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Missional Leadership

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EDITORIAL: THE BEST LAID PLANS

JEFFREY S. LAMP, EDITOR

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As I write this editorial I'm saddened by the news that noted New Testament scholar and Pentecostal Gordon Fee passed away Tuesday, October 25, 2022, at the age of 88. For those students of the Bible who came of vocational age in the latter part of the twentieth century forward, Fee was a towering figure whose scholarly output was both prodigious and profound. Perhaps best known for his hermeneutics text (co-authored with Douglas Stuart), *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, Fee would write numerous seminal works, including commentaries, studies in textual criticism, and monographs on pneumatology and Christology.

In the days following his passing, many eulogies have poured forth, many relating an anecdote told by John Crosby, a former student of Fee's at Wheaton and Gordon-Conwell. It was the first day of a New Testament Literature course, when Fee jumped up on his desk at the head of the class and announced, "This is not a class on New Testament! This is a class on immortality! Some day you will hear 'Fee is dead.' Do not believe it! He is singing with his Lord and his king!" He then led the class in singing, "O, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing."

I am sure many such remembrances of Fee's life and career will be forthcoming in the days to come. I only met Gordon Fee once. It was in the early 1990s when I was a fairly new PhD student at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. I was seated at a table for a banquet at some conference or another. Had I the wherewithal at the time to realize what I was about to see, I would have recorded the date, place, and yes, even the conference, of this meeting. But as I was sitting at the table, Gordon Fee and E. Earle Ellis came to sit down at my table. Ellis sat next to me with Fee sitting on Ellis' other side. At first, they engaged in small talk, then someone asked a question directed toward both of them, and the next half hour was filled with these two giants of New Testament studies engaging each other in an exemplary display of knowledge, wisdom, and experience. I stared glassy-eyed at the mastery these two men displayed of a field I was only beginning to enter.

In the early 1990s I began attending meetings of the Society for Pentecostal Studies (SPS). In those days, discussions of developing a distinctive Pentecostal hermeneutic were gaining momentum among Pentecostals. Roger Stronstad had entered the fray with his proposal of a prophetic hermeneutic that had several points of divergence with Fee's

approach as articulated in *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. I recall some rather heated exchanges in conference settings in those years, leading me not to attend meetings for several years. At the time, I couldn't really understand why some of the membership seemed so intent on attacking Fee for not being "Pentecostal enough" (as one person attending some of these sessions later characterized it) in his hermeneutics. For me, Fee had become someone quite significant in the field of biblical studies; he had demonstrated that a scholar could be both one of the leading voices in the academy as well as an example of a deeply committed Pentecostal believer. He was on our side!

So as I sit in my office with several of Fee's books lining my shelves, I marvel at the career he had and at his influence, both in the classroom and through his writing, on generations of Pentecostal scholars. His legacy is immeasurable. As I age, all too rapidly it seems, I look at what he said to that New Testament Literature class so long ago, and claim those words for myself.

This issue of *Spiritus* has had a circuitous path to its published form. We had originally decided to dedicate this issue to the theme of "Spirit-empowered mission." As that effort unfolded and as deadlines began to approach, we found ourselves with very few submissions to consider, clearly not enough to publish an issue on the theme. Then quite fortuitously one day as the new school year was about to begin, I was sitting in my office when a colleague, Eric Newberg, happened by my door and popped in to say hello. He had been on a year-long sabbatical during which he did research and writing on the topic of Spirit-empowered leadership. He shared that he had written an article on the topic and asked if *Spiritus* might be interested in publishing it. I indicated that we would surely entertain the article. Then he shared that he had doctoral students who had written course papers using the framework for assessing Spirit-empowered leadership he had developed, and suggested that these papers, written on Spirit-empowered leaders, might be packaged with his leading essay and published together in the spring 2023 issue. I asked if he might be able to light a fire under some of his students to get it done in time for this fall's issue. His persuasive powers were effective, and so we modified the theme of this issue to read "Missional Leadership." We have some articles that came about from our initial theme as well as these articles assembled by Newberg. As they say, "The best laid plans of mice and men. . . ."

The issue opens with a pair of studies that came forth under the initial theme for this issue: Spirit-empowered mission. The first, a study from ORU PhD student Rebekah Bled, focuses on the presence of Spirit-empowered witness in Uruguay against the backdrop of secularism entrenched in the nation's development from its beginnings. Bled identifies the mission of a Roman Catholic nun, Mother Rubatto, and her Capuchin sisters in the latter half of the nineteenth century and current activity of neo-

Pentecostals as bright spots of Spirit-empowered witness in a thoroughly secular society. Daniel Isgrigg follows with an analysis of evangelistic movements and their effectiveness in North America. Ironically, despite the fact that many of these movements originated in North America, the rates of success have fallen far short of the lofty goals these movements set for themselves. Isgrigg offers sober assessment, yet provides reason to hope for current and future generations of evangelists.

The six articles originating out of Eric Newberg's research follow, beginning with Newberg's article that identifies, explains, and critiques paradigms of Spirit-empowered leadership employed by Spirit-empowered leaders. Drawing on the work of Max Weber, Newberg understands Spirit-empowered leadership as a form of charismatic leadership, wherein leadership flows from charisma or giftedness attributed to the leader by his or her followers. After a discussion of the findings of theorists concerning charismatic leadership, Newberg delineates five paradigms of Spirit-empowered leadership, using Ephesians 4:11 as a template: apostle, prophet, healing evangelist, pastorpreneur, and teacher/scholar.

Articles follow that draw upon Newberg's study of Spirit-empowered leadership, identifying the paradigms individual Spirit-empowered leaders evidence and assessing the effectiveness of these leaders in light of charismatic leadership research. David Osei-Nimoh surveys the life of Ghanaian theologian Opoku Onyinah. Tomasz Bialokurec assesses the Spirit-empowered leadership of a perhaps surprising candidate, Pope John Paul II. Robert McBain follows with a survey of the tumultuous life and ministry of Jimmy Swaggart. Charles Obara looks at the ministry of Reinhard Bonnke in Africa. Samuel Akibu rounds out this collection with a study of a Beninese-Nigerian carpenter, Samuel Biléou Joseph Oschoffa, who founded the Celestial Church of Christ. This diverse roster of Spirit-empowered leaders provides ample opportunity to test Newberg's approach in assessing Spirit-empowered leadership.

The issue concludes with sort of postscript that shifts the focus on missional leaders from the widely known to those less well-known. Wonsuk Ma looks at the examples of three deceased ORU students who exemplified commitment to mission in their lifetimes. Ma's piece is a call to be mindful that there are countless "unknowns" who serve faithfully in mission, whose lives are models of humility that may speak to those more visible Spirit-empowered leaders.

So what does the remembrance of Gordon Fee have to do with the theme of the present issue of *Spiritus*? I'm sure I could come up with some creative way to bring the two together, but I shall resist the temptation to do so. Rather, I will simply take the tack (or the cop-out) that Bob Dylan takes when asked to divulge the meaning of his lyrics. I won't tell you; you need to figure that out for yourself.

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AGAINST THESE THINGS THERE IS NO LAW

SPIRIT-EMPOWERED WITNESS IN SECULAR URUGUAY

REBEKAH BLED

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Abstract

Uruguay is a country unique in Latin America for its secularism. It secularized early, thoroughly, and publicly, under the leadership of President José Batlle y Ordoñez, at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. A century later, Uruguay still boasts the highest percentage of atheists, agnostics, and nones in the continent. This is a country that seems to defy the sometimes triumphalist narratives of the pentecostalization of the global South. Yet, even amidst this backdrop, there are bright spots of Spirit-empowered witness. This article seeks to examine two of these bright spots of Spirit-empowered hope during Uruguay's historic secularization process and in the present.

Introduction

Uruguay is a country without an indigenous population, that has been lauded as a “democratic miracle,”¹ and labeled the “Switzerland of South America.”² The early genocide of the indigenous Charrúas³ created a supposed *tabula rasa* in which modern Enlightenment ideals could be enacted in a South American landscape. A heavy influx of European immigrants created a demographic described as being “descended from the ships.”⁴ Uruguay's cultural patriarch, José Batlle y Ordoñez, received these immigrants with open arms, so long as they left their “superstitions,” including religion, on those ships. Today, Uruguay has remained the most secular country in Latin America, with the church having been “privatized and ghettoized”⁵ for over one hundred years. Todd Johnson and Gina Zurlo's *World Christian Encyclopedia* states simply, “Uruguay is by far the most secular and least Catholic nation in the Americas.” While Johnson and Zurlo show Catholic adherents in Uruguay at 52.9 percent, they note that regular mass attendance stands at 3 percent.⁶ However, even here, bright spots of Spirit-empowered courage, hope, and tenacity shine forth. This article examines two of these bright spots:

the witness of Mother Francesca Rubatto and the Capuchin sisters, Italian nuns who sailed as missionaries to Uruguay during the height of anti-clerical tensions in the late nineteenth–early twentieth centuries, and the potentially equally significant witness of current neo-Pentecostals in Uruguay.

Method, Structure, and Sources

This article draws from Eneida Jacobsen’s factual model of public theology. The factual model calls the researcher and reader alike to look for where and how faith is “already being made public” as the faithful live out their theology.⁷ This article will look first at the efforts of Uruguay’s cultural patriarch, José Batlle y Ordoñez (hereafter Batlle), to transform Uruguay from an immigrant backwater into a modern, secular, and homogenous nation and the witness of the Capuchin sisters. This article will then jump forward one hundred years, looking at neo-Pentecostals in present-day Uruguay.

