

## REVIEWS

### ***Human Sexuality & the Holy Spirit: Spirit-Empowered Perspectives.***

Edited by Wonsuk Ma and Kathaleen Reid-Martinez. Tulsa, OK: ORU Press, 2019. 360 pp.

*Human Sexuality & the Holy Spirit* is a multi-authored work edited by Wonsuk Ma and Kathaleen Reid-Martinez that brings together a global list of contributors. Wonsuk Ma serves as Dean and Distinguished Professor of Global Christianity at Oral Roberts University. Kathaleen Reid-Martinez is the Provost and Chief Academic Officer of Oral Roberts University. She also served as a Co-Chair of the Scholars Consultation of Empowered21.

This book is a revised compilation of the studies presented at the 2017 Empowered21 Scholars consultation in Singapore. It assembles a host of global scholars who engage with the topic of human sexuality using an array of examples from real-life experiences within their global contexts. The overall theme running through the book is that human sexuality is a gift from God that has been corrupted by sin, but the Holy Spirit is at work restoring the gift through Spirit-empowered communities.

This book is divided into two parts. The first part contains four chapters that provide a biblical and historical background for the book's second part. In part one, Lian Mung's chapter on human sexuality and the OT Spirit-empowered leaders reveals the goodness of human sexuality. The second chapter is Mark Hall's study on the Pauline vice lists with an emphasis on homosexuality. In their own ways, both of these chapters assert that one can live within God's healthy sexual boundaries by submitting themselves to God (9, 24). Chapter three contains Clayton Coombs's historical survey of the church's response to homosexuality. In chapter four, Michael McClymond excellently evaluates some of the literature on gender identity. He suggests Christians should respond by loving their neighbors as themselves while not accepting every transgender ideology (93).

The book's second part contains various contextual studies from Asia, Africa, North America, and Europe. The section's first three chapters focus on

child discrimination within Korea, India, and Nepal. The following six chapters explore various issues among youths and young adults in different social settings in Africa, the Philippines, and North America. The chapters cover gender inequality, HIV, discrimination against women workers, and God's design for marriage. The last three chapters explore issues of adult sexuality and homosexuality within more of a Christian context. These studies include the struggles faced by celibate gay Christians, the role of women in Yoido Full Gospel Church's cell ministry, and the struggle of pursuing liberty under Christ. In summary, the studies reveal the extent of the fallenness of human sexuality within religious, cultural, and social settings and the restorative role of Spirit-empowered communities within these contexts.

The writing style of the authors is an engaging blend of scholarly thoroughness and easy reading. Having such an eclectic group of global scholars is particularly refreshing, as is the worldwide scope of their studies. This breadth of scholarship provides readers with fresh perspectives into their understanding and engagement with human sexuality within their own settings. The book's global scope was undoubtedly its greatest strength, but it was also a weakness to some extent. For instance, the second part of the book contained all the global studies. It would have added to the book to have these studies sub-sectioned by location (i.e., Asia, Africa, North America, Europe) and have a few introductory paragraphs beginning each subsection to provide the reader with a contextual overview of the region. Doing so would have given the reader some background information while helping the book flow. Naturally, as with many books published from academic consultations, it can be challenging to make the content flow. Still, even with these limitations, the book performs well. The postscript does an excellent job of drawing all the threads together.

While the input into the book is global, the underlying attitude behind the studies is that of a conservatively Evangelical approach to human sexuality. In keeping with the studies' broad scholarly and contextual scope, it would have benefited the book to have the input of voices who hold alternative views of human sexuality to contribute to the dialogue. However, the absence of such voices makes this book "safe" to put in the hands of students and interested laypersons within the Spirit-empowered communities while still challenging them and expanding their understanding of the topic. To this point, the book does remarkably well. It undoubtedly fits the brief of providing a text to the global Spirit-empowered community discussing the theological and pastoral challenges regarding this issue of human sexuality.

**Robert D. McBain** is Dean's Fellow and a Ph.D. student in the College of Theology and Ministry at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, USA.

***Depression, Where is Your Sting?*** By Robert D. McBain. Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2021. 158 pp.

Serving as a chaplain in two Pennsylvania state psychiatric hospitals for over three decades, I have read numerous accounts about depression. Why read another? Because each person's journey is different, and healing originates from God in various ways. This book reveals the spiritual aspect of recovery in depression that is profoundly missing from countless volumes. Mental health concerns have become immense topics of conversation in our society, and properly so.

Robert McBain's book, *Depression, Where is Your Sting?*, is a courageous description about one man's battle with depression. The author openly shares his fight with depression in his youth on the East Coast of Scotland. He relates his struggle about despair overwhelming his life as he walked into the Atlantic Ocean to drown himself. Providentially, he recounts that his cell phone rang and eventually he walked back on the shore to answer the device. These suicidal feelings pervaded his life for a number of years. As he wrote, "suicide acted as a vent to release the pain depression causes" (34). Consequently, when he had an encounter with Christ, his spiritual life tackled futility with some victory. Yet, his salvation experience did not necessarily take away his hopeless feelings. I will not provide the entire narrative in this review; one must read his story for all the details.

The author describes depression interchangeably as either a disease, illness, or sickness. He speaks of the stigmatic grip it has in our American society toward this dreaded ailment, as opposed to other sicknesses. When one speaks of cancer, there is an immediate compassion (as it should be toward the person). However, we treat depression with comments such as "cheer up," or "just get over it."

