Excerpts from the Memphis Manifesto," in a 2021 book edited by Chris Green and Daniela Augustine produced for the Pentecostals and the Common Good Project. This study documents that PFNA not only did not invite the Church of God in Christ to join PFNA, but there was an undocumented agreement that black Pentecostal churches would not be received as members. This was not resolved until PFNA was dissolved in 1994 and replaced by the multicultural PCCNA (Pentecostal Charismatic Churches of North America). E. L. Jones, CGP African-American legend, told me that even CGP racially mixed services included whites who were sympathetic to the KKK.

[20] Jon Butler, "Enlarging the Bonds of Christ: Slavery, Evangelism, and the Christianization of the White South, 1690-1790," in *The Evangelical Tradition in America*, ed. by Leonard I. Sweet (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1984), 87–112. Butler argues that the Anglican program of evangelization in the eighteenth-century North American colonies was not simply coincidentally related to the massive turn to slavery during the same period. Butler acknowledges that most religious systems nearly always supported slavery and the English colonists had a slavery model in the West Indies by 1660, but the Anglican influence was direct and not unimportant.

[21] Deane William Ferm, *Contemporary American Theologies: A Critical Survey* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1981), 43, 48, 41, 47. On a related front, Tisby, *Color of Compromise*, 95, shows that the United Daughters of the Confederacy erected hundreds of monuments several decades after the Civil War to support the "Lost Cause" myth. A later spike in monuments was linked to racial ferment during the Jim Crow era. Tisby quotes Fitzhugh Brundage, a historian of lynching and the Jim Crow era, who said, "They tended to be erected at times when the South was fighting to resist political rights for black citizens."

[22] Frank Macchia and Jerry Shepherd interview of Herbert Daughtery was published under the title "The Gospel that Speaks to Blackness," *Agora* 4:1 (Summer 1980), 14–17, 9. Assemblies of God minister Bob Harrison, *When God Was Black* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971).

[23] Craig Scandrett-Leatherman, "'Can't Nobody Do Me Like Jesus': The Politics of Embodied Aesthetics in Afro-Pentecostal Rituals," (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2005), 153, 155, 165, 162, quoting Theodore Kornweibel, Jr., *"Investigate Everything": Federal Efforts to Compel Black Loyalty During World War I* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press: 2002); and Charles H. Pleas, *Fifty Years Achievement From 1906 - 1956: A Period in History of the Church of God in Christ* (Memphis, TN: Church Public Relations, Church of God in Christ, 1991). Also see Craig Scandrett-Leatherman, "Rites of Lynching and Rights of Dance," in *Afro-Pentecostalism*, eds. Estrelda Alexander and Amos Yong (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 94–95, 104–6. See Tisby, *Color of Compromise*, 106–10, and the horrific story (104) of the rape on September 3, 1944, of Recy Taylor, who was on her way home from the Rock Hill Holiness Church in Abbeville, Alabama.

[24] *White Wing Messenger* 20:7, April 4, 1942, 1; *Foursquare Crusader* 6:41, July 27, 1932, 1; and *Foursquare Crusader* 6:39, July 13, 1932, 2; *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* 30:21, September 19, 1946, 3, 9. See Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited*, 190–91.

[25] Tisby, *Color of Compromise*, 100. See Michael, "Ecclesiology," 55–63; Gaston Espinosa, *William J. Seymour and the Origins of Global Pentecostalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), ch. 6.

[26] Tisby, *Color of Compromise*, 101.

[27] "The Counterfeit Christianity of the KKK," *Christianity Today*, 20 April 1984, 30–32.

[28] Michel, "Ecclesiology," 61. Tisby, *Color of Compromise*, 90–91, points out that W. J. Seymour was part of a wave of African-Americans who searched for family members after emancipation. Tisby, *Color of Compromise*, 101–2, quotes the Grand Dragon of Oklahoma of merging Christian religion with white supremacy that helped account for 40,000 ministers belonging to the KKK.

[29] William Robert Snell, "The Ku Klux Klan in Jefferson County, Alabama: 1916-1930," (Master's thesis, Samford University, 1967); William R. Snell, "Masked Men in the Magic City: Activities of the Revised Klan in Birmingham, 1916-1940," *The Alabama Historical Quarterly* 34:3, 4 (Fall & Winter 1972), 206–27.

[30] See *Dake's Annotated Reference Bible: The Holy Bible: King James Version*, by Finis Jennings Dake (Lawrenceville, GA: Dake Bible Sales, Inc., 1963), 144, 159. Compare Dake's Bible to the series by Clarence Jordan that included *The Cotton Patch Version of Luke and Acts* (Piscataway, NJ: New Century Publishers, Inc., 1960). A good summary of these racial issues found in *Dake's Annotated Reference Bible* is provided by Stephen R. Haynes, "Distinction and Dispersal: Folk Theology and the Maintenance of White Supremacy," *Journal of Southern Religion* 17 (2015). Cf. "Scholars Scrutinize Popular Dake's Bible," *Christianity Today* 38:1, 10 January 1994, 50.

COVID-19, Science, and Race

A Black Pentecostal Engagement

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Abstract

A Black Pentecostal engagement of COVID-19, science, and race points towards a rapport between the Spirit-empowered Movement and health sciences where religious and secular (science) actors are respected agents in the public arena with each offering valuable perspectives and resources to pivotal conversations about public health in this case. In this article, it is argued that the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) represented in the episcopal letters of Bishop Charles E. Blake, Sr., the presiding bishop of COGIC from 2007 to 2021, demonstrate a religious perspective that possesses a critical perspective on engaging health science during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through his establishment of a COVID-19 taskforce of physicians and clergy, Bishop Blake has published episcopal statements on the pandemic that advanced public health by promoting scientifically-informed and medically sound measures that are consistent with Scripture and COGIC theology.

Introduction

The United States has entered a leadership vacuum regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. To switch metaphors, the country has entered a war zone marked by social catastrophes such as nearly 500,000 deaths by March 2021, devastation to families affected by the virus and the related economic crisis, loss of learning by urban public school students, the projected closure of 5 percent of Christian

congregations, and the disproportionate negative social impact of the pandemic on communities of color. Major sectors of U.S. society are reeling in reaction to the pandemic.

Clarity about the role of science in advancing public health has been contested. Situated within a polarized American society and church on the role of science, the debate about science's role in society is compounded by the reality that the society and churches grapple with living within an era of post-truth, alternative truths, alternative facts, and alternative realities that fuel the "infowars," or information wars. This reality hinders the U.S. government along with denominations and congregations from addressing the COVID-19 pandemic in a constructive, systematic manner. Rather than being united in the pursuit of ending the pandemic, an intellectual fight has broken out between the different camps reflecting opposing positions on the role of science in addressing the pandemic.

The debate within congregations, homes, and other institutions is framed by different views. Is COVID-19 just like the flu or a more deadly virus? Should we defend the science or fight science in advancing public health in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic? Are we to interpret the deaths associated by the pandemic as a means to "herd immunity" or avoidable deaths? Should race-related healthcare disparities exacerbated by the pandemic be ignored by the government and healthcare institutions? Or should government and public health funds be directed to reducing these disparities in regard to the pandemic specifically and improving the overall health outcome for Black and Brown Americans in general? Does a person's individual civil liberties trump public health or must public health place limits on one's civil rights? Does the U.S. constitutional religious right to assemble in-person as a congregation prevail over the government's public health responsibility to contain a pandemic by requiring the suspension of in-person religious gatherings? Are Christians to frame this debate as an issue of obeying government or serving God?

Science and COVID-19: A Spirit-empowered Engagement

While secularization appeared to truncate the religious sphere of the United States with "faith in science" replacing "faith in God" during the second half of the twentieth century, post-secularity might be a better descriptor of the religious context of the twenty-first century and of the context of a Black Pentecostal engagement of COVID-19, science, and race. On this topic, this perspective might point towards a rapport between Pentecostalism and health sciences where religious

and secular (science) actors are respected agents in the public arena with each offering valuable perspectives and resources to pivotal conversations about public health in this case.

Collaboration could occur between secular (science) institutions that recognize the civic and intellectual significance of religion in general and Spirit-empowered Christianity in particular. Spirit-empowered Christianity is deemed to possess a critical perspective on life, hold a valuable wisdom, and play a vital role in society. As the scholar Jurgen Habermas argues, societies, especially Western ones, need religion to thrive. So, Spirit-empowered organizations could unashamedly and unabashedly participate as vital institutions in the public arena. Following the thesis of sociologists Donald Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, there is present in Pentecostalism something more than sociological factors like economics, culture, and identity. What Pentecostals call the Holy Spirit, Miller and Yamamori identify as "the S Factor."[1]

How have Black Pentecostals who engage the scientific discussion of the COVID-19 within the public arena as Christians testify to the power of the Holy Spirit? How do they speak in Christian terms and content? How do they speak on experiences and practices that are "untranslatable" to a secular audience such as the Holy Spirit and divine healing?

How do they avoid perpetuating the culture wars along the lines of the U.S. Christian Right and Left? To engage the secular arena as Christians without culture war politics, Spirit-empowered Christians can cease mirroring cultural wars of the religious versus secularist combatants and co-lead a campaign of Christians and healthcare scientists in both communities to learn together how to respect, appreciate, and celebrate the constructive role that each is able to play in society.

In Michele Dillon's study of a post-secular Roman Catholicism, she proposes for Christianity and the secular an "appreciation of the mutual relevance." This "mutual relevance" could offer the Spirit-empowered Movement a pathway to greater "public relevance" by producing "culturally useful resources for addressing contemporary social ills" in dialogue and collaboration with secularism. These resources could include a constructive engagement of science, especially health care sciences. With a "contrite modernity" of a secularism that is cognizant of its excesses and of a Spirit-empowered Movement aware of its problematic triumphalism, they both can be open to "mutual self-critique." More broadly, these are joined by the inalienable rights of the U.N. Charter of Human Rights with additional commitment to healthcare justice and by Pentecostalism's democratization of the Spirit as well as its theology of holistic healing, including the

role of medicine. These perspectives could deepen practices of holistic healing promoted by the Spirit-empowered Movement that respect the integrity of the human body, life, and the family. Together they could enrich citizenship within society and in the Christian household of faith. While difference is acknowledged, it is engagement rather than combat. Consequently, new forms of Spirit-empowered civic engagement could emerge.[2]

Borrowing from Dillon, we stress that Spirit-empowered Christians could introduce their vocabulary of healing and the content of the biblical healing narratives in the public arena. Rather than translating their speech and arguments "into an accessible secular vocabulary" as Jurgen Habermas advocates for all religious arguments, it might be better for the secular sphere to become bi-lingual by learning the Christian language. More than a mere intellectual exchange, a Spirit-empowerment Movement with post-secular sensibilities could express a robust vision of flourishing life that embraces healthcare justice for people of color and others limited by healthcare inequities.[3]

Within the Spirit-empowered study of theology and science, Frederick Ware, a Church of God in Christ clergyperson, is among a select group of Black theologians, including Barbara Holmes, for whom science is a topic of their theological exploration. According to Ware, "Pentecostals have to make a choice of alignment with dominant theological and scientific paradigms." He adds:

> The old alignment with fundamentalist attitudes seems no longer to be a viable option for a robust engagement with modern science, given the evasion and rejection spawned by this kind of alignment. Recently, Pentecostals have associated more closely with both Evangelical organizations (e.g. the BioLogos Foundation) and mainline Protestant groups (e.g. Metanexus Institute and the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences).