Historian Susana Monreal’s work on Italian nuns in education and healthcare in Uruguay provides insight into the late nineteenth–early twentieth centuries from the Catholic perspective. Sociologist Néstor Da Costa is an important voice on the current religious climate in Uruguay. Finally, Magdalena Milsev’s thesis on a prominent neo-Pentecostal church network in Uruguay, *Misión Vida para los Nacionales*, provides valuable ethnographic insight into Pentecostal belief and praxis.

Ideology and Identity: A Brief History of Uruguayan Secularism

The birth of Uruguay did not happen peacefully. Achieving independence from Spain in 1811, Uruguay was not yet its own country, forming instead the Banda Oriental together with Brazil and Argentina. In a complex history deserving of its own study, Uruguay finally emerged from the Banda Oriental as a separate country forming a Spanish-affiliated buffer state between Brazil and Argentina. Uruguay’s first constitution was enacted in 1830. Uruguay then embarked on more than half a century of internal conflict, with ongoing civil strife as a lengthy punctuation on a chaotic beginning.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Uruguay was still culturally a territory. Gauchos roamed the *pampas* rounding up wild cattle and living on their meat.⁸ Both dueling and bull fighting were legal.⁹ Though most of the population was concentrated in the urban city of Montevideo,¹⁰ in many ways the culture of Uruguay of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries resembled the prototypical North American Wild West.¹¹ The arrival of the twentieth century brought the presidencies of José Batlle y Ordoñez, member of the Colorado party, and president from 1903–1907 and

again from 1911–1915. Against the backdrop of this Uruguayan Wild West, Batlle determined to make a modern nation out of Uruguay. Martin Weinstein comments, “Given the huge flux of immigrants in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and the first two decades of the twentieth, the challenge for Batlle . . . was to integrate this new and overwhelmingly urban mass into society.”¹² Cemented in history as the man who brought Uruguay into the modern era by the creation of the welfare state, Batlle was ever on the side of the urban poor through the medium of progressive government policy with a preferential view of the city.¹³ Batlle was strategically building an ideology of homogeneity among those who would constitute the new Uruguayans, that is, working-class Italians and Spaniards in Montevideo. Da Costa, describes it well:

The native people of Uruguay had been exterminated and the bulk of the country’s population now descended from immigrants who had come to this land in search of a better future. In a modernized Uruguay, they found a place, sustenance, future and protection in the hands of a newly consolidated state with plans for the future. All Uruguay asked of these immigrants was to abandon the trappings of their origin and join a new “we” where egalitarianism played a very strong symbolic and ideological role.¹⁴

Indeed, Stephen Armet notes, “more than one researcher has commented on the state’s obsession with forming, not just an integrated society, but a homogenized and uniform society leaning toward a liberal autocracy.”¹⁵ Critical in Batlle’s ideology was a driving anti-clericalism with Freemason sympathies,¹⁶ resulting, eventually, in a new constitution in which Article Five ensured complete separation of church and state.¹⁷ However, Batlle’s anti-clericalism went beyond this constitutional break between church and state. He sought removal of the church from the public square entirely. Milton Vanger summarizes, “Most of Don Pepe’s [José Batlle’s] moral preoccupations sooner or later involved anti-Catholicism.”¹⁸

Batlle’s legacy of anti-clericalism and, indeed, of anti-religion, reveals itself in the statistics on religious belief and practice in Uruguay more than a century later. The country currently boasts the highest number of atheists, agnostics, and nones in Latin America,¹⁹ and seems to largely resist the pentecostalization that largely otherwise characterizes the Global South.²⁰ Uruguay’s political history seems to have calcified into an identity element for Uruguayans.²¹ Uruguayan Parliamentary Senator, Carmen Asiaín Pereira, describes it thus:

This initial uniformity of the population in general terms of culture, language, ethnicity, and religion had a strong influence on its attitude towards the “different,” undermining the development of an open-minded

tradition. Sharing the “only child syndrome,” Uruguayans found themselves in no need to resolve the challenge of coexistence with the “altar.” This peculiar historical fact conditioned our nation since its birth, making it prone to holding a monolithic ideology and a single truth.²²

Italian Sisters in the Río de la Plata

Susana Monreal traces the first four Italian convents that came to Uruguay as missionaries during the mid-late nineteenth century, including the Capuchin Sisters of Mother Rubatto.²³ Monreal emphasizes commonalities between these four orders, including Marian piety, Eucharistic worship, and missionary zeal. In this, they were not unlike the early Pentecostals, who, having experienced a new or fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit, believed they had been anointed for service and went out immediately and zealously as missionaries, some to Uruguay.²⁴ It was Marian devotion, common to the time period, that served as the motivation and prescription for the sisters’ direct involvement in social engagement, specifically in roles of teaching and caring for the sick.²⁵ The first sisters arrived in 1856 to find an anemic Catholic church. Uruguay, in fact, would have no diocese in the country for a further twenty-two years, and until 1878 was considered an outpost of the Buenos Aires diocese. It was a vicarate with one parish for every 3,454 Uruguayans and one clergy member for every 1,140 Uruguayans. In total, there were thirty-three parishes and one hundred clerics for the entire nation.²⁶

Meanwhile, a letter from the Daughters of Mary Helper of Christians illustrates the passion with which the sisters approached their mission, revealing that their primary motivation was evangelization. Upon arrival in Montevideo, the sisters stayed with others until their home was ready. They expressed longing for this time so that they could continue “the evangelizing task that they had already begun with the children of the Italians” who were on the same boat to Montevideo.²⁷ Their letter states, “On the boat we have been able to realize the great need to make God known and loved, and we burn with desire to give ourselves to souls.”²⁸ Recent musings on Mother Rubatto’s influence echo the sisters’ missionary purpose: “When you study her life, you see that her missionary passion developed in this country. She came to an area that was a wasteland and had a great vision.”²⁹

Freemasons and Mother Rubatto

The Italian Freemasons who built the Italian Hospital of Montevideo looked to convents in Italy to supply the necessary nurses, “on the condition they do not put pressure on the sick in regard to religious practices.”³⁰ Few wanted to work as nurses because it was considered a low-class profession. Therefore, nuns were called from Italy

to work in the Italian hospital, under the anti-clerical Freemason founders and administrators. In this context, Mother Francesca Rubatto responded to the summons, arriving in Montevideo in 1892 with three sisters. Mother Rubatto was initially hesitant to respond to the request from the Río de la Plata due to the young age of the nuns under her care.³¹ Even when Mother Rubatto sailed for Montevideo, it was “with some anguish,”³² as the sisters were young, the journey was hard. Upon their arrival, the bitter clerical/anti-clerical tensions between the Bishop of Montevideo and the Italian hospital administrators prevented the sisters from beginning their work.³³ Nora Azanza, a Capuchin sister in present-day Montevideo, describes the situation: “Since [the hospital] was administered by Freemasons, they did not want to receive [Mother Rubatto]. People were mad at her, and she could have retired, but she preferred to earn a space.”³⁴

Through the assistance of other influential Catholics in the Río de la Plata,³⁵ the sisters were eventually able to begin work as nurses, caring for the immigrants the hospital was designed to serve. Crediting the sisters’ patience and tenacity, Monreal notes that despite the anti-clerical conflicts of the city, the hospital, and the nuns’ work as nurses, the sisters were, for a time, able to establish a daily rosary prayer, establish a chapel, and hire a chaplain who, remarkably, was paid by the hospital administrators.³⁶

Mother Rubatto seemed to overcome her initial hesitation towards the Río de la Plata, as she first requested via letter, then personally sailed back to Italy to recruit more nurses, returning to Montevideo with five sisters.³⁷ In addition to the hospital, Mother Rubatto served the poor and the young in Montevideo. Monreal quotes a sister who knew Mother Rubatto, Sister Petrina Merello, assessing her impact in the hospital and beyond:

The leaders of the hospital did not understand anything about religion . . . but the Reverend Mother with her kindness, education, and charity, knew how to win the hearts of all who came to her. The wife of the most contrary to religion, who called the priests a bag of rags and said that [Latin] America had lost all its luster after the priests entered, was the first to then give her a beautiful monstrance for the chapel.³⁸

Though she does not use the phrase “fruit of the Spirit,” Monreal nevertheless names two of the fruits the Spirit bears in the lives of those he empowers in describing Mother Rubatto’s impact at the Italian Hospital: “Her abiding joy and ‘gentle tenacity’ were a powerful help in gaining the trust of the anticlerical administrators of the Italian Hospital in Montevideo.”³⁹ In his address to the Capuchin sisters about Mother Rubatto, Pope John Paul II quotes a section from one of her letters in which she describes joyful and tireless engagement as only possible through “divine help”:

Serve the Lord joyfully, lovingly fulfill the duties entrusted to you, work tirelessly because you know how precious your work is in the sight of the Lord. And having worked hard for the glory of God whom you love so deeply, call yourself a useless servant of the Lord and be convinced of being one, because you know that you are not capable of anything without his divine help.⁴⁰

Mother Rubatto's faithful identification with those she served in Uruguay was such that upon her death she was buried among the Uruguayan poor as she requested.⁴¹ Indeed, her call to ministry began with a prophetic word in Italy "that she would never lack bread and that she would die in a foreign land."⁴² Having dedicated her life to the service of the poor and of adolescents in both Italy and the Río de la Plata, Mother Rubatto left a legacy of nineteen convents in the Río de la Plata.⁴³ In 1993, she was beatified by Pope John Paul II, becoming Uruguay's first saint.