Nevertheless, the author conveys a different perspective than the distinctive biomedical model cure. He takes us on his spiritual pilgrimage for help and wholeness for depression. One of his conclusions is that the biomedical model has overtaken the spiritual paradigm for people suffering from depression. He notes that in the medieval era the church led the way with assisting persons with mental health issues. In our contemporary age, with the discovery of psychotropic drugs

and therapy, the spiritual is disregarded. McBain offers a holistic method that includes spiritual with physical methods.

The author defines depression as “a total body experience that isolates the sufferer from everything real” (15). He presents the themes of depression, guided by John Swinton’s book, *Spirituality and Mental Health*, such as meaninglessness, the meaning of life, abandonment, clingy feelings, physical exhaustion, and a trapped life (15–25). Insightfully, he notes that these themes with proper reflection can become a life-changing experience that enriches our lives.

McBain researches several biblical characters such as kings like Saul, David, and Ahab. Other personalities like Elijah and Job are unpacked as well. Through scripture, primarily the Psalms, he demonstrates how insomnia, fatigue, feelings of worthlessness, and recurring thoughts of death are common in the mind of depressed people. Even the psalmist wrote, “Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?” (Psalm 42:5, NIV).

One major item he notes is that our modern church remains relatively silent about depression. He chronicles the church’s response through the centuries from exorcism, to the Great Awakening enthusiasts, to the biological method. Today, the majority of pastors assign these issues of mental health to the hands of psychiatrists and psychologists. In his view, having only the medical response is not a complete healing process. Notably, after his experience he believes that every church should have a mental health department. That is a novel idea worth consideration.

The book discloses the coping methods he learned in overcoming his depression. Some approaches he employed were:

1. Lament. He utilized the lament Psalms commenting that “the Psalms acted as a lens and an outlet through which I could reflect on my experiences and communicates them to God” (54).
2. In addition, he practiced spiritual language such as “the garment of praise” and “tongues” for catharsis and help (116–20).

In short, McBain’s writing is a much needed response for the care of church parishioners who come seeking God’s care for this disease. From my involvement in this vocation of ministry, I would add these ideas to the book, assisting pastors and priests who deal with this subject in their congregations.

1. Pray openly about depression in the pastoral prayer of the liturgy of the worship service. Almost every time I intentionally express the thought of depression, someone comes after worship and wants to talk about the topic.
2. Speak up about depression in sermons. Inevitably, we will meet individuals with depression and either subtly turn them away or discount their feelings with our lack of interest. Most therapists believe that talking openly assists with the healing process. We provide care groups for other diseases, why not depression?
3. Provide training in mental health and family systems in seminary as a required course of study and experience for pastors. I wonder how many ministers would have survived in the church ministry understanding the facets of mental health in their members.

As Pentecostal-Charismatic theology continues to evolve, a theology of suffering must mingle with the triumphalist preaching that comes from some sectors of this renewal movement. McBain's book unveils these dual concepts in his story. His experience does not dispose of medical science. Neither does he trust that faith alone provides healing. He believes that the combination of these actions remains our best option for wholeness to occur. Oral Roberts attacked this problem head-on with his emphasis on building the City of Faith (COF) in Tulsa, Oklahoma. COF was a medical center founded on combining both the biomedical world and faith for healing. Opening up about depression is not easy. It is a vulnerable and raw part of ourselves that many persons desire to ignore. I commend Robert McBain for the candid and honest thoughts about his journey. By writing about his depression, he opens a door for more dialogue on the topic. Hopefully, this work will cause others to spring into action and support those struggling with mental illness.

**Cletus L. Hull, III**, is Assistant Adjunct Professor of Biblical Studies, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, USA.

***The Holy Spirit Before Christianity.*** By John R. Levison. Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2019. xiii + 258 pp.

John R. Levison's provocatively titled latest book, *The Holy Spirit before Christianity*, grabbed my attention immediately. Of course, the Holy Spirit was "around" before Christianity, engaged as always in the Lord's people's lives, so why

write a book about it? This is not Levison's first text on the "Spirit" in the Bible. It is the culmination of multiple earlier books, articles, and paper presentations on the topic spanning decades. These include: *The Spirit in First Century Judaism* (Brill, 1997), *Filled with the Spirit* (Eerdmans, 2009), and *Fresh Air: The Holy Spirit for an Inspired Life* (Paraclete Press, 2012). In addition to a great title, this newest book offers readers an entrée into the world of Holy Spirit studies like no other. Although brief (a slim 122 pages of text), Levison's style is vibrant, accessible, and trenchant. The endnotes and bibliography (80 pages), excurses (32 pages), and three indices (23 pages) make this a keeper; I will certainly return to it repeatedly as a reference text.

Beginning with Hans Leisegang's work, *Der Heilige Geist* (1919), Levison takes issue with rooting pneumatology in the "mystical-initiative knowledge" of ancient Greek thought (2; also, Excursus 1). Leisegang maintained that the origins of "Holy Spirit thinking" were to be found outside of Jewish or Christian musings and in the philosophy and religion of the Greeks. Levison objects and contends that the origins of pneumatology are much older and deeply rooted in a time that preceded the Graeco-Roman world by centuries, a world that reaches back into the Old Testament and the communal lament of Isaiah 63:7–14 (sometime after 586 BCE) and the encouraging words of Haggai 2:4–5 (sometime after 539 BCE). Something new and innovative happened during this period; for the first time in the Hebrew Bible רִיחַ (rûah; Spirit) became רוּחַ קֹדֶשׁ (rûah qodes; the Holy Spirit). An utterly new concept was introduced that must have captured the imaginations of the original audiences of Isaiah, a concept that would endure for millennia—the *Holy Spirit*. (The only other occurrence of רוּחַ קֹדֶשׁ is in Psalm 51, which many scholars hold reached its canonical form much later than King David's time.) It also appears somewhat later in Wisdom 9:17 ("Who has learned your counsel, unless you have given wisdom and sent your holy spirit from on high?" [NRSV]). Why did not this phrase appear earlier in the Bible? What took so long for the concept to develop in the history of ancient Israel? Why Isaiah? Levison addresses these and other questions in the subsequent chapters.