Ware appears to seek a new alignment beyond the Fundamentalist, Evangelical, and Mainline Protestant options that foster a Pentecostal engagement with science that will increase "scientific literacy" among Pentecostals on one hand and "address both the intellectual problems and moral crises posed by modern science and its distortions." Internally within the Spirit-empowered Movement, he spotlights how "the lack of scientific literacy is being exploited" by certain ministries seeking financial gain through concocting "toxic brew(s)" that they advertise as "'healing water,' 'sacramental protocols,' and 'miracle mineral solution'" when consumed "in large doses can result in serious injury or death." A Pentecostal engagement with

science and education in scientific literacy is needed to help more people live amidst lethal misinformation.[4]

Science and COVID-19: The COGIC Engagement

During these first decades of the twenty-first century, Spirit-empowered denominations like the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) have occupied a unique place within the American religious landscape by having among its national leadership from the 1920s physicians and scientists who were either bishops, pastors, or women officials. These leaders created a space within COGIC to pursue a constructive, albeit limited, dialogue between faith and science.

The Church of God in Christ acknowledges the role of medicine as part of God's plan of healing. While some Pentecostal traditions reject medicine on theological grounds, juxtaposing faith with belief and medicine with doubt, limiting healing to divine agency, COGIC understands the role of divine and human agency in the biblical plan of healing. Providing theological support for medicine and vaccinations, COGIC has expressed support for members being vaccinated against COVID-19.

"The general welfare of all people," including healthcare, has been a long-term concern of COGIC. In its official theological document, the denomination states: "We believe that Christ, through his redemptive power, has enabled us and called us to help relieve human suffering created by sin, and we are to use whatever available resources in the restoration of [hu]man [beings] to physical, mental and spiritual health." Accordingly, prescription pharmaceuticals are to be used "under medical supervision for one's health and well-being." While prayer is recommended as the first "treatment" for illness, medical treatment is encouraged. Under a rubric of "Medical Care," COGIC expresses a dedication to "principles and practices in wholesome living, as a sound mind must reside in a sound body. . . ."[5]

Communiques called "Presiding Bishop's Statement on COVID-19" were composed and disseminated to the Church of God in Christ throughout the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in March through December 2020. In addition by May 2020, Bishop Blake convened a taskforce, the "COGIC COVID-19 Advisory Commission," and appointed as the commission's co-chairs two COGIC physicians who are bishops, Elton Amos and Terence Rhone. The commission was comprised of physicians, attorneys, scholars, pastors, and bishops.

In his first episcopal letter on COVID-19 dated 11 March 2020, Bishop Blake placed in conversation "considerable prayer" and consultation with "trusted

medical professionals." He noted: "*After considerable prayer and direct consultation with trusted medical professionals from around the country, the following is our response to the growing concerns over the rapid spread of the coronavirus disease epidemic (COVID-19) that is currently impacting the world*" (italics original). He stated that "the Church of God in Christ is providing and adhering to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) & Prevention guidelines, in addition to fervent, believing prayer." He included a link to the CDC website in his letter so that the COGIC leadership and membership could access current information about the virus and the guidelines. He saw a need for a "joint effort" between the congregations and the CDC in order to "reduce the risk of exposure as much as possible." While this joint effort expressed concern about individual transmission of the virus, he also acknowledged the role of risky decisions of organizations like denominations that could collectively increase transmission. He asked the "more than 10,000 congregations" of COGIC "to aggressively monitor the epidemic as it develops and take all necessary and recommended measures provided by the CDC."[6]

Prayer opened and concluded the communique:

> Lastly, let us continue to pray for the speedy recoveries of all who have been affected by COVID-19. Please also pray for the many healthcare workers who faithfully serve in numerous patient care settings as essential personnel, for our Church, the nation and the entire world.
>
> The Church of God in Christ trusts in the miraculous healing and protective power of the Lord Jesus Christ. As He alone is our Keeper, we will continue to wholly put our trust and faith in Him.

There is a call for the church to enter into intercessory prayer on the behalf of frontline workers and prayer for "miraculous healing" and "protective power" found in Jesus Christ.[7]

In the second episcopal letter on COVID-19 dated 18 March 2020, Bishop Blake continues the conversation. He inquires in response to the pandemic, "What are the saints to do?" He proposes:

> First, needless to say, we are living in perilous times, but certainly not without a divine remedy to survive, overcome and to emerge safely and victoriously. In fact, the same way God exercised His power to save Israel from every disease which struck the land of Egypt, even so did our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ demonstrate Himself to be the Son of

> God in accomplishing the healing of every widespread outbreak and pandemic affecting the regions wherever He traveled. For this reason, it is my desire to share some practical guidelines for elevating our awareness while fully engaging our faith.

He emphasized that COGIC congregants and leaders should "stay fully informed, well-prepared and safely empowered." They should "remain connected to good counsel" coming from CDC and "'be not deceived' nor vulnerable" to the virus through misinformation and risky behavior.[8]

Bishop Blake stated in this second episcopal letter on COVID-19 that "during this crisis, our faith in God is most responsibly exercised in trusting those voices whose entire lives and professions have been dedicated to the awesome task of ensuring our public health. . . . Strategic planning is the key to warfare. Therefore, to win, you must remain connected to good counsel." He grounds his perspective in the sovereignty of God. For Bishop Blake, God "is in control and is He [who] is ready to come to our rescue in critical times" such as during this pandemic. He also confesses God as the healer who "has sent His Word to heal." Bishop Blake understands healing in terms of miracles on one hand and preventive public health measures on the other, measures that relieve and mitigate against the public dimensions of the virus.[9]

In the third episcopal letter of 25 March 2020, Bishop Blake issues a call to the Church of God in Christ.

> Fervent prayer is our biblical response to any and all societal challenges. For this reason, your Presiding Bishop and General Board are calling all saints to observe a day of "GLOBAL FASTING AND INTERCESSORY PRAYER." This coming Friday, MARCH 27, 2020, we will intercede on behalf of all nations and people for Heaven's help in mitigating this dreaded disease—and for healing the bodies, minds and spirits of a fallen and fearful humanity. Please observe fasting from midnight, Thursday, March 26th until 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 27th—and continue in fervent prayer throughout the day. Ultimately, we trust in the great physician, Jesus Christ.

During the day of global fasting and prayer, prayers that "wise decisions will be made by international, national and state leaders" were offered up to God. There were prayers "for all that are in authority" extending from political offices to "the compassionate vanguard of those in harm's way," ranging from medical personnel

to teachers and police to pharmacy staff and grocery store workers. In addition, prayers were offered for "the mission-critical manufacturing supply chain." Amidst increasing infection and death rates, prayers were said for the affected families "grappling with the illness or loss of loved ones," requesting "divine comfort," and for "total health and healing" for those infected by the virus as well as "other medical conditions."[10]

Bishop Blake noted in his April 2020 episcopal letter on COVID-19:

> The Church of God in Christ does not support or condone any actions that defy the collective wisdom and recommendations of government leaders, both federally and locally, including scientific experts. In fact, the leadership of our church has communicated directly, on multiple occasions, with pastors and church leaders, encouraging all to abide by the directives and stay-at-home guidelines set by city, state, and federal officials.

He made clear that "Church of God in Christ remains committed to prioritizing the welfare of people over the economy" as government and civic leaders debate whether to prioritize profit or people.[11]

In the 1 May 2020 episcopal letter on COVID-19, Bishop Blake addresses what he identified as "premature re-openings" of churches. In the debate of whether to follow the government in reopening sectors of cities, towns, and states, Bishop Blake proposes caution regarding the premature re-openings until there is "tangible, persistent flattening of the curve" related to the rates of infection, hospitalizations, and deaths from the virus. He states:[12]

> We do not recommend the reopening of COGIC churches at this time. Although our current circumstances are not ideal, the Church of God in Christ is resolute in our stance that the reopening of churches, prior to the number of new COVID-19 cases significantly declining, and prior to a tangible, persistent flattening of the curve could prove detrimental to our congregant populations as a whole.

In the 23 May 2020 episcopal letter he implored:[13]

> We urge you, our pastors, to adhere to the recommendations of the CDC and NIAID [National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases] and to refrain from prematurely opening your churches and congregating in your buildings before we have credible and

> substantiated evidence that it is safe to do so. In addition, we urge you to establish a protocol to safely reopen your church to prevent any risk to the health and safety of our members and communities at large *before* you reopen your churches.

In the 29 December 2020 episcopal letter, Bishop Blake and the co-chairs of the Commission addressed the issue of COVID-19 vaccinations:

> Appealing to "trusted" medical doctors, Bishop Blake expressed confidence in their "advising COGIC adherents in a safe, scientifically sound and God-guided manner" regarding "medically sound counsel." While noting "the unprecedented acceleration of research, development, and approval (EUA) also contributes to the unease that some share regarding vaccination," Bishops and Doctors Amos and Rhone argue that since the "vaccination is the only medical option for the prevention of COVID-19" it should be taken. They offer three reasons to be vaccinated against this coronavirus.[14]

First, the "coronavirus vaccines do not contain live virus." Therefore, the vaccine itself cannot potentially infect people with the virus. Second, "the benefits outweigh the risks." They note that by being vaccinated you receive "a 95% chance of eradicating the virus in your system before it can make you sick! The result to be expected is that you LIVE and not DIE!" Third, there is the benefit of reaching herd immunity by "at least 70–80% of the population" being vaccinated and becoming immune to the virus; thus, the pandemic will end and the virus will be eradicated.[15]

In different cities and towns, COGIC congregations are partnering with county health departments, hospital systems, and pharmacies to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine in underserved communities from Los Angeles (CA) and Durham (NC) to Arkansas (KS). These COGIC congregations demonstrate their support of the vaccination efforts. In Los Angeles, West Angeles Cathedral, pastored by Bishop Charles Edward Blake, Sr., is partnering with the Los Angeles County Public Health Department to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to the Crenshaw neighborhood where the congregation is located. In Durham, Nehemiah Church is partnering with Duke Health, allowing its facility to be utilized as a COVID-19 vaccination center to administer the first shot on February 11, 2021, and the second shot on March 11, 2021. According to Dr. Herbert Davis, the pastor, the congregation provides volunteers to assist as well as recruit people from

the area churches to apply for appointments to receive the vaccine in addition to the people recruited by Duke. In Arkansas (KS), St. James Church is partnering with Graves Drug, a regional pharmacy. West Angeles Cathedral, Nehemiah Church, and St. James actively recruit vulnerable populations from underserved communities of people of color in the vaccination efforts.[16]