Though I can find no direct mention of speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Spirit as defined by classical Pentecostalism⁴⁴ in the records of the Italian sisters in Uruguay, it is clear that the sisters possessed a faith that both sustained and empowered them for effective, joyful service in an ideologically hostile environment. It is my supposition that the sisters practiced a living faith replete with the charismatic fruits of the Spirit, among them joy, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22–23). Additionally, the Holy Spirit produces endurance, resilience, and tenacity in the lives of those he infills, and these are certainly evident in the sisters, with Mother Rubatto as the exemplary case. Notably for the anti-clerical political context in which the sisters served, Paul explicitly states, "against these things [that is, the fruit of the Spirit] there is no law" (Gal 5:23).

Neo-Pentecostals in Modern Uruguay

A century later, Pentecostalism holds great potential for meaningful witness in Uruguay through the message of a God who is interested in daily concerns and offers an ongoing experience of hope in divine relationship mediated by the Spirit. The impact of this potential witness, though, is still an open question. While general reception of Pentecostalism in Uruguay is a "mixed bag" in this country so unaccustomed to and offended by public displays of faith,⁴⁵ the boldness that engenders public scorn⁴⁶ also empowers Pentecostals to engage in areas that other believers and/or government aid programs can or will not. Those who receive their message cite Pentecostalism's presence in the country as proof God has not forgotten Uruguay,⁴⁷ while critics call the Pentecostal message one of magical thinking that preys on the passive, the isolated, and the weak.⁴⁸

Paul Freston discusses divine healing as the lens through which to give helpful elucidation on this critique: “The concept of ‘divine healing’ draws on Durkheim’s distinction between religious and magic: the latter creates a clientele and not a community.”⁴⁹ Freston argues: “The ‘clientele model’ has limited utility. Only a small religious enterprise can be economically viable as long as it depends on a fluctuating clientele. . . . What is called divine healing is merely an initial stage . . . to be superseded, in successful cases, by a stable community receiving doctrinal instruction.”⁵⁰ By this logic, then, the authentic Christian community that outlasts whatever material gain is realized is the most potent defense against accusations of the clientelism of magical thinking. It can be argued that the Capuchin sisters’ faithful authenticity thus cut through the anti-clerical tide and led, eventually, to public honor replacing the initial public scorn.⁵¹ While beatification, or even a positive public reputation, are not the end goals of witness, they nevertheless provide an unexpected long-term legacy, pointing to the credibility earned over time by Spirit-empowered grit in a religiously hostile environment.

Neo-Pentecostalism in Uruguay has not yet earned this credibility. Relatively new arrivals on the Uruguayan religious scene, neo-Pentecostals are in the process negotiating metanarratives of religious identity in the public square, an enterprise whose outcome and impact remain unknown.⁵² While economic transformation through Pentecostal social engagement among the poor has been discussed elsewhere,⁵³ this author’s contention is that a significant social engagement Pentecostals offer Uruguay is one of negotiating hopeful and cosmological meaning-making in a modern, secular context. Magdalena Milsev’s thesis on a Uruguayan neo-Pentecostal church, *Misión Vida*, is helpful in understanding this negotiation, especially regarding Pentecostal cosmology. Drawing from Joaquín Algranti, Milsev contrasts the idea of Pentecostal Christians as passive victims of manipulation with a description of a broad, even cosmic, understanding of reality that calls the believer within this worldview to active, hope-filled engagement:

The cosmological formalizations in MVN [*Misión Vida*] are in contrast to the analytical perspectives that have seen neo-Pentecostalism as a kind of “sub-religion” where ethical elements are absent. Following Algranti, despite the “eminently practical-magical character” with which neo-Pentecostalism is usually associated, “its representations also develop a deeply theoretical dimension of representation-explanation of the world that leads to acting in the environment and transforming it.”⁵⁴

The world that Pentecostals in Uruguay work to transform is one that, in contrast to the material worldview engrained in the Uruguayan context, includes the spiritual

dimension, and thus relies on the Spirit's presence, guidance, and empowerment. In their research on Pentecostal social engagement, Donald Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori explain:

An argument has been made that Pentecostalism is a direct response to modernity. According to this explanation, the Enlightenment produced a flat, materialistic worldview. . . . While this philosophy produced one scientific revolution after another, it also put a squeeze on the human spirit. Pentecostalism, therefore, is a reaction to this worldview. It is resuscitating the "feeling dimension" of human life by introducing the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, into everyday life.⁵⁵

Pentecostals have long been identified by their concern for the whole gospel, including health, in the power of the Spirit. In present-day Uruguay, sharing this concern for health looks less like divine healing crusades and more like the extending of tenacious and creative care for the hopeless. Indeed, Uruguay's extraordinarily high rates of suicide make hope an issue of life and death. A 1998 article reports the worrying trend of steadily increased suicide rates.⁵⁶ Nearly a quarter of a century later, the trend is 8 percent higher⁵⁷ and, in fact, is "double the world average."⁵⁸ The *Oxford Textbook of Suicidology and Suicide Prevention* gives the following reasons as the probable causes:

Unemployment rates, a poor economy (very low incomes and high debts), forced retirement, and the emigration of young people and professionals, etc. Other reasons include domestic violence, sexual abuse, alcoholism, isolation, and the insufficient treatment of psychiatric patients.⁵⁹

Current Uruguayan Cardinal, Daniel Sturla, is concerned about many of these same issues, stating in one interview that "the most difficult problem is the lack of a sense of life of many, especially by the youth."⁶⁰ Though he does not credit Pentecostalism with this message, Sturla nevertheless takes a cue from the experiential nature of charismatic streams of Christianity and urges Catholics to take up the joy of belonging to God as a form of both personal empowerment and of empowerment for witness, or the public disclosure of the good news.⁶¹

Both Da Costa and Jorge Marquez, pastor of Mision Vida, describe the hope Pentecostalism offers in terms of access. This is notable in a country that has had religion "privatized and ghettoized,"⁶² with some historical churches having seemingly invisible onramps to participation and belonging. Da Costa comments that Pentecostalism in Uruguay provides a contrast to hierarchical church structures in that they ". . . introduce other elements, such as . . . belief in healing. They elaborate less on theology and embrace a more direct approach and in turn, this demands a personal

relationship with God.”⁶³ In describing hope as access, Marquez emphasizes the kind of God who makes himself accessible: “People come to us because we have given a more accessible God, an everyday life kind of God. A God who is interested in finding a solution to marital problems, a God who is interested in how we earn our living and what we get to eat every day.”⁶⁴ When solutions and support are possible and publicly disclosed, so too, is hope.

Conclusion

Though religion has now been privatized for more than a century, neo-Pentecostalism is increasing the visibility of religion in Uruguay. Pablo Semán and Ari Oro note that Pentecostalism in Uruguay has its roots in the aggressive proselytization plans of Brazilian and Argentinian neo-Pentecostal churches, whose presence then “stimulates a Native Uruguayan Pentecostal revivalism.”⁶⁵ According to Semán and Oro, the competition between the two groups is intense and decisive “in the conflictive profile of Uruguayan Pentecostalism.”⁶⁶ The conflictive profile is perhaps more apt a description than a surface look would reveal. Da Costa discusses “secularities” in various global contexts, emphasizing that one secularism is not interchangeable with another, for each secularity is negotiated in context through the “struggle of various social sectors.”⁶⁷ It is possible that the entry of neo-Pentecostals from Uruguay’s geographic neighbors adds to the struggle to preserve a uniquely Uruguayan secularity in the face of what are sometimes perceived as imported cults.

More than one hundred years ago, when Uruguayan secularism was undergoing its first and (so far) most conflictive public negotiation, the Capuchin sisters sailed to Uruguay from convents in Italy to care for the poor and sick. Their presence as religious emissaries from the “old world” added a layer of nuance in the church-state conflict of the new republic, whose leadership’s goal was for citizens to move beyond religion. As noted at the outset of this article, “all” the new republic required of arriving immigrants was to “abandon the trappings of their origin and join a new ‘we.’”⁶⁸ The sisters were among these immigrants to Uruguay and yet categorically refused to leave their religious identities “on the ship.” Pentecostal “foreigners” in Uruguay display initiative and boldness reminiscent of the young nuns who sailed from Italy in the previous century. A recent conversation with a pastor in Uruguay speaks to this:

The bright spot in Pentecostalism in Uruguay is that the Pentecostals will go where no one else has the courage to go. The universities, the desperately poor, places that are just a mess. Pentecostals are already there ministering. If the people in these situations had to wait for the mainline denominations to have enough courage to go⁶⁹

Here the pastor trailed off with a shrug of the shoulders indicating the wait would be long indeed.

Though history now reveres Mother Rubatto and the Capuchin sisters, their arrival in Uruguay at the height of the anti-clerical tensions was highly contested. Like the Italian sisters, who, through their persistent faithfulness and joy presented a compelling witness in a radically secular context, the Pentecostal worldview encompassing a spiritual reality engenders tenacious hope in the Uruguayan context. One has to wonder if the public presence and provocation of neo-Pentecostals in Uruguay will result in successful democratization of religious identity, in which the long-standing secular identity narrative is broken into alternative storylines with multiple options of belief, or if the provocation in the public square will lead to even deeper secular entrenchment. When hope breaks through, it can be transformative. The question of neo-Pentecostals in Uruguay is whether or not the hope they profess will, like the Capuchin sisters, earn credibility with the Uruguayan public over time.