The Hebrew Bible is abundantly clear: the Lord was always with his people via what Levison calls a cacophony of different divine agents that appear in the Exodus and wilderness wanderings narratives: the pillars of cloud or fire, extraordinary angelic appearances, the *pānîm* (the presence or face) of God, and a dense cloud that is distinct from the pillars of cloud or fire (8, 41). These divine agents played a vital role in God's interaction with ancient Israel as mysterious vehicles of divine presence among the people. Levison examines each manifestation in depth. Moreover, their presence in these stories provided the raw material for later prophetic reflection

during an equally trying period for nascent Israel: the Babylonian exile and eventual repatriation under Persian hegemony. Although memories of the Exodus and wilderness wanderings narratives reverberate from Torah to Psalms, the Spirit is never specifically connected to the great liberation story of the Israelites. Not until Isaiah, when the “Holy Spirit” replaced the earlier agents altogether (30; cf. Isaiah 63:9). The combination of crisis and displacement during the sixth century (what Levison calls the “jolt of crisis”) was “fertile ground for a creative reimagining of Israel’s cherished traditions” (30, 39). God would once again bring liberation for his people, but the agent would be the Holy Spirit this time.

Chapter three offers a close textual analysis of Isaiah’s lament in 63:7–14. There Isaiah harkens back to Moses’s dialogue with God in Exodus 33 and his attempt to clarify who would accompany the people into the Promised Land. Would it be the *pānîm*, the pillars of fire and cloud, the dense pillar, or perhaps an angel? It is a fair question, and the story is unforgettable as Moses pressed his negotiations with God; he needed some clarity. However, his questions remained unanswered, and Moses and later readers alike remain uncertain: who would go with Moses and the people into the land of promise? Centuries later, all three questions were answered by the prophet. With one reference to an angel and three references to the Spirit (including two to the Holy Spirit) in Isaiah 63, the prophet is unequivocal: the Lord “put his Holy Spirit within them” (63:11) and delivered his people from their enemies. The Holy Spirit was the effective agent of deliverance in Exodus. Since this is the first reference to the *Holy Spirit* in the Bible, Levison claims this should be the launching point of pneumatology rather than dubious Greek philosophy (39).

Lest readers consign the Holy Spirit’s presence to a distant memory, in chapter 4 Levison focuses on Haggai, who directs his attention to an audience with firsthand knowledge of the exile and responds negatively. Following Isaiah’s innovative lead, Haggai calls the repatriated Israelites to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. He adds, “My spirit stands among you; do not fear” (2:5). Among the 378 references to *rûahî* in the Bible, where the Spirit “rushes upon, is upon, pours out, empties upon, blows, clothes, rests upon, guides—along with a host of other actions,” only here the Spirit “stands” (77; 727). Levison claims that with this phrase, the boundaries between past, present, and future crumbled. The God who brought Israel out of Egyptian bondage, through the desert, to the promised land, now *stood* among his people (83).

Following his textual analysis, Levison returns to his initial query with a summary of Christian attempts to explain the Spirit of God as a hypostasis, “the

progressive rendering of an internal [divine] attribute as an external entity” (86). His question is clear: does this adequately account for the ancient biblical tradition of the Holy Spirit among the people? Since biblical thinking on the Spirit is rooted in the geopolitical shifts of the Neo-Babylonian and Persian eras, the starting point of pneumatology should be in the biblical history, crisis, and community of the same era. He draws upon Jürgen Moltmann to support his assertion (and discusses how they differ; 107–111). Thereafter, Levison deftly engages emerging thought on the Spirit in Second Temple Jewish Literature, the New Testament, and especially Paul’s writings (which he maintains holds the most fully developed expression of Isaiah’s vision; 122). In narratives, prophecies, and psalms, these ancient authors tenaciously held to the conviction that God was *with* his people to deliver and restore (121). They had not been abandoned.

The book concludes with 13 excurses on topics addressed briefly in the main text. They allow readers to dive more deeply into salient topics of interest to them. These excurses will serve as research material for years to come.

Like most modern biblical and theological scholars, I was well-schooled in what might be called the “Holy Spirit dichotomy.” Put simply, this generalization claims that the Spirit was present only fleetingly or intermittently in the Old Testament, but the same Spirit is present permanently in the New Testament. The divide (and other dichotomies like it, e.g., Holy Spirit “power” vs. “person”) is simply not sustainable in light of Isaiah’s and Haggai’s innovative prophecies. Although Levison does not mention this, these words amount to new divine inspiration at a crucial moment in the history of the people of the Lord.

Reviewers have hailed *The Holy Spirit before Christianity* as a mandate for a new pneumatology among Christians, but Levison expressly disavows it (122). Instead, his book is a resounding call for biblically informed pneumatology rooted in the Bible. In the matrix of lament for things lost (Isaiah 63:7–17; Psalm 51) and the hope of divine promise (Haggai 2:4–5), unprecedented oracles emerged to point a way forward. In so doing, they assured God’s people that though elusive,<sup>1</sup> the Lord is present in the drama of human history. To use Haggai’s words: “do not fear.”