Science and COVID-19: Divine Healing and Medicine

Bishop Blake and the Commission build on the COGIC history of holding in creative tension divine healing and medicine. The Church of God in Christ acknowledges the role of medicine as part of God's plan of healing. While some Pentecostal traditions reject medicine on theological grounds, juxtaposing faith with belief and medicine with doubt, limiting healing to divine agency, COGIC understands the role of divine and human agency in the biblical plan of healing. Providing theological support for medicine and vaccinations, COGIC has expressed support for members receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

"The general welfare of all people," including through healthcare, has been a long-term concern of COGIC. In its official theological document, the denomination states: "We believe that Christ, through his redemptive power, has enabled us and called us to help relieve human suffering. . . ."[17]

The relieving of human suffering is a calling of the church that is enabled by the redemptive power of Christ. Since human suffering is understood as being a product of sin and Christ's redemption frees from sin, Christians are to utilize all relevant resources in restoring people in a holistic manner, including "physical, mental and spiritual health."[18]

Accordingly, prescription drugs or pharmaceuticals are to be used with "medical supervision for one's health and well-being." While prayer is to be the first "treatment" for illness, medical treatment is encouraged.[19] Under the heading of "Medical Care," COGIC expresses a dedication to "principles and practices in wholesome living, as a sound mind must reside in a sound body. . . ."[20] Counseling ministries by certified professionals are encouraged to be made available to congregations in order for members to be able to receive referrals for "medical information" as well as other services.[21]

Science and COVID-19: Engaging Racial Disparities

COGIC expressed commitment to "the equal access of all [hu]mankind to the goods and service of this earth," which conceptually could include "equal access" to healthcare services for all people regardless of income or race.[22]

Government and public health funds should be directed to initiatives that will reduce the race-related healthcare disparities that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. These initiatives should provide better healthcare in treating and preventing the infections from the coronavirus for African Americans, Latinx, and First Nations (Amerindians) as well as improve the overall health outcomes of these populations.

In the "COGIC Doctors' COVID Response" (1 May 2020) co-authored by Bishops Terence Rhone, MD, and Elton Amos, MD, they note the issues of race-related healthcare disparities in their communication to the denomination as they reviewed the recommended guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. They state that "the experts have admitted the health disparity that results in more deaths in people of color than whites. Centuries of social and economic inequality most likely have caused Black Americans to suffer additional consequences of this pandemic, increasing the vulnerability of our members and worshippers." They stress that "especially distressing is that the rates of COVID19 infections and deaths remain disproportionally high among African Americans." They relate this phenomenon to "the U.S. government's history of experimentation, disparate healthcare services, and willful blindness to the social determinants of health that contribute to people of color's health status."

Key to understanding race-related healthcare disparities and appropriate Spirit-empowered Christian responses is possibly to re-engage the Memphis Miracle of 1994 and the "Racial Reconciliation Manifesto" sponsored the Pentecostal Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA). A serious, critical, and constructive re-engagement of the Memphis Miracle of 1994 and its "Racial Reconciliation Manifesto" that promoted racial reconciliation could introduce new vocabulary, sensibilities, and ethics into the discourse of North American Pentecostals of all races as well as Spirit-empowered Christians on all continents. The re-embrace of the Memphis Miracle and the "Racial Reconciliation Manifesto" could lunge North American Pentecostal-Charismatic denominations into the future as leaders in advocating the reduction of race-related healthcare disparities and the advancement of healthcare justice for all people.[23]

Re-engaging the "Racial Reconciliation Manifesto" could re-introduce the topics of racial equality, reconciliation, and equity as subjects and identify healthcare justice for people of color as a priority in promoting racial equity. This perspective would challenge discourses that espouse "colorblindness" in healthcare delivery by recognizing racism as an institutional reality that negatively impacts health systems and the life outcomes of people of color. A re-engagement of the Manifesto could commit Spirit-empowered Christians to supporting the call to end racist structures that produce healthcare disparities among the races as they "work against all forms of personal and institutional racism." By adopting the distinction between personal and systemic racism made in the Manifesto, Spirit-empowered Christians and congregations could advance analyses of racism in healthcare institutions. Identifying racism as a sin expands racism from being merely a moral flaw or social problem, providing a framework to address issues such as race-related healthcare disparities.[24]

Understanding racism systemically would frame race-related healthcare disparities as intertwined with racial privilege, prejudice, and power in the allocation of healthcare resources. Racism, according to William J. Wilson, leads one racial group, often white people, to garner the power to impose its racial prejudices on other racial groups; these non-white groups function in a subordinate manner within the society, ruled invisible in research on disease, pharmaceuticals, and public health initiative as well as underserved in the healthcare delivery system; hospitals, clinics, and physicians are fewer per capita than in majority white communities.

The race-related healthcare disparities exacerbated by the pandemic should garner government and public health funds in reducing these disparities in regards to the pandemic specifically and the overall health outcome indexes for African Americans, Latinx, and First Nations (Amerindians) from leading Black Pentecostal perspectives.

In support of the establishment of health clinics in communities underserved by the medical establishment, COGIC congregations and the denomination itself have illustrated the partnerships between faith and science. Clinics have been sponsored in urban centers like Detroit (MI) by New St. Paul, in towns like Hayward (CA) by Glad Tidings International COGIC, and rural communities in the Global South. Within the Global South, COGIC has also sponsored medical mission trips staffed with doctors and nurses to countries in the Caribbean, South America, Africa, and Asia.

Conclusion

The concerted efforts of COGIC in addressing the pandemic can be a factor in containing "the spread of COVID-19 pandemic and decrease morbidity and mortality." COGIC facilitates preventive behavior "changes based on faith motivations and worldview" by ensuring that the public health recommendations they support square with COGIC's moral "values and religious practices." Therefore, in providing "relevant health messaging" from a Spirit-empowered Christian perspective, COGIC advances public health by promoting scientifically-informed and medically sound measures that are consistent with Scripture and COGIC theology.[25]

In "leading by example" in its denominational and congregational modification of its religious practices in compliance with public health measures related to the pandemic, COGIC participates in the civic arena as a "transformational" leader. It models best practices in preventing the transmission of the virus. It defuses "fear and mistrust" by engendering hope and fostering trust amidst the pandemic. It enters the public arena as a national and global institution constructively engaging science and promoting public health, serving as "a trusted intermediary between the government and local communities." It illustrates the vital role congregations and denominations can play in educating people about where to locate reliable scientific information about best public health practices regarding preventing and limiting the transmission of the virus as well as about vaccines to protect against the virus. Within the context of "infowars," or information wars, a greater chance for reliable information to be heard and believed exists when more institutions like COGIC disseminate reliable information and counter misinformation. This reliable information can "facilitate" preventive behavior that lessens the spread of the virus.[26]

By being located in communities underserved by medical establishments and other institutions, COGIC congregations are crucial intermediaries between the government and the people because of its "close proximity" to the people most infected and affected by the virus and many of these congregations themselves being comprised of people from these vulnerable populations. By being "embedded in local communities" and maintaining "relationships of trust and familiarity," COGIC congregations offer a "comparative advantage" in conferring credibility to public health initiatives addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. By COGIC congregations serving as COVID-19 testing and vaccination sites, they are part of the healing infrastructure that connects prayer and medicine.[27]

The leadership of Bishop Charles Edward Blake, Sr., and the Church of God in Christ has offered a model of a Pentecostal engagement of science, public health, and faith that is theologically based, medically informed, and scientifically sound.

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Pentecostalism and Coronavirus

Reframing the Message of Health-and-Wealth in a Pandemic Era

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Abstract

One of the global effects of the COVID-19 pandemic is the religious responses that it has generated. For contemporary Pentecostalism in particular, which is a religion that preaches and teaches a theology of human flourishing through the principles of prosperity, the negative effects of the coronavirus on people proved a theologically challenging endeavor. Pronouncing curses on evil or blaming Satan for it in human life has always been part of the means to achieve health and wealth for contemporary Pentecostals. This is very much the case in Africa where the instrumentalist use of religion as a means of personal and communal survival and wellbeing already exists. Thus, the contemporary Pentecostal health-and-wealth gospel, although appeals to the Bible for theological legitimacy, also resonates very much with the African worldview. In the midst of the pandemic, however, the monolithic understanding of flourishing preached by some Pentecostals came unstuck. In this article, we discuss African contemporary Pentecostal responses to the pandemic in order to show how the reality of evil can challenge existing understanding of life's challenges and the need to be holistic in our responses to them.

Introduction

This article reflects on Pentecostal/Charismatic responses to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The discussions are situated within the African context where contemporary Pentecostalism is flourishing both in numerical strength and in public presence because of the extensive use of modern media technology. There is a strong affinity between Charismatic Christianity and media and in the last year in which in-person meetings have had to be restricted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The use of media technology by religious organizations has been moved several notches up from where things were just about a year ago. The outbreak of the pandemic, I point out elsewhere, coincided with the celebrations of major Christian events.[1] In the year 2020, the Christian seasons of the Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, and Christmas were all celebrated either in lockdown mode or under restrictions. The celebrations in the year 2021 are likely to be the same, at least in most non-Western contexts, where vaccination against the virus is unlikely to take place until past the midpoint of the year.

The coronavirus pandemic triggered a world crisis of monumental proportions and as Klaus Schwab and Thierry Malleret point out, "deep existential crisis also favors introspection and can harbor the potential for transformation."[2] The pandemic has created "a dangerous and volatile period on multiple fronts—politically, socially, geopolitically—raising deep concerns about the environment and also extending the reach of technology into our lives," Schwab and Malleret note.[3] When the two authors add that no industry or business will be spared these changes brought upon the world order by the pandemic, it definitely includes the business of the church. In this article, we first learn about the nature of contemporary Pentecostalism before pointing out how its theology of prosperity and interpretations of reality are brought to bear on a public health issue—the COVID-19 pandemic—helping us to appreciate the importance of religion, and in this case, the religious and theological responses of Pentecostal Christianity to existential evil.

Contemporary Pentecostalism

The designation contemporary Pentecostal or Charismatic church/ministry is usually deployed in the African context to refer to those urban-centered prosperity-preaching churches and ministries that emerged across Christian Africa from the middle of the 1970s. The well-known characteristic features of contemporary

Pentecostal churches/ministries include an emphasis on the critical place of charismatic manifestations in the lives of believers and the worship of the church; urban-centered mega-size congregations; hermeneutics of success and prosperity; prayer and proactive attacks on the sources of evil; ministries of healing, exorcism, and deliverance; belief in the powers of positive declarations and the cursing of evil; and a focus on spiritual warfare as a means of human flourishing. Contemporary Charismatic churches have built or aim to build modern and imposing worship auditoriums that are fitted to accommodate a strong and innovative media culture and a taste for religious internationalism and globalization of faith. Their modern outlook, media technology driven religious services, and messages of motivation appeal strongly to Africa's upwardly mobile youth.