While Pentecostalism does not show signs of a sweeping upward trajectory in Uruguay, neither does it show signs of withering or withdrawing. This demonstrates what Wonsuk Ma describes as Spirit-empowered grit: “The crux of the empowerment is located in tenacity and resolution to accomplish a God-given task.”⁷⁰ Milsev summarizes the presence of neo-Pentecostal churches in Uruguay since the 1980s: “they have acquired social—and political—relevance, as they have achieved to reach popular sectors, providing social services where the state is not present, as well as powerful symbolical referents for people in situations of deprivation.”⁷¹ Pentecostals are in Uruguay to stay. Combined with the message of sturdy hope, which is a by-product of an experiential relationship with God through the Spirit, Pentecostal witness provides a bold and a potentially winsome counter-narrative to Uruguayan depressiveness.⁷²

This article has examined two areas of Spirit-empowered witness in Uruguay’s secular context, both past and present. Though the dominant narrative of Uruguay is one of secular triumph over religion, the witness of Catholic sisters in the Italian hospital at the turn of the twentieth century, and the witness of hope the Pentecostal message offers to the present-day Uruguay, both speak to the Spirit’s active presence in this country. In both cases, small groups of faithful believers’ lives bear evidence of the fruit of the Spirit. In the case of the sisters, they were far from home, young, and what they could offer spiritually was largely unwanted by those in power in the spheres of society in which they served. Likewise, present-day neo-Pentecostals are largely viewed with suspicion, with their presence in the country having been characterized as a cult or plague by secular power wielders.⁷³ Yet, in both cases, they persevere with tenacity and joy, demonstrating the resilience that so marks those who are filled with God’s Spirit.⁷⁴ In both cases, through the courage and faithfulness of the minority of believers, the Spirit bears lasting, visible fruit in the radically secular context of Montevideo, Uruguay.



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Notes:

¹ Marcos Supervielle, “Uruguay’s Miracle: Redistribution and the Growth of Unionism,” *Global Dialogue: Uruguay* 4:1, February 2014, n.p., <https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/uruguays-miracle-redistribution-and-the-growth-of-unionism/> (24 April 2021); Uki Gofii, “Uruguay’s Quiet Democratic Miracle,” *The New York Times*, February 9, 2016, n.p., <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/10/opinion/uruguays-quiet-democratic-miracle.html> (24 April 2021).

² Russell H. Fitzgibbon, *Uruguay: Portrait of a Democracy* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1966), 264.

³ This happened at the campaign of *Salsipuedes* or “Get out if you can,” under Uruguay’s first president, Fructoso Riveria, in 1831.

⁴ Leticia Núñez Almeida, “Migration, Borders, and Identities in Uruguay,” *Estudios Históricos – CDHRPYB* 11:22 (December 2019), 6.

⁵ Diego Mauro and Francisco Javier Ramón Solans, “Catholics in the Streets: City and Religion in the First Half of the Twentieth Century (Spain, Argentina, Uruguay),” *Revista de Historia y Religión* 8 (January–June 2018), 11.

⁶ Todd M. Johnson, Gina A. Zurlo, “Uruguay,” in *World Christian Encyclopedia Online*, http://dx.doi.org.oralroberts.idm.oclc.org/10.1163/2666-6855_WCEO_COM_02URY (30 April 2021). Drawing from Grace Davie’s “Believing without belonging” argument, Michael Winter and Christopher Short note, “. . . most surveys of religious belief in northern Europe demonstrate high levels of continuing belief in God and some of the more general tenants of the Christian faith, but rather low levels of church attendance” (Michael Winter and Christopher Short, “Believing and Belonging: Religion on Rural England,” *British Journal of Sociology* 44:4 [December 1993], 635). By contrast, Ignacio Zuasnarbar, Director of the Uruguayan polling company Equipos Consultores, describes the Uruguayan religious landscape as one of loose belonging to a group that has shame as one of its primary identifiers: “Catholics are a big group in our country but with a sense of shame because we are a secular country and religion is not a positive value” (Stephanie Nolen, “In Secular Uruguay a Populist Cardinal Rallies the Faithful and Kicks Off a Feud,” *The Globe and Mail*, 24 May 2018, n.p., <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-in-secular-uruguay-a-populist-cardinal-rallies->

the-faithful-and-kicks/ [December 2021]). Here, identifying as Catholic comes with the side-effect of social shame, which perhaps describes in part the hesitancy Uruguayans have to regular mass attendance.

⁷ Eneida Jacobsen, “Models of Public Theology,” *International Journal of Public Theology* 6 (2012), 13.

⁸ “Gaucha: South American History,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, n.d., n.p., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/gaucha> (24 April 2021).

⁹ Bullfighting was banned in 1912. See Guy Hedgeco, “The Death of Bullfighting Worldwide,” *Animal Guardians*, n.d., n.p., <http://bullfighting.animalguardians.us/bullfighting-overview/bullfighting-bans/#:-:text=Bullfighting%20was%20introduced%20in%20Uruguay,Uruguayan%20law%20in%20February%201912> (29 April 2021). Dueling was outlawed in 1920 in Uruguay, and apparently reinstated in 1992. See “Uruguay Ex-President Wants to Bring Back ‘Duels’ to Solve Legal Disputes,” *The Q*, 17 June 2017, n.p., <https://qcostarica.com/uruguay-ex-president-wants-to-bring-back-duels-to-solve-legal-disputes/> (29 April 2021).

¹⁰ Michael Gooble, “Gauchos, Gringos, and Gallegos: The Assimilation of Spanish and Italian Immigrants in the Making of Modern Uruguay: 1880-1930,” *Past and Present* 208 (August 2010), 196.

¹¹ Philippe Bled, personal communication with author, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, 20 April 2021.

¹² Martin Weinstein, *Uruguay: The Politics of Failure* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975), 20.

¹³ Weinstein, *Uruguay*, xv.

¹⁴ Néstor Da Costa, “Non-Affiliated Believers and Atheists in the Very Secular Uruguay,” *Religions* 11:50 (2020), 3.

¹⁵ Stephen Armet, “Education Policy as a Mechanism for Secularization in a Catholic Majority Country: The Case of Uruguay, (1877–1932),” (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 2014), 111.

¹⁶ Victor Dahl, “Book Review: Garibaldi y el Uruguay,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 50:3 (August 1970), 641–42. Carmen Asiaín Pereira, “Religion and the Secular State: Uruguayan Report,” in *Religion and the Secular State: National Reports*, eds. Javier Martínez-Torrón and W. Cole Durham, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: International Congress of Comparative Law, 2010), 770.

¹⁷ “Appendix: The Constitution of the Republic of Uruguay,” *The Southwestern Political Science Quarterly* 1:1 (June 1920), 95–118.

¹⁸ Milton Vanger, *José Batlle y Ordoñez of Uruguay: The Creator of His Times 1902-1907* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 249.

¹⁹ Da Costa, “Non-Affiliated,” 3.

- ²⁰ Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
- ²¹ Néstor Da Costa, “The Laicity Phenomenon as Identity Element: The Uruguayan Case,” *Civitas* 11:2 (May–August 2011).
- ²² Asiaín Pereira, “Religion and the Secular State,” 769.
- ²³ Susana Monreal, “Religiosas Italianas en la Consolidación de la Iglesia Uruguaya Moderna,” *Revista del Instituto Histórico y Geográfico* 32 (2010), 152; Monreal, “Italian Sisters,” 2–4.
- ²⁴ Allan H. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 57–59; Arto Hamalainen, “Europe’s Christian Heritage: Lost or Finding Its Roots Afresh?” in *The Remaining Task of the Great Commission*, eds. Wonsuk Ma, Opoku Onyinah, and Rebekah Bled (Tulsa: ORU Press, 2022), 149.
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- ²⁶ Armet, “Educational Policy,” 45.
- ²⁷ Monreal, “Italian Sisters,” 10.
- ²⁸ Monreal, “Italian Sisters,” 10.
- ²⁹ Nora Azanza, quoted in “Uruguay tendrá su Primera Santa: Madre Francesca Rubatto,” *Iglesia Católica Montevideo*, 22 February 2020, n.p., <https://icm.org.uy/uruguay-tendra-su-primera-santa-madre-francisca-rubatto/> (28 December 2021).
- ³⁰ Monreal, “Italian Sisters,” 13.
- ³¹ Monreal, “Italian Sisters,” 13.
- ³² Monreal, “Italian Sisters,” 13.
- ³³ Monreal, “Italian Sisters,” 13.
- ³⁴ Adrián Echevarriaga, “Francisca Rubatto es la Primera Religiosa en Uruguay en ser Canonizada,” *Galería Montevideo*, April 18, 2020, n.p., <https://galeria.montevideo.com.uy/Revista-Galeria/Francisca-Rubatto-es-la-primera-religiosa-de-Uruguay-en-ser-canonizada-uc750151> (21 July 2021).
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- ³⁶ Monreal, “Italian Sisters,” 13.
- ³⁷ Monreal, “Italian Sisters,” 13.
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⁴² Echevarriaga, "Francisca Rubatto."

⁴³ Echevarriaga, "Francisca Rubatto."

⁴⁴ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 111–12.

⁴⁵ "2018 Report on International Religious Freedom: Uruguay," *U. S. Embassy in Montevideo*, 9 July 2019, n.p., <https://uy.usembassy.gov/2018-report-on-international-religious-freedom-uruguay/> (28 December 2021).