**William Lyons** is Associate Professor of Old Testament and Semitic Languages at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, USA.

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel L. Terrien, *The Elusive Presence: Toward a New Biblical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978). In a nod to Terrien’s seminal work, Levison uses “elusive” in several places in his book.



## ***Washed in the Spirit: Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Water***

**Baptism.** By Andrew Ray Williams. Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2021.

300 pp.

Baptism has long been a gaping hole in Pentecostal theology. For a movement that has spoken so much about baptism in the Spirit, there has been scant attention given to how that might relate (if at all) to water baptism. And for a movement that has been so concerned with the Great Commission, the baptism that is so much a part of Jesus' command has received little thought beyond mode, age, and formula. Even the expression "water baptism" (which Pentecostals have coined to mark a clear distinction between the sacrament of baptism and the baptism in the Holy Spirit) raises eyebrows of concern among Christians of other traditions. However, now, in *Washed in the Spirit*, Andrew Ray Williams has provided the work that Pentecostals have so long needed: a distinctly Pentecostal theological account of the sacrament of baptism. In seeking to construct such a Pentecostal theology of baptism, Williams is concerned with both "renewing Pentecostal teaching and practice, as well as ecumenical engagement" (1). If heeded, his proposal could certainly fulfill these claims.

Williams builds on the methodology of Chris Green in *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of the Lord's Supper*. However, he supplements this with a "field study" perspective through participant observation and interviews with church members in churches of three diverse US Pentecostal denominations. In this, he seeks to draw out the official teaching of the denominations and the ordinary theology surrounding baptism of both early and contemporary Pentecostals in each of the three traditions.

The three denominations Williams engages are the Foursquare Church (a Finished-Work denomination in which Williams is a minister), the International Pentecostal Holiness Church (IPHC; a Wesleyan-Holiness Pentecostal denomination), and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (PAW; a Oneness denomination). These denominations began in the US, and the research is limited to North American sources. For those outside North America, the inclusion of Oneness Pentecostals in the study may seem odd. However, the emergence of Oneness Pentecostalism had a significant influence on all US Pentecostal thinking about baptism. So, it was a necessary inclusion within a North American context.

For each denomination, Williams examines the ordinary theology of water baptism from within the published sources of the denomination's first decade's-

worth of periodicals, official denominational statements, and any scholarly voices before engaging in a field study in a local congregation. For the Foursquare Church and IPHC, part of this field study took the form of participant observation at a baptismal service. Unfortunately, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic prevented the observation of a PAW baptismal service. Williams deftly compensated for this obstacle by transitioning from ethnography to netnography, interviewing a pastor about baptismal practice. This field study component was beneficial in engaging in this topic because there were sometimes differences between official denominational formulations and the understanding and experiences of the interviewed church members.

After drawing from these three denominational studies, Williams engages in-depth with two key baptismal scriptures (Romans 6:1–11 and Acts 2:37–40), which emerged from historical sources. Again, readers outside of North America might be surprised by the discussion on Acts 2:37–40. But as the book discusses, these verses have had an enduring influence on American Pentecostal baptismal consciousness. Williams engages in a theological reading of these texts, contextualized within the Pentecostal interpretive tradition and in dialogue with the broader church tradition. This paves the way for his constructive work.

By this point in the work, Williams has already made a significant contribution to scholarship. Still, his constructive work holds this book's full potential (and full importance) for Pentecostal theology and praxis. Williams addresses "what a distinctly (trinitarian) Pentecostal theology of water baptism might look like" (228). Doing so may cause many Pentecostals to re-think their conception of baptism in the Holy Spirit. Yet, this is not the limit of Williams' work, for he also expands the implications of Spirit baptism into areas of ecclesiology and eschatology. He then concludes with some practical consequences for baptismal practice and liturgy. Some will, undoubtedly, resist Williams' call for a resituating of Spirit baptism within the sacrament of water baptism. Yet, he demonstrates that doing so has great ecumenical potential and overcomes some of Pentecostalism's own problems while not downplaying subsequent experiences of the Spirit.

Some difficulty arises in the desire to show hospitality to Oneness Pentecostals and maintain fellowship and ecumenical ties with the broader church. Williams is aware of this difficulty yet still suggests that Trinitarian Pentecostals "consider the legitimacy of prior baptisms performed in Jesus' name." At the same time, they should "retain and continue the practice of baptism in the name of the Triune God" (219). However, this would have ecumenical implications for baptism and

ordination (if ordinands had not been baptized in the Triune name) and may create a sticking point with other Trinitarian churches on wider issues. From a non-North American perspective, the proposal to add the name of Jesus to the Trinitarian baptismal formula would also appear questionable. Williams' appeal for Pentecostals to recognize the baptism of those baptized as infants (and thus to stop re-baptizing) is a much stronger point. This point could be further strengthened by engagement with some strands of British Baptist theology.

This book is not a tentative step towards a Pentecostal theology of the sacrament of baptism; it is a giant, bold leap. Yet, the boldness of this leap is firmly and deeply anchored within the classical Pentecostal tradition. The book deserves a wide (and engaged) readership both within that tradition and beyond. From now on, no one can address baptism from a Pentecostal perspective without taking proper account of the work of Andrew Ray Williams.