Contemporary Pentecostal churches and ministries are led by highly influential and charismatically gifted leaders. Many of them have a public ministry because of their strong and powerful media activities that reach millions of followers around the world. The adoption of a motivational approach to preaching, their knack for breaking down biblical narratives and applying them within a context of personal development and economic empowerment, and their existential and pragmatic approaches to faith that use the Bible to speak to real-life situations in times of peril has endeared the average contemporary Charismatic pastor to a wider public in a way that the historic mission churches have not been able to do. The responses to the outbreak of the pandemic that we discuss in this article are based on data obtained from the media sources of contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic pastors such as their live televised worship services, and especially YouTube videos circulating on various social media platforms. At the height of the pandemic these are the locations from where religious resources of supernatural succor were obtained by many people. The contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic culture of mobilization of prayer for the public good—whether it means positive declarations of prosperity or the cursing of evil—is something that proved very relevant in how this wave of Christianity has dealt with the pandemic.

Preaching Prosperity During the Spread of an Evil Virus

The discussion of the negative effects of COVID-19 in the light of contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity is important for theological reasons too. These are churches that emphasize a theology of health-and-wealth. The general thrust of the message is that Christians must believe God for success, wellbeing, prosperity,

emancipation, positives, elevation, and empowerment for various endeavors in this life. The preaching of prosperity is not necessarily inconsistent with the promises of God in Scripture. One of the many biblical passages one heard over and again at the height of the pandemic was Jeremiah 29:11, "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." The problem is therefore not with the message of wellbeing and prosperity, but rather, it is with the simplistic emphasis on a formulaic theology of success that does not leave room for self-denial, pain, and suffering as outlined in a proper theology of the cross.

This gospel of prosperity, in several of its aspects, came unstuck in the face of what sermons and prophetic declarations describe as an "evil virus." This has been very much the case, at least in African Pentecostal/Charismatic homiletics and rhetoric. In the theology of many of the charismatic figures who lead these churches and movements, the presence and persistence of evil would normally be explained in terms of the work of the devil and other principalities and powers. What creates the spiritual spaces for evil to thrive, in the Charismatic prosperity discourses under scrutiny here, range from living in sin to the non-fulfillment of tithing obligations to the church. In Africa, the general belief among Christians, but in particular Pentecostals, is that traditional religious practices of libation-pouring to deities and ancestral sacrifices and celebrations of festivals have become sources of spiritual contamination and setbacks to the fortunes of a continent that is otherwise very materially blessed by God.

On the world stage supernatural evil, it is believed, comes upon humanity as a result of social deviations like the endorsement and toleration of alternative sexual lifestyles—the LGBTQI agenda—and these are considered to be a source of affliction as it goes against the teachings of the Bible on proper human sexuality and marriage. Contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity propounds a reciprocal theology, in which Christian giving in particular is transactional in nature because not only does God bless those who give to their pastors and prophets, but he also withdraws his cover and protection from those who do not give. This is a Christianity that also believes very much in the authority possessed by Spirit-filled believers to curse evil, cancel curses, and to principalities and powers generally to neutralize their powers and effects on people's lives and situations. In contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity, spiritual and material prosperity follows the cursing of evil and so the coronavirus was problematized as an "agent of Satan" inflicted on the world not just to upset our lives, but also to trouble seriously the people of God.

Contemporary Pentecostal Responses to Coronavirus

How are Africa's contemporary Charismatic pastors with this prosperity mindset, authoritative approach to prayer, and belief in the prophetic and supernatural evil, responding to a pandemic that has defied their theological logics? There are many influential Charismatic preachers in Africa who have founded very large or mega-size ministries with public influences unparalleled in the history of Christianity on the continent. Their religious media empires, as we have noted, enable these charismatic figures to speak to global audiences. The ones whose responses to the pandemic are discussed in this article include Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams of the Action Chapel International (ACI) and Pastor Mensa Otabil of the International Central Gospel Church, both based in Ghana. Pastor Chris Oyakhilome of Christ Embassy, a Nigerian church based in South Africa, receives mention for buying into conspiracy theories surrounding the outbreak of the pandemic. Pastor Oyakhilome shares that position with the American prosperity preacher Kenneth Copeland, who at the height of the spread of the pandemic declared it nullified. Prophet Emmanuel Makandiwa of Zimbabwe predicted the outbreak of a pandemic about five years ahead of the coronavirus pandemic and we discuss what he prophesied as an example of the Pentecostal/Charismatic emphasis on the deployment of spiritual gifts in public life.

Pastor Otabil is a motivational speaker who usually takes a pragmatic approach to existential issues. Archbishop Duncan-Williams leans towards mobilizing prayer to deal with crisis and Pastor Oyakhilome is known for his miracle working ministry and in particular for his emphasis on healing and deliverance. Pastor Makandiwa functions as a charismatic prophet. This is to say that although we categorize all these pastors and their ministries under the general rubric of contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic ministry, there are differences in the way their ministries operate or function. In spite of these differences one can say that, to a very high extent, they all belong to the prosperity believing and preaching category of Pentecostalism and that orientation shows to various degrees in the ways they have preached, prayed, or prophesied in relation to the pandemic.

Religious Responses to the Pandemic

Pentecostalism is an experiential religion with a very forceful oral culture and so the data for discussion is accessed mainly from sermons, statements, and prophetic declarations made during the lockdown and restriction periods through various

media outlets. There are a number of things to note from the outset: first, many of the sermons and declarations were very inspirational as they sought to bring hope to hearers through various media networks; secondly, some have bought into religious conspiracy theories relating to the pandemic with Pastor Chris Oyakhilome even claiming that the whole thing was a hoax perpetrated by media technology companies seeking to install a new 5G network facility that would harm the world; thirdly, the trajectories of the messages also showed how the pandemic was challenging contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic triumphalist assumptions on faith and evil in human life; and fourthly, the element of the prophetic has played a key role in the religious responses to the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has, among others, challenged the faiths of many people with Christians calling for concerted prayer to defeat a virus that some thought had been inflicted on the world by the devil. In many sermons, especially from the Charismatic sector, the coronavirus was "cursed" as demonic, and as an agent of the devil, is out to destroy God's people and this was particularly on account of the fact that it disrupted the nature of church as we have come to understand it. In not a few cases there were submissions speculating that perhaps this was the beginning of the apocalyptic times about which the Bible talks. Pastor Chris Oyakhilome of Christ Embassy has also indicated that the virus attack is a way in which technological giants are diverting human attention to facilitate the setting up of their 5G infrastructure around the world.[4]

One the most important biblical passages that served as the foundation of prayer in the COVID-19 period was Psalm 91. It begins with the words, "You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust'" (Ps 91:1–2).[5] The psalmist's reference to God's deliverance from "the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence" in verse 3 provided the appropriate discourse for many seeking to invoke the name and power of God in dealing with the pandemic. A lot of prayer circulating in the media used verses from this particular Psalm. Of the various Christian churches in Africa, I found the responses of the contemporary Pentecostal or Charismatic churches to the outbreak of the pandemic very instructive and revealing. This is because as churches that focus on the charismatic experience in the power of the Holy Spirit, their theology has an interventionist orientation; they take the theology of evil seriously and how to deal with evil features prominently in their ecclesiology.

Lockdown and Contemporary Pentecostal Theology

The COVID-19 era came as a test of a situation that provided an alternative context within which to articulate Charismatic motivational messages. Pastor Otabil is one among a very few Charismatic pastors who decided, when the government increased the numbers of people gathering in a single location from twenty-five to one hundred, to continue services online. In the face of depressive spirits, failing businesses, empty pockets, family dislocations, sicknesses, bereavements, and so on and so forth, many, like Jesus on the cross, felt forsaken. Pastor Mensa Otabil seized the moment to repackage his messages on the principles of success, positives, promotion, and wealth creation to suit the spirit of the times. A number of Charismatic pastors returned to eschatological messages, a theme that is normally missing from prosperity discourses.

That is not to say Africa's Charismatic church leaders do not believe in judgment, hell, the second coming of Christ, and the like; no, they do. However, that sort of message was simply inconsistent with the regular emphasis on health, wealth, and material prosperity that had become part of the Charismatic self-definition in terms of religious emphasis. Whether articulated in terms of the power of Jesus or that of the Holy Spirit, Charismatic Christianity speaks the language of power in which God turns impossibilities into possibilities. The depressive circumstances that the COVID-19 pandemic situation created offered the virtual perfect fit for the sort of motivational and inspiring messages associated with contemporary Pentecostalism. Thus, the responses to the pandemic also brought to the fore contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic religious cultures of the mobilization of prayer for the public good in the light of their strong hermeneutics of evil as spiritually caused.

Its prosperity message had often sounded a bit monolithic and myopic in the sense that although it is preached in full knowledge that suffering and evil are real, those sorts of human circumstances have often been ignored. The American prosperity gospel exponent, Kenneth Copeland, even responded to the pandemic against the backdrop of the American elections that eventually President Joe Biden was to win. He wrote on his Facebook page on October 17, 2020, as follows:

> The COVID-19 pandemic has been used as a pretext for the election to force all of us into fear. When we are fearful, we are willing to sacrifice our peace and prosperity for security, but it is a false security.

> We need to stand firm in our faith and have dominion over fear. Resist fear, and the devil will flee from you.

The emphasis on the power of triumph, success, promotion, life, health, victory, and overcoming has blinded many Charismatic, especially prosperity touting, preachers to the real-life circumstances of their patrons. With businesses, domestic economies, and the personal health of many people taking a hit, the messages of prosperity were simply confronted with a reality check in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Until the onset of the pandemic, it was the triumphalist stories of those who are winning the battles of life that we often heard about in Pentecostal testimonies. The lots of those going through challenges were often treated as if they did not apply the right principles of success, which would usually mean, the faithful fulfillment of tithing obligations. In the particular circumstances of the pandemic, everyone to some extent was confronted with the realities of evil and suffering with even the wealthiest of nations and their economies being crippled.

Suddenly, the messages of prosperity had to be repackaged due to the onset of affliction with the outbreak of COVID-19. In contrast to the regular messages that those who fulfill certain religious obligations would be successful and win the battles of life, this particular demon of a coronavirus was affecting the fortunes of everyone including pastors and prophets who had assured us that faithful Christians were beyond the logic of suffering. Many took to social media to question the inability of the African Charismatic prophets to foretell the onset of the coronavirus and if not deal with it, at least get the world to prepare. The world was locked down through Good Friday and the Easter periods of 2020. Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams claimed that the virus was a demonic attack from satanic and demonic wombs and incubators.[6] He further declared that the virus would disappear by the Passover, but this did not materialize with another Passover upon us in 2021.[7] The lockdowns did not afford African Pentecostal/Charismatic pastors their usual opportunities to advertise the "benefits of the cross," "the blood that speaks," or the "power of the resurrection" during Lent and Holy Week.

Here for instance is a selection of a combination of prayer and declarations made by Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams in the early weeks of the pandemic:

> The Coronavirus is a name, is a person without body and in the name of Jesus, as we bow our knee and we pray, in the name of Jesus, this

plague, pestilence and virus will bow the knee and will stand down and go back from whence it came in the name of Jesus. The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble and he knoweth them that trust in Him. I challenge you, within these thirty days to trust in the Lord like never before. Show the enemy that your faith is in God. If we only trust God when everything is good and in good times when everything is alright, then it is not faith and it is not trust. But it is the times of trouble and moments like this that we know whether we trust God, or we don't trust God. It is times like this that your faith and my faith is renewed, it takes times like this, trying situations like this, to reveal the strength of our faith. Trust in God, I challenge you to trust in God, to have faith in God, as never before.