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⁴⁹ Paul Freston, "Contours of Latin American Pentecostalism," in *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Donald M. Lewis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 236.

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⁵² Narrative identity in Uruguay, while fascinating, is outside of the scope of this article. For more see, Rebekah Bled, "Whose Line Is It Anyway: A Dialogical Narrative Analysis of Two Public Neopentecostal Narratives in Uruguay" (Paper presented at the 51st Annual Meeting of Society for Pentecostal Studies, Costa Mesa, CA, 2022).

- ⁵³ See Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007); and Wonsuk Ma, Opoku Onyinah, and Rebekah Bled, eds., *Good News to the Poor: Spirit-Empowered Responses to Poverty* (Tulsa: ORU Press, 2022).
- ⁵⁴ Joaquín Algranti, “La Política en los Márgenes: Estudio Sobre los Espacios de Participación Social en el Neopentecostalismo,” *Caminhos, Goiania* 5:2 (July 2007), 361–80, quoted in Milsev, “Salvación y Política,” 39.
- ⁵⁵ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 25.
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- ⁶⁰ Jim McDermott, “‘Listen to the Voice of the Holy Spirit,’ Archbishop Daniel Fernando Sturla Berhouet; Montevideo, Uruguay,” *America: The Jesuit Review*, 12 February 2015, n.p., <https://www.americamagazine.org/content/dispatches/listen-voice-holy-spirit-archbishop-daniel-fernando-sturla-berhouet-montevideo> (26 November 2021).
- ⁶¹ McDermott, “Listen to the Voice.”
- ⁶² Mauro and Solans, “Catholics in the Streets,” 11.
- ⁶³ Jessica Martinez, “Pentecostal Churches on the Rise in Predominantly Secular Uruguay,” *The Christian Post*, August 3, 2013, n.p., <https://www.christianpost.com/news/pentecostal-churches-on-the-rise-in-predominantly-secular-uruguay.html> (27 December 2021).
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- ⁶⁵ Ari Pedro Oro and Pablo Semán, “Pentecostalism in the Southern Cone Countries: Overview and Perspectives,” *International Sociology* 15:4 (December 2000), 610. This paragraph is adapted from Rebekah Bled, “Whose Line is it Anyway,” 17–18.
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⁶⁷ Néstor Da Costa, “The Laicity Phenomenon as Identity Element: The Uruguayan Case,” *Civitas* 11:2 (May—August 2011), 210.

⁶⁸ Da Costa, “Non-Affiliated,” 3.

⁶⁹ John Hamilton, interview by author, Montevideo, Uruguay (via Zoom), 24 August 2021.

⁷⁰ Wonsuk Ma, “Isaiah,” in *Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit*, eds. Trevor J. Burke and Keith Warrington (London: SPCK, 2014), 37.

⁷¹ Sotelo and Arocena, “Evangelicals.”

⁷² Ronzoni, “Population.”

⁷³ U. S. Embassy, “2018 Report.”

⁷⁴ Wonsuk Ma, “Lecture Nine,” class notes from GTHE 962 Theologization in the Changing Global Context of Christianity, Oral Roberts University, Spring 2021.

THE UNFINISHED TASK IN NORTH AMERICAN EVANGELISM AND ITS IMPACT ON SPIRIT-EMPOWERED CHRISTIANITY

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Abstract

This study explores the state of evangelism in North America, particularly the Spirit-empowered church in the US. Charted through the history of evangelism movements, most of which originated in North America, this essay will look at those movements, their impact on the church, and some theological reasons why North America has not been more effective in its own evangelistic efforts.

Introduction

Before taking my present job in academia, I spent twenty years in ministry in a local Spirit-empowered church, seven years of which were as a lead pastor of a church of eighty people. These pastoral years were good, but hard. As much as I loved the people, as a small church, we struggled to grow in an area that boasted over 1,000 churches and many mega-churches. The challenges of the average pastor are immense, but what made my experience particularly frustrating was that in seven years as the pastor, we averaged less than one salvation per year. Of course, the Great Commission was a priority and we said we believed the baptism in the Spirit was for effective witness. We were very active in outreach ministry, conducting over a dozen outreaches per year. But these efforts yielded very few salvations. I found that many of my neighbor churches were reaching people at an astounding pace. In the end, I had to come to grips with the fact that some churches are better at reaching people than others.

The reality that some Christian traditions are better at evangelism than others is also playing out on the global stage. Spirit-empowered Christianity is demonstrating that it has a distinctive advantage in global church growth. According to Todd Johnson and Gina Zurlo, Spirit-empowered Christianity (SEC) now numbers 644 million people worldwide, a growth of nearly ten-fold in the past half-century.¹ For many

Spirit-empowered denominations, growth is particularly significant in the Global South. For example, in Latin America, Pentecostals and Charismatics have grown from 4 percent of the Christian population to 29.4 percent.² There are similar trends in other regions of the world. In 2020, Spirit-empowered Christianity represented 35.7 percent of Christians in Africa, 30.3 percent of Christians in Latin America, and 19.5 percent of Christians in Asia.³ These global trends have contributed to SEC becoming the fastest-growing religious movement worldwide.

North America, however, is a different story for evangelism. Headlines declaring the decline in the church have been a regular occurrence in religious media. Since 1999, church membership in the US has declined from 70 percent in 1999 to 47 percent in 2020.⁴ This fact is particularly difficult to understand for those who study the unprecedented growth worldwide of Spirit-empowered movements.⁵ This study will explore the state of evangelism in North America, particularly the Spirit-empowered church in the US. Charted through the history of evangelism movements, most of which originated in North America, this essay will look at those movements, their impact on the church, and some theological reasons why North America has not been more effective in its own evangelistic efforts.

To the Ends of the Earth

Evangelism is a major tenet of the Christian faith. The idea that the whole world could be evangelized stretches back to the Gospels themselves with Jesus' famous prediction, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt 24:14, ESV). The thrust of evangelistic efforts to reach the world in obedience to Jesus' Great Commission continued into every period of Christian history. In fact, David Barrett has documented 788 different formal plans to reach the world for Christ by Christian communities in the past two millennia.⁶ Yet, Barrett laments, all of these plans failed to finish the task in their generations.

The twentieth century opened with a significant re-emphasis on evangelism, which became the catalyst for a number of modern attempts to finish the task. In 1855, A. T. Pierson wrote an article in the *Missionary Review* with a "[p]lan to evangelize the world."⁷ Pierson's Northfield Conferences combined eschatological zeal with the missional impulse to preach the evangelical gospel to the ends of the earth before the coming of the Lord. This was followed by John R. Mott, the Methodist layman who published his classic work *The Evangelization of the World in This Generation* in 1900. Many missiologists were animated by his charge to mobilize the global Christian world to unite to reach the lost. The enthusiasm came to a head in 1910 at the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, where Protestant missionaries organized and committed

to completing the task of evangelism within a decade. While great energy was generated, it ultimately fell short of its goal, as others had done before. But Edinburgh did inspire the founding of other ecumenical movements such as the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council.⁸

The missionary impulses of Pierson and Mott naturally influenced the founding of the Pentecostal Movement in the early 1900s. Animated by an eschatologically motivated impulse, Pentecostals sought to reach as many people as possible before Jesus returned. Azusa Street Mission attendees were filled with the Spirit and spoke in unknown languages, with the expectation that they were empowered to take the gospel to the world. Though Spirit-baptism was an inner work of the Spirit, it was primarily concerned with the outward witness to the whole world. Taking the gospel to “every creature” was a top priority and the reason for the Spirit’s empowerment.⁹ Allan H. Anderson comments, “[Pentecostalism] is above all else a missionary movement—this premise enables us to understand the primary motivation for its global expansion through the twentieth century.”¹⁰ But the missional impulse often placed more emphasis on missionaries evangelizing the world rather than reaching their own continent of North America.

The evangelization impulse is seen clearly in the formation of the Assemblies of God (AG) in 1914, where one of its goals was mutual cooperation in the effort of preaching the “whole gospel for the whole world.” At the second General Council held in November 1914 at the Stone Church in Chicago, the AG committed themselves to prioritizing evangelism. They passed a resolution that said, “We commend ourselves and the movement to him for the greatest evangelism that the world has ever seen.”¹¹ Yet, over the next few generations, Pentecostalism remained relatively on the margins of the North American landscape. Between WWI and WWII, the AG stabilized but grew only marginally. It was not until the post-WWII era that significant growth took place as Pentecostals began to experience upward mobility in the post-war boom. It is in this era that departments of missions and evangelism were established, shifting the evangelistic enterprise to missionaries rather than serving as the overall mission of the fellowship.