**Jonathan Black** is Lecturer in Theology and Co-Director of the Institute for Pentecostal Theology at Regents Theological College, West Malvern, UK.

***Art and Faith: A Theology of Making.*** By Makoto Fujimura. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020. xiii + 167 pp.

Makoto Fujimura founded the International Arts Movement, the Fujimura Institute, and he co-founded the Kintsugi Academy. In this work, the award-winning author, speaker, and artist employs the metaphoric use of an ancient Japanese art form to produce a theological and spiritual masterpiece on the convergence of art and faith. Kintsugi art entails reassembling shattered porcelain pottery to create a more beautiful vessel, more valuable, and more sophisticated than the original. The art form was discovered accidentally. According to a sixteenth-century tradition, when a young attendant dropped an invaluable vessel, his warlord wanted to punish the servant. However, the tea master intervened and arranged for the vessel to be reassembled using a well-known Japanese technique that mixes lacquer with gold pigment. In presenting the “restored” teaware to the warlord, the attendant did not deliver a vessel with no sign of previous damage. Instead, he gave a fully functional vessel more pleasing than the original, which still bore the original cracks. Fujimura's thesis rests on this type of Kintsugi symbolism.

Fujimura contests the dominant biblical and theological meta-narrative framed as Creation–Fall–Redemption–Restoration. He argues that the concept of restoration (akin to consummation) is an insufficient eschatological telos because God does not merely wish to fix creation and return it to its original form. Instead, Fujimura imagines a Kintsugi telos based on the alternative sequence of Creation–Fall–Redemption–New Creation. Moreover, if pre-fall humans were initially commissioned to be artists and poets (that is, to design and to name), why would they not continue this act into the future? According to Fujimura, “Christian expectation of the future has nothing whatsoever to do with the end . . . of this life, the end of history, or the end of the world.” Quite to the contrary, “Christian expectation is about the beginning . . . of true life, the beginning of God’s kingdom, and the beginning of the new creation of all things into their enduring form” (84).

Fujimura fastens his thesis to the eschatology of N. T. Wright, from whom Fujimura secures an impressive foreword. Like Wright, Fujimura imagines a Creator who sings the creation into being and commissions humans to partner with him in ongoing co-creation (see Wright’s *Surprised by Hope*). For Fujimura, the biblical story is a mosaic of creative activity. At the heart of this story is God’s revelation through the bread and the wine, which are themselves made by humans. Therefore, Eucharistic worship celebrates the collaborative work of farmers who grow wheat, bread makers who bake bread, and bread shop owners who distribute it. In disclosing himself in this way, God employs humanity’s creation of bread and wine to reveal the resurrected Jesus at the Eucharist table.

Attentive readers have much to glean. First, Fujimura does not deliver a “how to [create] manual.” Instead, he serves up a spiritual feast. As an artist, he is not an apologist but a mystic. For Fujimura, the slow process of art-making—and every creative effort—ought to function as a spiritual discipline, a vocation well-suited for reflection, prayer, and worship. Through creative imagination, artists and their ardent witnesses become partners of the New Creation.

Fujimura encourages his readers to extend the gospel beyond the “art of soul-winning” (an adage Pentecostals often use to describe evangelism) to a more robust and holistic salvation story. In the current climate of #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo, Fujimura implores Christians to fix inequities and for humans to remake and create beauty by writing new stories based on equality. Such remaking captures the most profound realm of Kintsugi, where artists seek to imagine a new and better world.

I suggest this work for several audiences. Students in Pentecostal liberal arts environments should be stimulated to employ their creative minds and hands. Fujimura laments that the passionate creativity used in social media gains so little

traction in the church. Moreover, Fujimura argues that utilitarian impulses (“let’s use social media to communicate the gospel”) must not thwart the celebration of human creativity for its own good. Pastors should listen carefully to the desires of culture that are moved primarily through multisensory experience. What if our churches would launch their congregants to advance the kingdom in concert with marketplace creativity? Why do leaders rely heavily on experienced business minds to lead church financial drives but seldom employ artists to fashion the context for their witness? What if churches used the gifts of their painters and poets to enliven discipleship? Readers will be encouraged to imagine soul-winning efforts and disciple-making strategies delivered by their artists to a world that craves human creativity. Implications for salvation, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology are high limitless.

**Martin Mittelstadt** is Professor of New Testament at Evangel University, Springfield, MO, USA

***The Interpreting Spirit: Spirit, Scripture, and Interpretation in the Renewal Tradition.*** By Hannah R. K. Mather. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2020. xiv + 247 pp.

This volume is an edited version of Hannah R. K. Mather’s Ph.D. dissertation at the London School of Theology. It constructively develops the place of the Spirit in the acts of the interpretation of Scripture. Mather proposes a Renewal approach to the Spirit’s role in interpretation. She also identifies, locates, and dialogues with other scholars within the Renewal stream who use narrower and broader categorizations for Pneumatic, Pentecostal, Renewalist approaches to interpreting Scripture.

Chapter one provides the methodological approach for the study, including the historical layout, explanations of key terminology, and limitations. Chapters two through five engage with multiple authors. This discourse is categorized into the historical periods of Pneumatic hermeneutic development. It engages with the key voices of each period. Chapter two covers 1970–1989 with the emerging Evangelical, Charismatic, Roman Catholic, and Pentecostal conversationalists. This early period witnessed the emergence of approaches that sought to be holistic. Chapter three covers 1990–1999. It begins with Steven Land’s groundbreaking contribution concerning the effect, ethics, and cognition (Mather’s terms as

representative of Land's orthopathy, orthopraxy, and orthodoxy) as foundational to experiencing the Spirit through and beyond the Scriptures. Chapter four presses beyond Pentecostal appropriations of the Pneumatic hermeneutic, potentially limiting the conversation and the conversation partners.