This is not the end of the world, there are people who are saying that this virus is judgement from God and that it is the sign of the end of the world. They are entitled to their opinion. And others believe it is from the enemy but whatever these schools of thoughts are, doesn't bother me. The most important thing is for you to have right standing with God because if you have a right standing with God, if it is from the enemy, the Bible says "no weapon formed against you shall prosper and every tongue that rises in judgement against you, you shall be condemned." And if it is judgement from God, in the day of judgement, God has promised to deliver and to exempt His chosen, His children from the judgement. So, whatever it is, you are covered. And I don't want you to entertain fear, don't entertain any fear because the blood of Jesus has covered us, the Bible said "when I see the blood, when I see the blood, when I see the blood, I will pass over you."

We invoke the blood of Jesus over this nation, we invoke the blood of Jesus over our borders, our airwaves, our high seas and the land, and every family of this country and nation and all the members of our church. We invoke the blood of Jesus that this virus and this angel of death will pass over our dwellings, will pass over our loved ones, will pass over all that concerns us and that there will be no loss of any father, mother, wife, husband, boy or girl or grandson or granddaughter. There will be no loss of any life among us and that our wives will not be widows and our children will not be fatherless. And no father or mother will bury their children by any means in the name

> Jesus. . . . In the face of adversity, in the face of disaster and in the face of tragedy, you are an overcomer.[8]

In this mix of discourses on hope, demonization of the virus, and the declaration of protection from evil, Archbishop Duncan-Williams very clearly confronts an issue that had become a problem for the otherwise prosperity theology that he has been propagating. As with the first Passover and the first Crucifixion and Resurrection days in the Bible, everyone was locked down at the height of the pandemic and churches were closed. That was a reality away from which no one could run as it was the reality the world was facing. The messages were still empowering; preachers were challenged by the circumstances to tweak them a bit to account for what the world was going through.

"The Man Who Could Not Be Locked Down"

During the 2020 Resurrection day televised church services, one of the sermons came from Pastor Mensa Otabil. The word "lockdown" featured quite prominently in his Easter Sunday message. The text for the day was Matthew's account of the resurrection and the theme was "The Man Who Could Not be Locked Down." There were three instruments that the authorities used to lock Jesus down, according to Pastor Otabil. These were the physical, legal, and political. The physical instrument was the stone that was used to seal the tomb in which Jesus was laid. The legal one was imposed when the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and asked him to issue a "command for the tomb to be made secure until the third day" because "the imposter," when he was alive, had said he was going to resurrect after three days. Pilate complied and gave the request legal backing (Matt 27:62–63). The third instrument of lockdown was the political one in which soldiers were sent to guard the tomb of Jesus: "Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard of soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.' So, they went with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone" (Matt 27:65–66).

In spite of these three instruments of lockdown, Pastor Otabil averred, Jesus resurrected from the dead: "God wants to breakdown something that has locked you down," Pastor Otabil assured his hearers. There were three instruments of lockdown used to restrain Jesus, but God needed only two instruments to release him. These were the natural and the supernatural instruments of God and both are listed in Matthew 28:2, "And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it."

Pastor Otabil explained that God has his own way of intervening when we are locked down by the circumstances of life. In the case of Jesus, God deployed the natural instrument of an earthquake and a supernatural instrument of the intervention of angels. The stone was rolled away for us to see what God had already done, and that is, he had raised Jesus from death. Pastor Otabil illustrated his point using parts of the Pentecost day message preached by Peter: "But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power" (Acts 2:24).[9]

The Eschatological Gear

Until the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, one would have struggled to hear sermons on the second coming of Christ among contemporary Pentecostal preachers. One scarcely hears sermons about eschatological events in the contemporary Charismatic world. This is because a preacher cannot, in prosperity fashion, encourage members to make as much money as they could, build big and palatial homes, buy the best in luxurious cars and at the same time preach that, but anyway, Jesus could appear like a thief in the night.[10] Contemporary Pentecostals believe in God's end time judgement and the second coming of Christ, but they simply do not preach it. Paul Gifford also mentions this in his book, *Ghana's New Christianity,* noting that the recurring emphasis in this form of Christianity "has to do with success, wealth and status."[11] If these are the recurring themes of contemporary Pentecostalism, what changed in the first quarter of the year 2020?

Prosperity preachers were forced to respond to a pandemic that revealed the realities of life. In the period of the coronavirus consternation, there was certainly a change in mood and several preachers took on eschatological issues that had hitherto been placed on the back burner. Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams of the ACI claimed on Palm Sunday that this was a wakeup call for the church to realize that "we have a place to go." The reason for the born-again experience was for us to prepare for eternity, he noted. In his words: "this is the time for purity, holiness, righteousness in heart and motive; this is not the time to make money but to give and be a child of God like never before. This is not the time to bear grudges." These "worldly things" would be obstacles when Jesus returns to judge the world. This message was a complete antithesis to his proposals in the book *You Are Destined to Succeed* in which the Archbishop claimed that the use of luxurious material things were divine rights and not options for "a man of God."[12]

On the Sunday of the Triumphal Entry, Archbishop Duncan-Williams preached on the works of the flesh (1 Thess 5:2–3). "This is the time for people to get saved . . . if we do not get into the ark now, we will be left behind." This coronavirus is a "pestilence and a plague," he noted. The only thing that can save humanity is to get into the ark of our salvation, which is Christ. It was instructive to hear Archbishop Duncan-Williams saying people must "endure" trials and temptations. All the prophecies are falling into place, he further noted, for the Son of Man is coming again. He refers to Matthew 24:22, "And if those days had not been cut short, no one would be saved; but for the sake of the elect those days would be cut short."

In the particular sermon, Archbishop Duncan-Williams preached that in the COVID-19 situation, we have seen nations evacuate their citizens. It is the same way in which "heaven will evacuate its own," that is, the elect at the imminent return of Jesus: "God will send an aircraft with Jesus as its captain and every believer will be evacuated home." He explained that only "citizens of heaven" would qualify for the evacuation and made a direct appeal in his broadcast for listeners who did not know Jesus to embrace him as Lord and Savior. The days of suffering would be shortened for the sake of the elect, he emphasized. God said, "I will spare the elect" and so, all the citizens of heaven will be evacuated; you cannot go to the airport if America sends an aircraft to evacuate her citizens if you do not have an American passport; even your spouse, if they are American would be evacuated and you will be left behind; the rapture is an aircraft," the Archbishop noted.

The terms and expressions that were deployed in this thoroughly eschatological message by Archbishop Duncan-Williams were striking: heaven, hell, redeemed, sanctification, preparedness, purity, uprightness, rapture, and these as compared to the recurring emphasis on material success that Gifford talks about. Archbishop Duncan-Williams concluded with the story of the ten virgins (Matt 25:1–13). At the announcement of the arrival of the bridegroom, only those with adequate oil in their lamps were able to meet him. In the same way, "if you are not a citizen of a country, it does not matter who you are married to, you will not be evacuated when the rapture takes place." It was striking because this is a preacher who, like many others in his category, often centered his sermons on tithing and offerings as seed-sowing for blessing: wealth, health, and upward mobility as the right of the Christian. "This is not the time to make money" the Archbishop said, rather, "this is the day to show compassion; you can have all the money in the

world, but it cannot save you; a day is coming when all these material things will mean nothing."

The Prophetic Gear

A video recording still circulating on social media shows Prophet Emmanuel Makandiwa prophesying the appearance of the coronavirus about five years before its emergence in China. Prophet Makandiwa has a thriving international ministry in Zimbabwe.[13] He is the Founder and General Overseer of the United Family International Church (UFIC).[14] Prophet Makandiwa is about the only known Charismatic voice to have prophesied the onset of the pandemic and that was in 2015. He delivered about five prophecies in total on different occasions pointing then to an incoming pandemic that was going to throw the world into confusion. In the first prophetic utterance made in January 2015, Prophet Makandiwa held a Sunday service at the City Sports Centre in Harare, Zimbabwe, where said, "we need really to pray," noting that an ailment was coming out of China that would not compare to anything we have witnessed before in world history. He compared what was coming then to a nuclear weapon, noting however that it was not going to be about an explosion, but rather a catastrophic contamination of the atmosphere that was going to be chaotic. "It was going to take the world time and days to gather the dead bodies together," he prophesied. He likened it to a demonic spirit on rampage that was going to stop at nothing, except prayer: "only prayer can save us now."[15]

In the second prophecy delivered in November 2016 at a Sunday Service at the City Sports Centre in Harare, Zimbabwe, Makandiwa declares among others:

> I saw also . . . another disease more deadly. I saw it coming from the sea. They will investigate and find it will come from the ocean. More deadly than HIV and cancer. Very fast. Very aggressive . . . and thousands, if not millions, will die. . . . It is a plague, so we must pray against it. God preserves. God gives life.[16]

Prophet Makandiwa put out a third prophecy in February 2017, also at the City Sports Centre in Harare, Zimbabwe. In this third one, he prophesied among others that the disease was going to kill more people than any disease that the world had fought previously. He claims to have been given a divine revelation that showed people falling like leaves and dying: "they will do everything to investigate where

it's coming from they will not find it, but eventually, they will confirm what I am telling you. . . . It is a plague that only God can stop."[17]

The fourth prophecy was delivered just before the onset of the pandemic in Africa in early March 2020. At the Sunday service at Chitungwiza Basilic. Prophetic Makandiwa stated in part:

> I say our intelligent people will break down. Doctors will cry. Leaders of our nations will cry. Now at this rate if (it) goes on for 3 months, it will be terrible. But you know that God has given us grace over every flying evil. . . . God will give power to his people. Power to do what? As you are praying now, you are pronouncing a curse over this curse. You will open your mouth and command every flying insect to die. As long as the insect is a virus, as long as it is a disease, you have to take charge over every flying insect which is a disease. . . . The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. He will deliver you from this plague and when you become proud again, he will give you other (another) one. Until you know that God reigns in the Kingdom of [humanity].[18]

Prophet Makandiwa's final prophetic utterance was delivered in February 2020 at his Chitungwiza Basilica.[19] In this final one the prophet seemed to have prescribed hydroxychloroquine, which had been discredited in some quarters as one possible pharmaceutical intervention to the disease. Our concern though lies in the fact that at least Prophet Makandiwa predicted a lurking disaster that he referred to as a plague and also framed its emergence in terms of the demonic, although in the same breath both prayer and hydroxychloroquine were pointed to as possible cures to the pandemic.