In the post-World War II era, the US church saw a resurgence in attendance from 30 to 50 percent of the population.¹² Much of the mid-century growth was due to new forms of mass evangelism. Evangelicals like Billy Graham and Pentecostal healing evangelists like Oral Roberts pioneered the method of mass evangelism. Roberts, who became famous for mainstreaming healing on television, never saw healing as his primary mission. His ministry of deliverance was in the mode of the traditional evangelist. To emphasize this, in 1953, Roberts launched the “Million Souls Crusade” with the goal of winning a million souls to Christ per year. This was not secondary to healing for Roberts; rather, it was his “first, second, third and last goal. Besides that, I have no other.”¹³

A significant moment came in 1966 when Billy Graham and *Christianity Today* hosted the Berlin Congress on Evangelism, which brought together an international delegation of Evangelical missionaries and evangelists to re-ignite the church toward the unfinished task. The motto was “one race, one gospel, one task,” a theme that emphasized overcoming sectarian and racial walls that prevented the church from uniting in mission. Carl F. H. Henry commented:

If Christians around the world heed the plea of the congress to unite in a bold and winsome presentation of the Good News, the twentieth-century world will be spectacular, confronted with a prospect of peace and hope and joy that men and women of all races and lands may share.¹⁴

Following this congress was the Lausanne Congress on Evangelism in 1974 that began the Lausanne Movement focused on uniting Evangelicals toward the common goal of “total evangelism of the world.”¹⁵ It turns out that Lausanne was just the beginning of efforts to increase evangelism as the twentieth century was coming to a close.

Toward A.D. 2000

In the 1970s–1980s, leaders from several prominent Christian evangelism and mission movements converged to discuss an effort to coordinate world evangelization efforts leading up to A.D. 2000.¹⁶ The gathering included Keith Parks, David Barrett, Luis Bush, Thomas Wang, and Jay Gary, who met together to brainstorm on what it would take to “finish the task” prior to the turn of the millennium. The result is the following commitment:

In light of the unfinished task, but with a quiet confidence in the possibilities for the completion of world evangelization if Christians cooperate with one another; and in light of the fact that many Christian denominations and organizations are already using A.D. 2000 as a milestone; it is hereby resolved that in the near future a small world-level consultation of Christian leaders be convened to focus on A.D. 2000.¹⁷

David Barrett, the noted missiologist and statistician, did extensive research to document that there were some 250 initiatives between Pentecost A.D. 33 and 1900. In each case, efforts to evangelize the world were launched and fizzled within a generation.¹⁸

However, the momentum toward A.D. 2000 was gaining momentum as several significant efforts at world evangelism were already underway. One effort was led by

religious broadcasters who aimed to preach the gospel by radio to every nation by 2000. The Southern Baptist Convention launched their “Bold Mission Thrust” in 1976 with a target of world evangelization by 2000. In 1976, Ralph Winter started the U.S. Center for World Mission focused on unreached people groups. Roman Catholics also caught the evangelism vision in 1978 when Pope John Paul launched a major evangelism effort called “Evangelism 2000” led by Spirit-filled Catholic Tom Forrest. Also, in the late 1970s, Bill Bright launched the Jesus Film as an evangelism effort called “New Life 2000” to introduce every nation to Jesus in their native tongue.¹⁹ In 1980, the World Consultation on Frontier Mission was held in Edinburgh with the goal of “A Church for Every People by the Year 2000.” All totaled, some thirty different organizations and denominations had set their sights on evangelizing the world by A.D. 2000.

Decade of Harvest

In the various Pentecostal denominations, several major evangelism initiatives were also taking place. Each one recognized the importance of the upcoming millennial moment and placed an emphasis on the last decade as a special era of evangelism. Most notably was the AG’s “Decade of Harvest,” which focused on US evangelism based on foreign mission principles. Others included The Church of God (Cleveland, TN) initiative called “Decade of Destiny,” the “Mission 2000” effort in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and the “Church Target 2000” initiative in the International Pentecostal Holiness Church.²⁰

Beyond these classical Pentecostal movements, the Charismatic renewal community was mobilized by Vinson Synan, the Pentecostal historian who became the leader of the Spirit-filled ecumenical evangelism movement called the North American Renewal Service Committee (NARSC). Synan joined with various Charismatic renewal communities to host a Global Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelism Conference to take seriously the mandate of world evangelization.²¹ The NARSC leaders set a goal of reaching half of the global population with the gospel by A.D. 2000. For Spirit-empowered believers, the missional emphasis of the Spirit made the turn of the century a perfect target for finishing the task. Synan noted in 1988, “If Christians, who are filled with the Holy Spirit and who are given evangelistic gifts are not able to win the world to Christ, who else will be able to rise to the challenge? If not us, who?”²² Conferences continued through the 1990s until the final one was held in 2000, after which NARSC was dissolved and the various ecumenical Charismatic leaders went their separate ways.

As ecumenical convergence movements dissolved and cooperation for world evangelism once again waned, a new convergence movement was about to be birthed

out of the centennial celebration of the Azusa Street Revival in 2006. Organized by Church of God of Prophecy pastor and evangelist, William M. (Billy) Wilson, the Azusa Centennial brought together 50,000 people from 115 nations to celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Azusa and to pray for a fresh outpouring on a new generation for a new millennium. The Centennial was more than just another Holy Spirit conference. It was a convergence moment in which Spirit-filled leaders saw the value of cooperation towards reaching a new generation.

Out of the Azusa Centennial was birthed a vision for a new convergence of Spirit-empowered movements called Empowered21 (E21). Wilson assembled a Global Council of Spirit-empowered leaders who prayed and dreamed together about a goal for E21: “That every person on earth would have an authentic encounter with Jesus Christ through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit by Pentecost 2033.”²³ In the tradition of previous movements, E21 emphasized the purpose of the Spirit-empowered life was to evangelize the world with the gospel in obedience to the Great Commission. Today, it is mobilizing global constituents toward this goal through regional councils meeting on a regular basis to cooperate and consult together on how to “finish the task” in this generation. They have also developed a Global Evangelistic Alliance to collaborate toward the goal of reaching the world by 2030 and have organized a global conference in Amsterdam in 2023.²⁴ Their mission is not just to reach every nation, but “*every person on earth*” (emphasis added). Can this be accomplished in the next decade? That remains to be seen, but like previous movements, E21 is calling the church back to the mandate to evangelize the world for Jesus Christ in this generation. In similar fashion, the Pentecostal World Fellowship, also chaired by Wilson since 2019, has the focus of this mission to “unite and mobilize the global Spirit-filled family in completing the great commission of Jesus Christ.”²⁵

Despite the cyclical resurgence of these missional initiatives, Global Christianity has remained fairly static in the last fifty years. While Christians have increased from 1.2 billion in 1970 to 2.5 billion in 2020, that growth has failed to keep up with global population growth, with the percentage of global Christians remaining stagnant from 32.4 percent in 1970 to 32.3 percent in 2020.²⁶ The demographics of the global Spirit-empowered Movement today are no doubt impressive. But we must be realistic in our account of what is taking place. The reality is that despite the past century of convergence movements seeking to cooperate toward the goal of evangelization, the unfinished task remains largely unfinished, especially in North America.

The Unfinished Task in North America

Though the global Spirit-empowered Movement has seen tremendous growth in the past half-century, North American SEC has not kept pace with the world. Of the 644

million global Spirit-empowered believers, only 67 million are located in North America, placing North America fourth among the six continents.²⁷ While the total number increased from 2000–2020 by 14 million, the total percentage of believers declined from 12.1 percent to 10.5 percent. Overall, Pentecostals and Charismatics in the US have increased from 13.8 million in 1970 to 65 million in 2020, but have failed to keep up with population growth.²⁸

While much of the leadership for the global evangelistic efforts has been from North America, North American Christianity has not particularly benefitted from these evangelism initiatives. Many church statisticians have sounded the alarm that the church in the US is in decline.²⁹ The Pentecostal efforts at evangelism had mixed results leading up to A.D. 2000. For example, Edith Blumhofer and Paul Tinlin noted that the AG's Decade of Harvest fell well short of its goals of 5 million new converts and 5,000 new churches.³⁰ All totaled, AG adherents only grew by less than 400,000 during that decade and has climbed steadily to a modest, yet less than expected, growth of 1.1 million since 1990.³¹ At the same time, the goal of 5,000 churches was equally disappointing as the number of churches declined from 8,988 in 1990 to 8,801 in 2000, a net loss of 187 churches. The AG was not the only major Pentecostal denomination to struggle. The International Pentecostal Holiness Church saw moderate growth from 1,475 churches in 1989 to 1,868 churches in 2000, including an increase of over 60,000 members.³² While these gains were certainly welcome, they fell below their stated goals and expectations set by the millennial benchmark.

What these numbers tell us is that North America, while slowly growing, lags largely behind the global landscape of growth. For example, from 2009–2019, AG (US) adherents climbed from 2.9 million to 3.2 million, an increase of 13.1 percent.³³ Conversions over this same period climbed from 440,803 to 487,322, a growth of 10 percent.³⁴ The church is growing, but growth among ethnic minorities, rather than evangelization, is the leading cause. The total population of White adherents remained relatively flat—from 1,853,632 to 1,849,688—yet declined in total percentage from 70 percent to 56 percent. Over the same period, Hispanic adherents went from 428,747 (16 percent) to 739,001 (23.2 percent).³⁵ Yet, this is not to say that growth is directly tied to evangelism among ethnic populations. Ethnic language districts in 2018–2019 saw a decline of 5.1 percent in conversions.³⁶ This means that while the AG is experiencing more diversity, which is positive, growth has stagnated among most of its congregations overall.

In Canada, Pentecostals and Charismatics are not faring any better. The total number of Spirit-empowered believers more than tripled from 709,000 in 1970 to 2,300,000 in 2000.³⁷ Yet that growth has stagnated since, marking 2,500,000 in 2015. For example, the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, perhaps the largest Pentecostal body, has seen only modest growth in the last twenty years, from 220,000 in 2000 to

240,000 today.³⁸ Michael Wilkinson notes that Pentecostalism reached its peak in 1991 with over 435,000 Pentecostal believers, but has since declined as many Pentecostals joined independent neo-Pentecostal or Charismatic groups like the Vineyard.³⁹ It is notable that Spirit-empowered believers have outnumbered Evangelicals for the past two decades as a percentage of the total population, but that percentage is comparatively small at 6 percent.