Chapter five notes the diversity of voices emerging from 2010–2018 (when the research for this book was primarily completed). In this chapter, Mather proposes two “schools” of thought for Pneumatic interpretation: the “Regent School” and the “Cleveland School.” Amos Yong is treated as a *sui generis* who bridges such “schools” and offers a unique approach that does not fit either school. Mather describes how the Regent School seems more broadly ecumenical and leans toward a grammatical-historical approach. In contrast, the Cleveland School leans more toward methods like reception history and reader response.

Chapter six concludes the volume with a summary of the findings. It constructively joins the various scholarly voices to try and identify what the Spirit is saying through the church both through and beyond Scripture. Mather tracks how her sampling of authors has either emphasized the Spirit's centrality in interpretation or kept the Spirit to the periphery. Mather seeks to address this through a more emphatic Pneumatic approach that is explicitly Trinitarian, affective, ethical, and cognitive. Further, Mather engages with several subjects that she believes lack scholarly engagement in most literature. She considers these subjects as potential hindrances to Pneumatic interpretation.

With much to commend this historical survey that brings such diverse voices into dialogue diachronically, there are a couple potential areas that need to be addressed. First, while the label “Cleveland School” has gained some traction in scholarly circles and publications, a “Regent School” proposal has not. This is not to suggest that Mather has not discovered and delineated another distinct school of thought for Pneumatic interpretation. Still, many conversations around the subject (often) speak of a “Springfield School” in contrast to a “Cleveland School.” This latter designation also has not been born much by way of any specific scholarly engagement. Still, like the proposed “Regent School,” it seeks to follow a more grammatical-historical approach. In contrast to the “Regent School,” it seems to be more ecumenically inclusive of Evangelicalism rather than seeking a more broadly ecumenical approach. Perhaps more needs to be done to delineate such schools of thought and how they might uniquely contribute to the interpretation of Scripture (and in the case of Mather's work, to the Pneumatic interpretation of Scripture). Second, Mather connects several authors (e.g., Frank Macchia and Cheryl Bridges Johns) who have a more Christocentric approach to theology and hermeneutics as

overly bearing the marks of Reformed theology. However, this may miss the Christocentric spirituality of those claiming classic Pentecostal confession of the “Full Gospel” of Jesus as Savior, (Sanctifier), Baptizer in the Spirit, Healer, and Soon Coming King. While authors like John Christopher Thomas and Kenneth Archer have made a classic Pentecostal confession explicit, others like Macchia and Bridges Johns may not have.

One commendation of this volume is Mather’s explicit attempt to bring divergent voices into constructive conversations for the sake of the wider church. The quest for a Spirit-enlivened hearing of Scripture (affective, ethical, and cognitive) that recognizes one’s limitations and gifts and provides a fuller hearing should not be lightly dismissed. Mather has sought to admit faithfully the divergences of authors and approaches as she brought them together in dialogue. A second commendation is her emphasis on the Spirit as the one who is before and after Scripture. Mather points to the Spirit throughout the volume in ways that many discussions of biblical interpretation have failed too often to do. One would think the Spirit would be more emphatically discussed among Renewalist/Pentecostal/Charismatic scholars. Still, such does not seem to have been sufficiently the case. Perhaps Mather’s contributions here may spur more focused activity as befitting the Lord and Giver of Life. This volume provides a helpful tool for those seeking to understand the conversations on Pneumatic interpretation. It also points to ways forward, emphasizing points of convergence among the many Pentecostal voices and those yet to join the conversation.

**Rick Wadholm, Jr.**, is Associate Professor of Old Testament at Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, MO, USA.

***The Spirit-Baptized Church: A Dogmatic Inquiry.*** By Frank D. Macchia. London, UK: T & T Clark, 2020. 240 pp.

*The Spirit-Baptized Church* offers a pneumatological ecclesiology rooted in the metaphor of Spirit baptism. It suggests three ecclesial movements for the church: outpouring, incorporation, and charismatic/missional vocation (4–5). This book’s ecclesiological approach goes beyond more limited ecclesial paradigms favored by Pentecostals/Charismatics. Macchia uses Spirit baptism to generate an integrative ecclesiology that unites various pneumatic nuances of communion, sanctification,

and mission. Additionally, his understanding of Spirit baptism uses definitions engendered by North American classical Pentecostals. While not downplaying Spirit baptism as charismatic empowerment, Macchia's definition is eschatological in scope. He sees life in the Spirit reaching its fullness across a teleological progression towards the kingdom of God.

Following the introduction, *The Spirit-Baptized Church* is divided into four lengthy chapters. Chapter One develops Macchia's understanding of the Spirit-baptized church. It aims to demonstrate that his ecclesiology can unite communion and missional ecclesiologies through pneumatological Trinitarian incorporation. Macchia proposes that the church is administered by Spirit baptism. This argument is developed across several biblical and theological signposts. Of paramount importance is the link between the Spirit baptism of Jesus Christ and his crucifixion/resurrection. He reconciled humanity to God through his atoning death, allowing his baptism of fire to become one of incorporation and sanctification instead of divine condemnation. The outpouring of the Spirit can incorporate humanity into Trinitarian *koinonia*. This results in certain core practices (proclamation, water baptism, the eucharist, spiritual gifts, and mission) requiring social modality. Trinitarian life carries analogous anthropological motifs for ecclesial existence, especially in terms of "unity with an expanding diversity of persons and gifts" (43). Humanity is relational, and as the Spirit incorporates individuals into Trinitarian existence, personhood becomes oriented towards self-giving love. In this way, the church becomes the sign and instrument of Christ's saving grace in the world.