Reframing the Message of Health and Wealth in a Pandemic Era

The religious responses to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially what I have referred to in this article as the "mobilization of prayer" against evil, are not new. At the beginning of the twentieth century, when the worldwide influenza epidemic broke out, African Pentecostal prayer and spiritual healing groups, as Lamin Sanneh calls them, mobilized prayer to fight the pandemic even resisting the use of modern scientific medicine in the process.[20] The prophetic element that surfaced with Prophet Emmanuel Makandiwa's ministry was itself a reinvention of

something that was present in the ministries of the early African prophetic movements of the early twentieth century. The mobilization of prophetic prayer in African Pentecostal Christianity has always been inspired by the worldview that the enemy, lodged in the numerous maladies that afflicted the flesh, must be muzzled. It is usually up to the prophet or Charismatic leader to channel the forces of healing and protection into the community and sustain prayer "as the essential supply-line of the struggle" against evil.[21] In the particular case of the COVID-19 pandemic, Prophet Makandiwa served both as the one through whose ministry the revelation came and also the one who mobilizes for prayer against the plague.

We also see from the narratives that in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, people who previously preached about prosperity suddenly found the space in the times to talk about the issues of heaven and hell. These examples we have cited from Charismatic preaching, prophecy, and prayer within the COVID-19 period show how difficult circumstances, the reality of evil, and the unpredictability of the future can affect one's understanding of the church and the message that is carried in the name of Jesus Christ. On the one hand, we see how the coronavirus situation has led to the delivery of very pragmatic sermons, such as the one preached by Pastor Otabil, that confront evil as an existential reality. On the other hand, we see from Archbishop Duncan-Williams how the realities of evil led to a rethinking of a gospel that had become so materialistic that the things of eternity had been dislodged from their central place in contemporary Charismatic ecclesiology. The eschatological messages of the COVID-19 era resonate very much with what happened to the American apostle of the prosperity gospel, Jim Bakker, who after his fall from grace due to imprisonment for federal crimes returned to write a very instructive book, *Prosperity and the Coming Apocalypse*, in which he denounces his earlier message that materialism was a prime indicator of God's favor. In that book he uses his own context to criticize a one-sided prosperity gospel devoid of any eschatological significance:

> By and large, most of the church . . . does not want to hear an apocalyptic message. It wants a message of health and wealth, hope, healing, and financial prosperity. . . . Rarely does anyone talk about sacrifice, repentance of sin, or our failure to be what God wants us to be. When, for example, was the last time you heard a message on the cost of discipleship? When was the last time you heard someone preach on the judgment of God or the horrors of hell?[22]

It is noteworthy that just as his personal troubles led him to return to an eschatological message, the COVID-19 pandemic literally led most African Charismatic pastors along similar paths as we saw, for example, in the preaching of Archbishop Duncan-Williams.

The messages of prosperity preached by contemporary Pentecostal pastors are not entirely unbiblical, for there is such a thing as biblical prosperity (Ps 1; John 10:10). And indeed, the born-again experience itself has in the lives of many people led to a redemptive uplift in both its spiritual and material senses. When the born-again convert from lives of vanity and carnality, critical material resources become available for constructive uses and investment in personal and family lives are enhanced. What we criticize is therefore not material prosperity as part of God's blessing, but the fact that materialism—the love of money—is the root cause of all evil. Besides, the materialistic gospel of prosperity fails to account for existential evil and those whose lives are impacted by it are left without answers regarding their afflictions. Many of the principles of prosperity come unstuck in the face of misfortune, calamity, and evil, and the hope is that the coronavirus has among other things exposed the areas of deficiency.

Conclusion

There has not been a monolithic response to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic among African Pentecostal/Charismatic figures. The responses have ranged from mobilizing prophetic prayer to deal with the outbreak to inspiring hope in people in these times of despair and using the opportunity to return to messages that warn that eternity is not a figment of anyone's imagination. It is a reality for which people must prepare. This is a call for things to be rectified using the very biblical resources that are used to justify what it means to prosper in an uncertain world in which everything else is temporal and God alone remains sovereign. When we defer to his wisdom, we will walk through the valley of the shadow of death and still fear no evil, because God is with his people. That was the crux of the matter in Pastor Mensa Otabil's sermons of the pandemic era.

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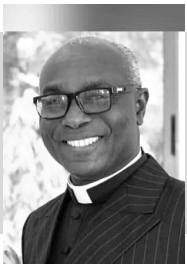

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Reviews

Yesterday, Today, and Forever: The Extraordinary Life and Ministry of Tommy Lee Osborn. By Edith Prakash. Lanham, MD: Seymour Press, 2018. v + 196 pp.

Tommy Lee Osborn (1923–2013) is the original exemplar of mass healing crusade evangelism. In *Yesterday, Today, and Forever*, Edith Prakash examines Osborn's life and theology and his impact on India. The book is adapted from her Ph.D. dissertation, "A Critical Investigation of Tommy Lee Osborn's Work in India: Its Impact and Implications," completed at Regent University under Vinson Synan's direction in 2013.

Prakash is the daughter of Indian evangelists, the late Nataraj Mudaliar and Padma Mudaliar, so she has a particular interest in the rise of Christianity in India. Her first chapter covers the history of Christianity in India, and the second chapter details the history of Pentecostalism in India. This information on India's religion, cultures, and beliefs sets the stage for understanding the context of Osborn's ministry in India.

Prakash turns to the early life and ministry of Osborn. She describes how he was saved at the age of 14 and at 16 traveled around the United States with a revivalist. At a church in Almo, California, he met Daisy Washburn. They fell in love with one another and got married on April 5, 1949, at the age of 17 and 18, respectively. For the next couple of years, they traveled around California holding revival meetings and, for a short time, became pastors of a church in Portland, Oregon. They went to India as missionaries in 1945 and were disappointed at the lack of converts. Osborn found it challenging to communicate the gospel to the Hindu and Muslim people. Although the Osborns were supposed to stay in India for several years, they went home disappointed after only ten months.

When they returned to the States, the Osborns began to fast and pray to discover why their ministry in India was ineffective. The Osborns realized that people "need proof that Jesus is alive" and that "without miracles, Christianity is little more than another dead religion" (75–76). Osborn received four visions of Jesus (in person, in the life of a minister, in the pages of the New Testament, and in his own life) that convinced him that preaching about a miracle-working Jesus was

the answer to world evangelism. Soon after, the Osborns left the United States and went to Jamaica for their first crusade. At his crusade, they began performing mass healing prayers for the sick and invited those who were healed to come to the platform to testify.

In 1960, Osborn returned to northern India to do a crusade in Lucknow, and in 1961 he held a crusade in southern India in the city of Madurai. His new mass evangelism techniques were successful, and several leading Indian evangelists, including D. G. S. Dhinakaran and Mohan C. Lazarus, trace the beginnings of their ministries back to that crusade. Osborn could not return to India for thirty-one years because of visa restrictions and did not conduct another crusade in India until Hyderabad in 1992. However, Prakash describes how he continued to influence India during his absence through his innovative methodology, which many Indian evangelists adopted. His financial support of native evangelists and distribution of literature were also influences. She also mentions the impact of Daisy Osborn and how her ministerial partnership with T. L. provided an example for female ministers in India. Another influence was Osborn's documentary film, *Athens of India*, which convinced Christians worldwide to pray for India.

Prakash dedicates one chapter to the healing theology of Osborn and how F. F. Bosworth, William Branham, and Gordon Lindsey influenced him. Another chapter is used to examine Osborn's hermeneutics and its intersection with Indian hermeneutics. The book's best chapter examines Osborn's mission strategy. According to Prakash, Osborn's innovations included holding crusades in outdoor fields, using a translator, performing a mass healing prayer, and the use of extensive publicity. Osborn continued to use these methods for the rest of his ministry as he traveled worldwide, and many Spirit-empowered evangelists have now adopted his methodology. Prakash paraphrases Osborn when she writes, "[T]hese methods of miracle mass evangelism have become the norm globally" (105).

As a missionary evangelist, I recommend this book to those who are interested in evangelism and missions. Prakash writes with scholarly precision while maintaining a passion for souls and a love for India's people. There are hundreds of dissertations and books that have researched Billy Graham's life in minute detail, and several have been written about the evangelical evangelist from Argentina, Luis Palau. Yet, there is a lack of research on Pentecostal evangelists. Perhaps the best summary is Vinson Synan's *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, but even this outstanding resource provides only a few paragraphs about individual Pentecostal evangelists. Roberts Liardon covers the healing evangelists in his *God's Generals* series. Many of the best resources available on Pentecostal evangelists are

autobiographies like Reinhard Bonnke's *Living a Life of Fire,* Marilyn Hickey's *It's Not Over Until You Win*, and Roberta Potts' recollections in *My Father, Oral Roberts.* There is a need for more research on Pentecostal evangelists, so it is gratifying to see a well-researched study covering the achievements of Osborn.

At times, the book abandons the study of Osborn's life to examine various aspects of Christianity in India. While well-researched, this material is not germane to the topic implied by the book's title. As such, this book is not a full biography about Osborn. Instead, it is a snapshot of one small part of Osborn's legacy—his impact on India. This book does an excellent job of detailing his ministry in India. Still, more research is needed on Osborn's impact in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas, considering that Osborn's ministry spanned seventy years in over 100 nations. I attended T. L. Osborn's Memorial Service at Christ's Chapel on the ORU campus and heard representatives from some of the largest churches from six continents give Osborn credit for their ministry success. Osborn deserves to have his theology and ministry studied in greater depth because of his life's immense impact.

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Sanctifying Interpretation: Vocation, Holiness, and Scripture. 2nd ed. By Chris E. W. Green. Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2020. xvi + 238 pp.

Chris E. W. Green is the Professor of Public Theology at Southeastern University in Lakeland, Florida, and Teaching Pastor at Sanctuary Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He earned his Ph.D. from Bangor University, Wales, UK, and has a DMin from Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, Oklahoma. He has authored numerous books and articles. Green's research interests are in Pentecostal spirituality, racial/ethnic injustice, and the doctrine of God.

This second edition is sixty-two pages longer than the first edition published in 2015 because Green felt he had more to say on the subject. Green writes to those in the Pentecostal community (Classical in particular) who interpret the text in their own unique way while ignoring other interpretations that may have value. The author writes, "I wrote this book, at least in part, because those experiences kept forcing me to work through what I was coming to believe about the Scriptures and how we are to

read them" (6). Green's central argument is "that God does not intend to save us from interpretation but through it" (xi). As such, he develops a soteriological hermeneutic built upon the premise that the interpretation process itself is part of the Christian's vocation. This approach is distinct from the traditional Pentecostal approach, which usually reads Scripture from a holiness perspective, emphasizing themes like separatism and sinfulness. Green argues that we will encounter fewer interpretative biases if we shift our perspective away from a traditional Pentecostal reading and onto a reading that is based upon vocation and holiness.

In the Introduction, Green discusses Pentecostals and their approach to Scripture and hermeneutics. Pentecostals have a high view of Scripture and utilized an epistemological methodology to validate doctrine and theory while rejecting those interpretations contrary to dogma. Pentecostals attempt to make all Scripture fit together cohesively, like a neatly solved puzzle, when, in reality, Scripture does not. Green replaces this epistemological approach with a soteriological approach that rejects theories and practices that affirm the text's infallibility and interpretation. Green "assure[s] us of God's reliability in our faulty readings of the imperfect biblical texts" (5).