If there is growth in the Spirit-empowered Movement, it is taking place in the independent networks of Charismatic churches around North America.⁴⁰ These networks, sometimes called the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), operate by a different set of values than traditional Pentecostal communities. Brad Christerson and Richard Flory studied these networks and noted that they have a different missional focus than the traditional mission of evangelism. Primarily, they “[s]eek to transform society as a whole rather than saving individual souls and building congregations.”⁴¹ Contrasted with early Pentecostals who saw themselves as an end-time missional movement, Charismatic churches often focus internally on advancing the prosperity of believers and the church network itself to grow personally, organizationally, and societally. While these factors have drawn members from Pentecostal circles into their ranks, it has also appealed to the US’s ethos of neo-liberal self-actualization. These churches offer innovative religious experiences that can be customized in ways that benefit the religious consumer. In this way, the goals of building the kingdom are commoditized by offering personal enrichment and success rather than motivating individuals toward accomplishing evangelization for the gospel’s sake.⁴²

Factors Shaping North American Evangelism

Why has Christianity in North America been in decline while SEC is expanding globally? I want to suggest three factors that have challenged evangelism efforts among Spirit-empowered communities. These factors seem to have impacted every generation’s effectiveness in fulfilling the Great Commission. But, particularly for this new generation, these factors are increasingly central to any effort to reinvigorate evangelization in North America.

Premillennial Eschatology

Pentecostalism was birthed out of the phenomenon of baptism in the Holy Spirit. But this experience was set in a larger eschatological and restorationist metanarrative known as the “latter rain.” Pentecostals believed the emergence of the last days phenomenon of Spirit-baptism and speaking in tongues was a sign that the earth was in its final days before Christ’s coming. This dispensational metanarrative was semi-cessationist in that

it understood that what was lost during the decline of the church was being fully restored in anticipation of the coming millennial reign of Christ.⁴³

The latter rain eschatological paradigm presented Pentecostals with two competing tensions. On the one hand, Pentecostals imagined an increase in glory from the outpouring of the Spirit that would make evangelism possible before the coming of Christ. They believed the restoration of the baptism in the Holy Spirit was the beginning of a worldwide global outpouring to bring in the end-time harvest. Pentecostalism was not a movement that evangelized; it was thought to be God's primary vehicle of global evangelization.

At the same time, the eschatological narrative had an equally pessimistic orientation. Rooted in premillennialism, Pentecostals rejected the postmillennial idea of progress that expected the Spirit to renew the world through the church. Instead, the dispensational aspects of premillennialism convinced them that the conditions on the earth were to get worse, not better. Peter Prosser comments:

Dispensationalists became a self-fulfilling prophecy. With the present dispensation winding down, Pentecostals recognized that sin was increasing and wickedness. In not looking for change, except for the worse, everything around them and among them would naturally tend to get worse.⁴⁴

One can see how these ideas would stifle evangelistic efforts as a lost cause. This cognitive dissonance between evangelistic success and fatalistic failure has little been recognized in Pentecostal circles. But it is a key tension that has motivated, or demotivated, evangelistic efforts.

One turn in this orientation was to shift a view of the eschatological mandate: "This gospel shall be preached in every nation as a witness, then the end shall come" (Matt 24:14, paraphrased). On the positive side, this verse could imply that the gospel will be successful at some point when every nation is reached in fulfillment of the promise that "[t]he earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Hab 2:14). This verse would imply that the gospel could reach the whole world. However, the eschatological mandate could also be interpreted by those who have a fatalistic view by implying that a witness of the gospel must reach one portion of every nation of the world rather than succeed in evangelizing the whole world. This was the strategy in the A.D. 2000 approach, to make sure that every nation had some gospel witness in some form in order to fulfill the mandate. This was the approach taken by media companies such as radio broadcasters and television networks like Trinity Broadcasting Network.

But perhaps a third approach is warranted that would avoid the tensions inherent in both approaches to the eschatological mandate. What if the goal of reaching the whole world is not a prediction but rather a challenge to every generation to take responsibility for reaching the world they have inherited? In this way, the eschatological mandate is not a goal of evangelization, *per se*. It is the motivation for evangelization for each successive generation. The failure of previous generations to win the world for Jesus should not deter this generation from believing that such a goal is possible. Nor should that failure be used as an excuse to limit evangelization efforts to filling a quota of the evangelized among every people group. Jesus is still coming, and North America is still worth reaching. Every year, North America grows and changes. Just as the global population rapidly expands through globalization, population growth, and migration, the nature of the church's understanding of "every nation" continues to shift. Therefore, generational contextualization is extremely important, as each generation takes up the mandate in the ways that reach their generation. It is this idea that leads us to the next hindrance and possibility in evangelization.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit

One of the hallmarks of SEC is its belief in Spirit-baptism as an empowering encounter with the Holy Spirit to be witnesses (Acts 1:8). Early Pentecostals understood this experience in a missional way, so much so that the languages they spoke by the Spirit were thought to be explicitly for their missionary endeavors. However, this emphasis shifted in the Charismatic Renewal and independent Charismatic movements toward the personal benefits of Spirit-baptism above its missional benefits. As a result, self-improvement has become the goal rather than the salvation of the lost. I dare say this inward focus has lessened the Spirit-empowered believer's missional impulse to reach the lost. This has no doubt had consequences on personal evangelism and the overall growth of the past few decades.

Pentecostals have tended to focus highly on missionary endeavors for the expansion of Christianity globally. As Allen H. Anderson notes, "Just as Spirit Baptism is Pentecostalism's central, most distinctive doctrine, so mission is Pentecostalism's central, most important activity."⁴⁵ But, the baptism in the Holy Spirit was never supposed to be empowerment just for missionaries; it was the power of evangelization for everyday believers living missionally in their own contexts. Pentecostals were called to be missional, not just missionaries.

The good news is a significant shift has taken place in recent generations as younger people are more drawn to missional Christianity rather than simply gospel proclamation. While this trend excites fear in some that mission will replace evangelism, the truth is that global growth is taking place primarily because global SEC worldwide

is far more engaged with social issues than in Western contexts.⁴⁶ Because global missions work has successfully integrated the gospel and social engagement, this has filtered down to North American Pentecostal denominations, adding compassion ministry to their statements on evangelization.⁴⁷ Missionaries have long invested in missional partnerships as the means of contextualizing the gospel. Says Robert Priest, “A high proportion of mission today involves the synergy of global partnerships across such marked socio-economic divides, partnerships mobilized on behalf of human need and of Christian witness.”⁴⁸ If missions work is successfully rooted in compassion ministry, why would evangelism on the local level be any different?

The shift from “missions” to “mission” is an important one for the growth of evangelism in North America. Christians need to see evangelism not as a calling or office in the church, but as the daily mission of the believer. Robert Priest comments:

In contemporary understandings, the task of living missionally is thought to belong to all believers, not merely religious professionals. Furthermore, there is a pervasive recognition that missional presence is best accomplished through the full body of Christ and that lay Christians living out their various vocational commitments in ways that establish a visible Christian presence is a critical component of authentic witness.⁴⁹

Missional living is a Spirit-empowered concept. The idea that the Spirit makes people witnesses does not have to fit the old paradigm of evangelistic crusades and/or preaching on the street corner. The Holy Spirit empowers believers in every generation to live everyday lives in which the kingdom of God is present in power, in mission, in speech, in friendship, and in vocation.

What is taking place is a shift in what is understood as evangelism, especially among Millennials and Gen Z. It is apparent that this generation is struggling with conventional models of evangelism. A Barna Report found that 47 percent of Millennials believed it was “wrong to share their faith.” That is a sobering statistic. However, it does not tell the whole story. The study also notes that 96 percent of Millennials report that sharing their faith is important, and 94 percent say that people coming to Jesus is the “best thing that could happen” to a person they love.⁵⁰ As one Millennial reflected on evangelism:

It is certainly a tragedy that communication of this beautiful message of Jesus’ love and grace has become associated with colonialism, cheap manipulation, and obscurant dogmatism . . . evangelism, sharing of the good news of Jesus, honestly stands in need of holistic overhaul both of method and of content.⁵¹

Rather than seeing evangelism as an event done by ministers, Millennials and Gen Z see their lives as missional and want their lives to be engaged in things that matter. In this way, Craig Spring notes they are uniquely equipped to evangelize. “Millennial Christians have more non-Christian friends than any other prior generation. They’re more plugged into the reality of the world.”⁵² So evangelism is of high priority, but younger Pentecostals are looking for new models of evangelism that differ from outdated evangelization paradigms.

By way of contrast, personal evangelism among Boomer Generations has also continued to fall steadily. One Barna study notes that less than 50 percent of the Boomer Generation engages in personal evangelism, compared to 65 percent of Millennials in 2013. Says Barna, “While the evangelistic practices of all other generations have either declined or remained static in the past few years, Millennials are the only generation among whom evangelism is significantly on the rise.”⁵³ That statistic has grown even higher more recently as 80 percent of Gen Z has shared Christ with someone in the past year.⁵⁴ While on the surface it appears evangelism is in decline, there is reason to hope for the future of evangelism in this new generation, even if it looks different from generations past.