Chapter Two moves from incorporation to election, with the election of Christ opening his divine election to others by way of the outpoured Spirit. Macchia's choice to emphasize election for his constructive ecclesiology is unique here, as it rarely gets much treatment by Pentecostals (59). By election, Macchia does not have in mind Calvinistic theologizing, which tends to emphasize individual predestination. Instead, the stress is on the divine love of God who, not wishing for any to perish (2 Peter 3:9), elects Jesus Christ to lead humanity into its destiny. Macchia suggests that election in scripture is "a divine act that arises out of grace and has as its overarching purpose mercy towards humanity to the glory of God" (96). At this point, Macchia is rooted within Barth's Christocentric understanding of election. However, he unpacks this by way of corporate pneumatology. That is, Jesus as Spirit-baptizer elects others by the anointing of his Spirit. Election thus takes shape across history, with the church serving to mediate



God's grace-filled choice to others. Overall, Macchia suggests that ecclesial election is primarily about God's redemptive purposes in the world.

Chapter Three describes the pilgrim nature of the Spirit-baptized church, which moves in the power of the Spirit towards the kingdom of God. In giving priority to the kingdom, Macchia hopes to quiet notions of realized eschatology (106). Yet, because the church participates in the mystery of new creation by the Spirit, it bears witness to the kingdom. Macchia delineates some ecclesial models to unpack how the church fulfills its nature. These models are: the church as the field of God, the body of Christ, the temple of the Spirit, and the army of God. The last model has been especially significant for Pentecostals/Charismatics, though it has faced challenges related to triumphalism. This chapter concludes with a word on the classic marks of the church as articulated in the Nicene Creed. It demonstrates the potential of Macchia's proposal to address several ecumenical audiences and concerns beyond his own Pentecostal tradition. The marks of unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity are all read pneumatologically. That is to say, as the church journeys by way of the Spirit towards the kingdom, the church participates in these marks as gifts but also, faced with its sinfulness, sees them as challenges to test fidelity to its nature and mission.

Chapter Four concludes the book on a missional note by describing how the Spirit-baptized church operates as an instrument of divine mediation to the world. This mediation occurs by way of proclamation, the sacraments, and gifted ministries (163). Macchia suggests that Spirit baptism is not exhausted by these ecclesial dimensions in an initiatory or progressive sense. Additionally, because Christ is the sole "mediator" of God's grace, the church's mediation should only be understood in a derived (or instrumentalist) sense. Nevertheless, in Christ, God has elected the church as a sign of the kingdom that lives by the Spirit's breath. While the Spirit may blow in unexpected directions, the outpoured Spirit also leads the church to designate some core practices (proclamation, the sacraments, worship, spiritual gifts, and mission). These strengthen the community and are effective pneumatological means of witness.

The book has many strengths. One strength is how it moves away from a pragmatist Pentecostal ecclesiology towards an ecclesiology that is more theologically robust. Another strength is how Macchia successfully speaks to Pentecostal propensities and offers a constructive proposal that should gain a hearing among a more ecumenical audience. Because Spirit baptism touches upon every aspect of ecclesial existence, Macchia's ecclesiology incorporates sacramentality, charismata, and gospel proclamation into a cohesive whole. In this

way, Macchia's proposal speaks into broader ecclesial conversations, though not without challenging nearly every tradition to root itself more deeply within the Spirit-filled life. This is especially evident in his comments on the Nicene mark of holiness and his suggestion that ecclesial existence is transformative and sanctifying. However, the reviewer was left wondering to what degree the church should expect a pneumatological transformation in this life as it journeys towards the kingdom. The reader questioned how Macchia's emphasis on the eschatological horizon maps present ecclesial life and expectations, especially as his proposal presses into diverging directions regarding the sinner/saint dynamic.

Macchia's dogmatic proposal deserves a broad audience despite these questions, especially among Pentecostals/Charismatics who are commonly critiqued for an underdeveloped ecclesiology. Moreover, Macchia's emphasis on Spirit baptism may spark other ecclesial proposals among the global Pentecostal family. These may allow for further pneumatological experiences and theologizing and help drive ecclesial reflection and construction.

**Jeremy Bone** is a doctoral student (Intercultural Studies) at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, USA.

***Third Wave Pentecostalism in the Philippines: Understanding Toronto Blessing Revivalism's Signs and Wonders Theology in the Philippines.*** By Lora Angeline Embudo Timenia. Baguio City, Philippines: Asia Pacific Theological Seminary Press, 2020. 214 pp.

The author, Lora Angeline Embudo Timenia, grew up in the Philippines and is ordained with the Philippines General Council of the Assemblies of God. This book is her Master of Theology thesis at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary (APTS) in Baguio City, Philippines. It interacts with the theology of signs and wonders of the Toronto Blessing revivalism in the Philippines.