In Part One (Chapters 1–3), Green describes how a believer's vocation (ministry) is united with their Christian identity by drawing a comparison with Christ's public ministry and his identity as the Son of God. By uniting vocation and identity in this way, Green attempts to show that Christians are sanctified as they minister to sinners. Therefore, Christians need not separate from sinners because the Christian vocation is among them. God's soteriological mission involves him equipping Christians to be vocational interpreters who reject easy biblicism and grapple with the more challenging texts. Green proceeds to connect liturgical worship as a priestly function. He argues for Pentecostals to adopt a liturgical worship style (e.g., Anglican) that promotes self-control and denial rather than the self-serving freedom in worship that Pentecostals typically embrace (62).

In Part Two (Chapters 4–5), Green discusses how the definition of holiness Pentecostals inherited was a mixed blessing. Primarily, Pentecostals defined holiness as a process of separation from the world while maintaining moral purity. However, for Green, holiness goes beyond morality, immorality, and judgment; holiness is love focused (88). Green's definition aims to show that holiness is more than just separation from sin and that it should be understood from the perspective of Christ's soteriological work (97–122).

Part Three (Chapters 6–8) explores how reading Scripture draws believers into holiness, transforming them so that they can operate in their vocation as "Christ's

co-sanctified co-sanctifiers" (125). Green argues that reading Scripture from an evangelical theological perspective with the telos of revelation needs to be superseded by a new methodology. The soteriological approach he presents does not see interpretation as a quest for revelation but as the means of fulfilling one's vocation. Christians do not have to negate their views on inspiration or inerrancy to adopt this method; Green's argument is more of an attempt to change the emphasis from what the Bible is to what the Bible is supposed to do. It is a transition from an epistemological reading to a soteriological one.

Green argues for the rediscovery of an early Pentecostal hermeneutic that goes beyond a literal reading towards a Spirit-guided spiritual reading. He proposes that believers adopt the theological viewpoint that Scripture is sacrament and interpretation of Scripture is a sanctifying encounter. This involves five practical steps: (re) reading in the Spirit, (re) reading with the community, (re) reading for Christ, (re) reading from the heart, and (re) reading toward faithful performance. In practical application, Romans 9–11 is utilized as a guide for navigation (185–206). This soteriological paradigm sanctifies textual interpretations and means that those texts that are typically difficult to interpret have a sanctifying quality.

This manuscript has many strengths. It is well written with a consistent, methodical flow. The arguments presented are compelling, well-supported, and convincing for the most part. I appreciate the author's recommendation for Pentecostals to consider the Anglican liturgical tradition (58). However, given the broad global contexts of Spirit-empowered movements, all liturgical genres should be embraced. I would recommend this book in the academic setting to be read in theology and hermeneutics courses on the graduate level. It would be advantageous in the ecclesiastical context for qualified clergy to utilize this text as a guide to adapt and explain the concepts of vocation, holiness, and Scripture to church parishioners for large or small group Bible Study.

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Pneumatic Hermeneutics: The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Theological Interpretation of Scripture. By Leulseged Philemon. Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2019. xv + 228 pp.

Leulseged Philemon is a lecturer in Biblical and Theological Studies at the Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology, Addis Ababa. This monograph is the publication of his Ph.D. dissertation at Fuller Seminary under the supervision of Joel B. Green. It provides a comprehensive investigation into the Holy Spirit's role in interpreting Scripture, while describing the remarkable contribution that Pentecostalism has made to the discussion within the broader ecumenical context. By presenting Pentecostalism as an ecumenical dialogue partner, Philemon extends the Pentecostal trialectic of Spirit, Scripture, and community to include the broader Christian community. In so doing, this book seeks to point a way forward for understanding the Spirit's role in theological interpretation within the broader Christian community.

Chapter one serves as the introduction to the study. Philemon summarizes theological interpretation's key scholarly voices and identifies essential themes running through their work (28–31). His findings serve as a starting point for the development of a constructive approach to understanding the Spirit's interpretative role in reading Scripture theologically. In chapter two, Philemon discusses Pentecostalism's interpretative tradition and how it engages with community, experience, and the Spirit's primary role in understanding the text (73). Within this dynamic, Philemon emphasizes a high view of Scripture through which God addresses humans above their reason and intellect (73). In the third chapter, Philemon provides some essential theological perspectives of the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic Churches on the interplay between the Bible and Spirit. Philemon argues that church community and tradition are the proper contexts in which the Spirit guides the interpretation process because the community provides the location where biblical interpretation is practically demonstrated (97).

Chapter four assesses pneumatic hermeneutics within the Reformed Protestant tradition by exploring the ideas of John Calvin, John Owen, and John Wesley. Philemon argues that the Reformed tradition believes that the Scripture does not require the church to interpret it. Instead, the Bible is self-interpretative (99) through the process of divine illumination and the internal testimony of Scripture (32–33). The Spirit works through Scripture to address fallen humanity's spiritual blindness because the Scripture is God's supreme authority and revelation (128).

Philemon argues in chapter five that Pentecostal hermeneutics contributes to pneumatic hermeneutics. It does this by informing and challenging the Spirit's absence in traditional Evangelical methodologies. Pentecostal hermeneutics also recovers the practice of theological interpretation by stimulating meaningful discourse concerning the Spirit's role (162). Philemon describes a Pentecostal hermeneutic as dynamic, experiential, and existential. It does not restrict the Spirit's role solely to biblical inspiration; instead, it invites the Spirit's presence in the interpretation process as an ongoing activity (163). Chapter six summarizes how Pentecostal hermeneutics contributes to the broader ecumenical discussion through its emphasis on the experience of the Spirit within the interpretative community. Philemon presents an interpretative strategy that integrates the Spirit and the community's role in understanding the sacred texts.

This book shows how Pentecostalism can contribute to non-Pentecostal processes of interpretation through its focus on the experience of the Spirit within the community. To this end, the author interacted with leading scholars in the field and presents a clear, well developed, and highly readable thesis that makes for an engaging blend of scholarly thoroughness and easy reading. Within his discussion, Philemon includes literature reviews in almost every chapter, which are engaging and relevant. His dialogue with scholarship past and present from Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, Reformed, and Pentecostal traditions, would be valuable to new students of hermeneutics to help orientate them within the subject. An important voice missing from this engagement was the voice of majority world scholars. Their inclusion would have enriched this monograph.

A broad pneumatological ecclesiology lies behind *Pneumatic Hermeneutics.* As Philemon understands it, the church community is the mediating agent through whom the Spirit's interpretative work is experienced and expressed within the broader Christian context. The church, therefore, operates as a pneumatological fellowship, relying entirely on the Holy Spirit. Organization and tradition play a crucial role in this dynamic. Yet, the focus is more on the unifying nature of the Spirit as he operates within the church's distinct social units, helping them learn from each other. As such, *Pneumatic Hermeneutics* situates Pentecostal hermeneutics and its trialectic within the broader ecumenical community. The book does this remarkably well and will undoubtedly help those who seek to link Pentecostalism into the broader Christian tradition. Besides this, the study also extends Pentecostalism's understanding of the church as an interpretative community and contributes to recent debates about Pentecostal hermeneutical distinctives and their relationship to Evangelical

hermeneutical principles. Overall, *Pneumatic Hermeneutics* is an excellent read and will be a useful addition to the library of those interested in the topic.

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The Spirit and the Common Good: Shared Flourishing in the Image of God. By Daniela C. Augustine. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2019. xii + 257 pp.

Daniela Augustine's *The Spirit and the Common Good* presents a theological ethic grounded in the events of the Incarnation and Pentecost, proceeding from the Eastern Orthodox and Pentecostal traditions. Augustine argues that human flourishing does not come simply from obedience to God's commandments but from an ontological transformation that involves an ever-greater imaging of the divine presence. Augustine advances her thesis in various ways, from dense academic prose to intimate and moving stories. The questions about Augustine's proposal that I will raise after introducing its content are questions for clarification rather than criticisms.

Augustine sets the book's material and thematic context against the Third Balkan War and the Pentecostal churches' peacebuilding efforts within war-torn Yugoslavia between 1991 to 2002. These events frame this work, presenting the problem of human violence and offering hagiographies of saintly in-Spirit-ed responses to the suffering caused by this violence. These stories present an existential call to follow a way of life that embodies our sacramental vocation as "the visible means of invisible grace toward peacebuilding and reconciliation, economic justice, sociopolitical inclusion, and ecological renewal" (228).

Chapter 1 lays the groundwork for Augustine's ethical proposals, beginning with the image of God that is common to all of humanity. As Christ is the visible image of the invisible God, bearing this image is to undergo "continual Christic transfiguring" (18). To bear the image of God is to *see* Christ in those created in God's image while also acting in *a* Christlike manner towards them. Appealing to the Orthodox icon of creation, Augustine describes God's image as an event in which God, creation, and humans face each other juxtaposed. Because sin and violence have fractured the world, the Spirit works within the church through

prayer and redemptive hospitality to transform the entire cosmos into what God created it to be: a sanctuary for divine presence and community.

Chapters 2 and 3 diagnose human violence and self-centeredness in a world of limited goods. The chapters offer a set of counter-formative practices to show how social and economic institutions function to disciple our desires and values. Augustine argues that no social contract will rid us of this self-centeredness. A heart transformed into Christ's heart through repentance by the work of the Spirit alone enables us to extend God's presence and *shalom* to our neighbor. Members of the Spirit-filled community fulfill their priestly vocation as worshiping beings who counter the world's greed through an economics of the Sabbath and an economics of the household. Practicing the Eucharist and the accompanying fast reorients our vision from self-centered consumption to identification with the hungry and the oppressed. Living within the Spirit-filled community should make us see the contrast between the indulgent consumerism our privileged first-world society offers and our responsibility for others.

Chapter 4 takes on the challenge of pursuing forgiveness in the face of violence. Augustine argues that "authentic forgiveness and reconciliation, wherever found, are manifestations of the Spirit's unceasing, redemptive, socio-transformative work of mending the world and transfiguring humanity into the likeness of its maker" (165). Yet, there are no easy pathways to authentic Christian forgiveness or for achieving reconciliation between the oppressed and the oppressor, particularly at the collective level. Here, the church can serve as a community exemplar who strives to walk in the "ways of peace" and who embodies forgiveness in its members. While forgiveness and world-mending cannot come from a top-down approach, it can be pursued through the Spirit-led community.

This book is a valuable contribution to contemporary theological ethics because it argues that the Spirit leads the church to mirror and participate in the divine work of the world's redemption. Thinking of practices such as "respacing," hospitality, and the Eucharist as reflecting the divine character and taking part in the divine activity is helpful. However, I would like to register two comments or questions. First, while Augustine's foundational concept of the image of God as the divine face, as introduced in the context of the Orthodox icon of creation, has clear symbolic value, Augustine does not fully explain what the divine face communicates or represents to human beings.

Second, while Augustine emphasizes that the cosmos' ontological renewal is enacted through the Incarnation and Pentecost—as an important lacuna in more nominalist or forensic accounts of redemption found in Protestant and Evangelical

traditions—I wonder about the redemptive extent of the cross in her account. I am specifically concerned that incorporation into the life of God through the Incarnation and Pentecost renders the work of the cross as a supplement to redemption rather than its central activity. Perhaps this is an issue of emphasis: Augustine claims that redemption is not *merely* reconciliation or justification but transfiguration into God's likeness. While Augustine discusses the role of the cross as an act of forgiveness and as the exemplar of self-sacrificial ascesis that Christians take part in, the cross does not appear as the central event of redemption. This line of questioning raises issues that the author could address in a monograph more narrowly focused on soteriology. These observations notwithstanding, I conclude with the following challenge, one among many in Augustine's fine book: "Changing the world begins with transforming the circumstances of our immediate other—extending to them the hospitality of God, respacing ourselves on their behalf in Godlikeness, seeking to provide what is needed but lacking for their flourishing" (107).

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When Tears Sing: The Art of Lament in Christian Community. By William Blaine-Wallace. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 179 pp.

As a psychiatric hospital chaplain for thirty-two years, I eagerly desired to read *When Tears Sing*, by William Blain-Wallace. Frequently, we chaplains gather the patients to recite the lament psalms. The recital of these psalms often touches an emotional vein in the patients as they speak aloud the psalmists' expressions of grief. The lament psalms describe the inner turmoil encountered in mental health work.

When Tears Sing is filled with anecdotes from a hospice chaplain who served the spiritual needs of AIDS patients at Grady Hospital in Atlanta, GA. He includes his ministry in churches and educational settings as well. Blaine-Wallace is an Episcopal priest and pastoral counselor. He shares his experience as a chaplain and his discovery of lament theology. Throughout his writing, he explains the lack of introspection Americans have in this matter and notes that our Christian churches do not lament very well. We desire happy feelings, not sadness. His keen insight into Scripture and humanity illustrates both his and the patients' inner experience with lament.

The division of chapters is two-fold. Part one, named "Coming Together," examines lament in its theological and psychological domains. He discusses the nature of grief concerning lament. The author describes a movement from wailing, to dirge, to solidarity, to joy, and then to justice. He highlights that the experience of lament remains a communal experience and not a solitary practice. Part two, titled "Going On Together," spotlights the application of lament. The theme of this section focuses on experiencing lament amid a world that is becoming more chaotic. The concluding chapters describe Emmanuel Church, which he conveys as a progressively theological congregation and a prayerful church. He tells many stories of occasions when the congregation extended themselves to individuals and groups outside their traditional setting.

Blaine-Wallace begins with a spirituality of tears. He writes, "When tears sing, hearts are opened. Open hearts are more susceptible to the pain in, around, and beyond us. Lamentational communities are challenged, as spiritual teacher Ram Dass reminds us, 'to keep our hearts open during the hurricane.' How do we keep our hearts alive in a hurting world that breaks through filters that keep us from being overwhelmed? Confession and prayer keep us more vulnerable to and available for the world-the-way-it-really is" (83). This thesis grounds the book and emphasizes the role tears and suffering play in moving people beyond resilience and American self-sufficiency to recognizing that healing comes from within the community context. Yes, it is acceptable to grieve and lament because we discover God through this process. Repeatedly, Blaine-Wallace states that the church experience must be about one's relationship with God and all people. Continuing with his thoughts, he offers seven dynamics connected to lament. These elements include "silence, listening, alterity, hospitality, repeating a story, absence, and curiosity" (101). The details of each of these are important exercises in the release of lament.

Chapter three is the core theological segment. Sharing stories about Desmond Tutu's efforts with apartheid in South Africa, genocide in Rwanda, and America's 9/11 experience, Blaine-Wallace notes the need for solidarity in suffering. As he relates these events, he rightly observes that America is weak in communal lament. We pride ourselves in isolation, demonstrating contempt for involving others in the lament experience. He discerns that our culture prides itself on success, completely ignoring lament.

The spirituality grounding lament is a theology of the cross. Blaine-Wallace's theology of the cross contends with social actions such as racism, whiteness, ageism, and liberation theology. He repeatedly describes God as the God of suffering. He mentions Dietrich Bonhoeffer's ministry and interacts with Bonhoeffer's poetry

while specifically elaborating upon how Christ's spiritual experience in Gethsemane relates to lament and suffering. Essentially, lament is about God meeting humans at the place of their suffering and pain. Yet, even at this point, there is resurrection. He explains that "the true church is bracketed by the historic church's theology of glory. We need to make more music" (78). Certainly, processing grief can provide healing. The process itself is an arduous process to undertake, in which we cannot bypass lament. If we do, it will be to our spiritual detriment.

In Part two, his pastoral piece presents the practicalities of speaking prayers of lament. Prayer in suffering releases oneself to the essence of God. Our rants and wailing create healing from our pain. Blaine-Wallace notes five expressions of this type of prayer, "refract, be still, wait patiently, stay curious, and cloak suffering" (87). With each topic, he provides supplemental thoughts on what these expressions mean regarding lament. Another unique concept unpacked is *witnessing*. Again, this idea is defined within a public community of faith. He writes that "the witnessing process allows the congregation to slow down community to a pace that invites attention to the moment. Each participant jumps into the pool of tears with others" (133). Blaine-Wallace provides a practical worksheet that outlines "how-to" lead a discussion group on the topic of *witnessing*.

Blaine-Wallace's liberal theological leanings are noted in his writing. He is a minister in a mainline church and comes from that perspective. He often engages in womanist theology or same-sex commitments in his ministry experiences. However, these vignettes should not diminish his reflections on lament. I would recommend this book to those in the Charismatic and Spirit-Empowered Movements. The doctrine of triumphalism buries lament and suffering with American success. We need a theology of suffering and the cross. His work on lament's strength is that though we have various theologies, the same human needs that lament employs remain in everyone. These ideas are worth exploring for a pastor, chaplain, or layperson. Indeed, a broader perspective on lament would do our churches good. If we can look past his progressive theology, we can glean gems about the art of lament in the Christian community. Without a doubt, integrating a theology of suffering would provide balance for the success mentality of our churches and ministries.

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All Things New: Eschatology in the Majority World. By Gene L. Green, Stephen T. Pardue, K. K. Yeo, eds. Carlisle, UK: Langham, 2019. 159 pp.

Eschatology has long since left the realm of neglected topics in Christian theology. From the thoughtful works emphasizing the notions of transformational eschatology to the growing critiques of dispensationalism, eschatology as a theological discipline is now a major theological emphasis in the Christian tradition. Yet, in the midst of all the conversations, few volumes have taken into account the impact of eschatology on the majority world. Into that space, *All Things New: Eschatology in the Majority World* has stepped in to give the world a glimpse of the various global contextual expressions of eschatology. As the editors note, eschatology's much needed growth has been paralleled by Christianity's shift to the majority world (5). Today, these two realities dominate reflection in the Christian tradition.

All Things New is a collection of essays from seven majority world scholars charting contextualizations of eschatology across Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Each essay charts a new path toward a better understanding of the global relevance of this important biblical theme. Each author grapples with a number of important issues shaping global expressions of eschatological commitment. First, each essay attempts to explore how Majority World Christians understand eschatology. Most of the essays note that most global eschatologies were adopted through Western missionary activity rather than indigenous perspectives. These essays tackle the pervasiveness of dispensational premillennialism in Latin America, Taiwan, and Korea as a major theme of critique. Because of this, each shows how contextual theologies have served to enrich more indigenous expressions of eschatology. Second, each essay wrestles to some degree with the political and social ramifications of Western eschatology. In each essay, the tension of the present versus future aspects of the Kingdom of God takes center stage in the various responses to political and social engagement.

In the opening essay, "Eschatology, Apocalyptic, Ethics, and Political Theology," D. Stephen Long looks at the legacy of apocalypticism and its influence on Christian eschatology. Long argues that eschatology should capture the apocalyptic imagination as the driving force to empower Christian ethics and social responsibility. Rather than catastrophic, apocalyptic visions, whether global or political, Long sees apocalyptic as "poetic, hyperbolic, comedic," that empowers

prophetic imagination and resists Christian political dominance (30–31). While too brief to delve deep into these issues, this chapter provides a good introduction to some basic issues. However, the essay's introductory nature and its lack of global perspective may make the reader question its relevance to the whole volume.

There are two essays from an African perspective. James Henry Owino Kombo addresses the critical role of eschatology in Africa's past and future. He intersects deeply rooted African realities of death, spirits, and the afterlife to related eschatological themes. These insights add depth that Western thinkers should take seriously, particularly in the ideas of ancestors and the thin line between the eternal and temporal world. John D. K. Ekem adds a helpful essay on interpreting Revelation 21:1–4 from a Ghanan worldview. He argues that through an African worldview, this passage could have both futurist and realized applications (60). Ekem uses two mother-tongue translations from two communities to illustrate how these texts have an end-time character and that its present application offers an alternative to the suffering and oppression often experienced in sub-Saharan Africa. He also points out that this passage enforces the African view of the sacredness of the ecological world and provides a standard for environmental ethics. He says, "God is the One who holds the past, present, and future, bringing them into a relationship of mutual dependence" (67). While his contextual interpretations are helpful, they seem to be not so much dependent upon the language translation as the essay would suggest.

The next two essays focus on Latin American eschatology and seek to show that Evangelical churches in Latin America are influenced by North American dispensationalism while also adapting their own progressive forms of dispensationalism. Alberto F. Roldan focuses on a "theology of hope" and examines three common eschatological hymns for elements of the already/not yet present. He notes that these tensions are not consistent with rapture theology. Instead, he argues that "Latin American theologians emphasize that it is necessary to transform the futuristic eschatology to an eschatology engaged in the here and now" (83). In the end, the critique—while it may be valid—lacks a compelling contextual framework unique to Latin America. Similarly, Nelson R. Morales Fredes argues that Latin American expressions of the Kingdom of God are deeply rooted in the present. For example, he examines the Latin American Theological Fraternity, which emphasizes a holistic, rather than futuristic, view of the Kingdom. Latin American eschatology's social and liberation aspects show how evangelization should have strongly rooted social elements that address this world's needs.

The final two essays take an Asian perspective. Aldrin Penamora examines how eschatology shaped the theology of David Yonggi Cho, the Back to Jerusalem Movement, and Watchman Nee in different ways. Each group engaged in the world to reach people effectively, yet with a different emphasis based on their own cultural and political engagement with the world. Like the others, Penamora argues that it requires both to understand rightly the Kingdom. In the final essay, Shirley S. Ho examines Taiwanese Judeophilia through several geopolitical, religious, and cultural lenses, noting how some Taiwanese used eschatology to be highly dispensational and pro-Israel. At the other end of the spectrum, Ho looks at the utopian vision of Kang YuWei and Christian eschatology and observes some helpful contextual similarities and differences with Christian millennialism. This critical essay demonstrates the value of contextual interpretations of eschatology from outside Western traditions.

Overall, this volume will be useful to anyone looking for contextual theology models that can stimulate a wider global discussion of theological topics. As eschatology continues to grow in popularity with both students and scholars, the inclusion of this short volume should be considered for any course on eschatology.

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