The author grew up in a classical Pentecostal denomination. As such, she had never encountered a Toronto Blessing church and its emphasis on signs and wonders such as gold dust, gold teeth, orb, gemstones, angel feathers, etc. Upon encountering such a congregation, the author grew confused because she had never seen such phenomena and had never read about it in the Bible. She was wary of the movement because, in the Filipino context, emphasizing signs and wonders was

associated with animistic beliefs. Therefore, this book is the author's search to understand the manifestation of signs and wonders as part of Toronto Blessing theology in the Philippines from a classical Pentecostal perspective.

From chapter 2 to chapter 5, the author reviewed the literature. While examining the historical background of the Toronto Blessing, she studied the development of the Pentecostal movement in the Philippines and Filipinos' religious spirituality. She showed how the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements grew, transmuted, and later accepted Toronto Blessing revivalist spirituality. The author continued to focus on the religious situation in the Philippines. The Filipino religious society structure has shown that people tend to be attracted to animistic things in their deep psychology. American Protestantism tried to eradicate folk religiosity amongst Filipino Christians. Still, attempts fell short due to the limitations of their Western worldview.

The author used qualitative research to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems. In chapter 7, the author interviewed four Filipino Neocharismatic ministers connected with the Toronto Blessing. The interviews revealed that the ministers hold to a Toronto Blessing theology and spirituality. In chapter 8, the author arranged the theological understandings of Filipino revivalists' signs and wonders influenced by the Toronto Blessing. The data also revealed that Filipino Toronto Blessing signs and wonders theology is similar to North American Toronto Blessing revivalist theologies.

In chapter 9, the author analyzed Toronto Blessing revivalism from a classical Pentecostal viewpoint and evaluated its dangerous elements. She stated that the Pentecostal church in the Philippines cannot ignore the spirituality of seeking revival. Yet, in the Philippines, where animism is deeply rooted, one cannot ignore the dangers. She suggested establishing a theological framework of discernment for manifestations of signs and wonders. She emphasized the importance of judging Toronto Blessing's various supernatural phenomena using biblical discernment rather than uncritically accepting all the manifestations. The author argued that the signs and wonders of God in the Bible are used to point to God's salvation, not just to surprise people. Therefore, it is essential to confirm whether these phenomena are linked to human salvation. As a case study, the author examined the phenomenon of gold dust and concluded that this phenomenon is not biblically endorsed. Neither does it point towards God's salvation.

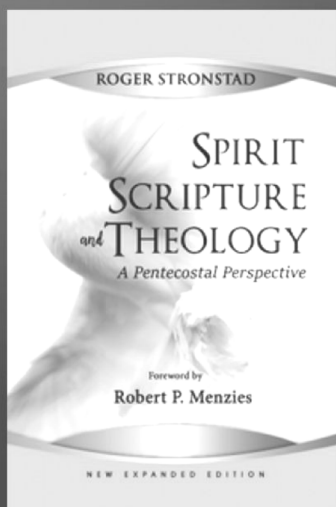
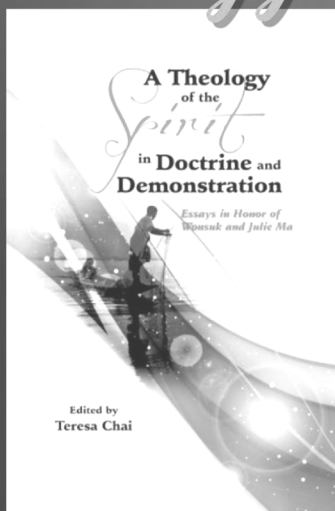
This book is a well-organized thesis that points out the theological instability of this movement and judges whether the phenomena that occur at meetings is biblical. The strength of this book is the author's selection of four representative

ministers whom she interviewed. The interviews provided good insight into how pastors in this movement think of the manifestation of signs and wonders in their ministries. It is also a great stimulus to convey their passion for revival. Another strength of this book is its guidelines on how classical Pentecostals should perceive the spiritual phenomena in the Third Wave movement's ministries. The method posted as a case study teaches what biblical soundness is and guides the various spiritual manifestations in the church.

As the author herself wrote, the weakness of this research is that very few materials deal with this issue from a theoretical point of view and that further scholarship is needed. It may be true that this movement has many precarious aspects. However, it is also true that the spiritual manifestations of this movement stimulate the indigenous religiosity of many Filipinos and draws them to the church. Therefore, this issue needs to be also studied from a missiological perspective. I hope that non-Western scholars will further research these issues in an animistic context. Overall, I recommend this book to classical Pentecostal ministers, especially in non-Western countries. They can use this book to acquire the attitude of biblically scrutinizing the various spiritual phenomena in the mission field.

**Noriyuki Miyake** is President of Central Bible College (Tokyo, Japan) and a Ph.D. student in the College of Theology and Ministry at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, USA.

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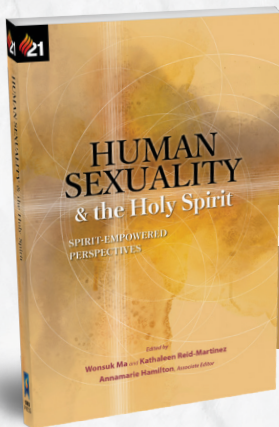
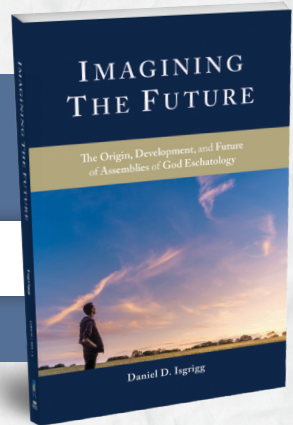
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