Politicizing the Gospel

One thing that is clear in North America is that the church has become less evangelistic as it has become more political. This is a huge problem facing Evangelicalism, including Spirit-empowered communities. While politics is by nature divisive, the exponential growth of Pentecostalism has somewhat benefited from North America’s overall stable political situation. As William Kay notes, church growth is often the result of stable political environments when the church can evangelize unhindered by governmental control.⁵⁵ The presence of political peace following WWII led to significant growth in Pentecostalism and led to the emergence of Charismatic renewal movements.

But political stability is far from what the US is experiencing today. While North America is largely free from military conflict on its shores, internal political polarization is causing great rifts in Spirit-empowered communities. This political climate has bled into the church, a phenomenon not experienced by early Pentecostals, who were fairly neutral on societal politics for the first few decades.⁵⁶ The movement towards conservative political alignment among Spirit-empowered churches mirrors trends in Evangelicalism. This became apparent in the US during the 2016 election and administration of President Donald Trump. While Evangelical ministers have served as presidential advisors in the past (both Republican and Democratic), the Trump administration was the first to marshal support from Spirit-filled ministers such as Paula White, Stephen Strang, Jentzen Franklin, and Lance Wallnau. Leah Payne and Erica Ramirez note that “Pentecostal-charismatic

faith-based media moguls have enjoyed unprecedented access to the White House during Trump's tenure. In return, they have showered the president with praise and loyalty."⁵⁷ The benefits of mainstreaming Spirit-empowered leaders were enormous. For the first time, Pentecostals and Charismatics, who in previous generations had been marginalized, were suddenly welcomed into the White House. The presence of Spirit-empowered leaders in presidential functions also meant that elements of Pentecostal spirituality were on full display in prayer meetings and rallies.

While Pentecostal denominations were not particularly vocal in support of President Trump, support from Charismatic ministers was no surprise to Arlene Sanchez-Walsh, who recognizes that prosperity-leaning Charismatic figures "appreciate showmanship, wealth, and spectacle."⁵⁸ President Trump's controversial style mirrored the leadership aesthetics of independent Charismatic ministers who celebrate their ability to "break away from constraints imposed by traditionally organized" groups, like Pentecostal denominations.⁵⁹ Many Evangelicals and Spirit-empowered believers admired him for just such a leadership style.

Whatever benefits were gained in the psyche of Spirit-empowered believers by this legitimization, the detrimental effects upon the witness of the church cannot be ignored, particularly with younger Christians. As the controversial candidate and president was lauded by many, others within the movement were disenchanted by a candidate whose past was littered with obvious contradictory values to Pentecostal morality and ethics. This cognitive dissonance, particularly in minority Pentecostal communities, was indeed disenchanting.⁶⁰ For many younger Pentecostals who were already struggling with a distaste for culture wars, the Trump presidency became enigmatic of the fatigue many have felt over the idea that Christianity should be aligned with political parties.

In abandoning the politicization of Christianity, younger Evangelicals have questioned Evangelical Christianity in North America as it exists today. Some studies show that Millennials and Gen Z are rapidly moving toward the "nones" category. It is true that a 2017 Pew Research poll found the "Millennials are more likely than older adults to take liberal positions on social and political issues."⁶¹ This is largely because younger generations are more ethnically diverse and tend to have a less conservative outlook on political and social policy.⁶² But it is more than that. Like early Pentecostals, they are rejecting the postmillennial impulse to Christianize the US through politics. They have a passion for seeing God's kingdom as a priority over any political or social kingdom.

Political conservatives often attribute the liberalization of the younger generation to the erosion of biblical worldview among US youth. But this is not a fair characterization, especially among Spirit-empowered communities. This generation appears to be outpacing older generations in their commitment to the core of

Pentecostal sensibilities. The Barna Group reports that 38 percent of younger generations rank speaking in tongues as part of regular worship services as a high priority, an amount over twice as much as the reported 14 percent of Boomers.⁶³ This phenomenon is exemplified by the prayer and worship movement led by Spirit-filled ministries at Bethel and the International House of Prayer. These two movements, and others like them, have ignited the spiritual passion of this generation, whose churches are arguably exhibiting more Pentecostal aesthetics than their Boomer parents.⁶⁴

Conclusion

As the religious landscape of North America continues to change, the church faces a crisis of decline that only vigorous evangelistic efforts can reverse. The Spirit-empowered Movement is leading the way globally as it effectively draws people into the kingdom of God. If the North American church wants to see similar results, it must draw on the things that have distinguished Pentecostal and Charismatic growth worldwide. First, now more than ever, baptism in the Holy Spirit is needed to empower the church to accomplish the evangelization of the world. We must realize that our next-door neighbors are equally as important to evangelize as the 10–40 window. Second, as the Spirit reignites believers' passion for evangelization, we understand we live in light of Jesus' coming and his Great Commission. God's kingdom is coming to earth. Our responsibility is to take the gospel to every nation before that kingdom comes. It is that urgency that keeps the church on task to fulfill the Great Commission. But it is also that eschatological orientation that buffets the church from trading the Spirit's passion for the kingdom for a false political kingdom on this earth. North American Christians need to evaluate how passion for political kingdom-building has hindered its witness. We need to embrace a vision of evangelism that is fueled by a passion for the kingdom of God above all other kingdoms that would distract us from fulfilling our mission. If each generation can take seriously its responsibility to take the gospel to every person's world, including our own continent, then we will answer the call to the global eschatological mission.



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Notes:

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PARADIGMS OF GLOBAL SPIRIT-EMPOWERED LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

Spirit-empowered leaders employ different paradigms of leadership. The aim of the article is to identify, explain, and critique these paradigms. Spirit-empowered leadership is conceived of as belonging to the category of charismatic leadership. Following Max Weber, charismatic leadership is understood as flowing from charisma or giftedness, which is attributed to the leader by his or her followers. The article starts with the findings of theorists concerning charismatic leadership. Then it delineates five paradigms of Spirit-empowered leadership—the apostle, prophet, healing evangelist, pastorpreneur, and teacher/scholar. Examples are offered from global contexts. Last, a summative assessment of the paradigms is conducted, using criteria formulated by theorists of charismatic leadership theory.

Introduction

A paradigm is a typical example or pattern of something, that is, a model. In this article, derived from a forthcoming book by the same title, we will take a typological approach in our analysis of prevalent models of Spirit-empowered leadership. We hold that Spirit-empowered leadership can be aptly categorized as types of charismatic leadership. Following Max Weber, we are conceiving of charismatic leadership as flowing from charisma or giftedness, which is attributed to the leader by his or her followers.

Spirit-empowered leaders employ different paradigms in their exercise of leadership. The purpose of this article is to identify, explain, compare, and critique these paradigms. We will start with the findings of theorists concerning types of charismatic leadership. Second, we will summarize five paradigms of Spirit-empowered leadership and give examples of each from diverse global contexts. Last, we will conduct a summative assessment of the Spirit-empowered paradigms using criteria formulated by the theorists of charismatic leadership theory.

Charismatic Leadership Theory

Prior to expositing five major paradigms of Spirit-empowered leadership, we delve into charismatic leadership theory and elucidate the basic characteristics of charismatic leaders. Max Weber established three kinds of authority for leadership: traditional, legal-rational, and charismatic. He defined charisma as being “set apart from ordinary people and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities . . . regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader.”¹

It was not until the 1970s that Weber’s theory of charismatic leadership was taken up by theorists of organizational leadership. Robert House formulated a theory of charismatic leadership starting from the premises of Weber’s sociological concepts.² House hypothesized that based on certain leader behaviors followers attribute extraordinary or heroic leadership ability to those leaders. Other researchers worked with House’s theory to define key characteristics of charismatic leadership. House (1977) and Shamir, House, and Arthur (1992) delineated the following characteristic behaviors of a charismatic leader: (1) articulating an ideological vision³; (2) referring to distal rather than proximate goals; (3) behaviorally modeling the values implied in the vision by personal example; (4) expressing high performance expectations of followers; (5) communicating a high degree of confidence in followers’ ability to meet such expectations; and (6) demonstrating behaviors that selectively arouse unconscious achievement, power, and affiliative motives of followers when these motives are specifically relevant to the attainment of the vision.⁴

Conger and Kanungo (1988) expanded the terrain of charismatic leadership theory by developing a widely accepted framework, holding that charismatic leadership is typified by four key characteristics: (1) possessing and articulating a vision; (2) willing to take risks to accomplish the vision; (3) exhibiting sensitivity to the needs of followers; and (4) demonstrating novel behavior.⁵ Informed by the findings of David C. McClelland in his study of the inner dimension of power (1975), House and Howell define two types of charismatic leadership: personalized and socialized.⁶ The categories of personalized and socialized charismatic leadership will serve as criteria for our analysis of the paradigms of Spirit-empowered leadership in the final section of this article.

House and Howell defined *socialized* charismatic leadership as leadership that (a) is based on egalitarian behavior, (b) serves collective interests and is not driven by self-interest of the leader, and (c) develops and empowers others. McClelland and his colleagues reported their finding that socialized leaders tend to be altruistic, to work through legitimate established channels and systems of authority when such systems exist, and to be self-controlled and follower-oriented rather than narcissistic. House and Howell

defined *personalized* charismatic leadership as leadership that (a) is based on personal dominance and authoritarian behavior, (b) serves the self-interest of the leader and is self-aggrandizing, and (c) is exploitative of others. Personalized leaders rely on personal approval or rejection of followers to induce others to comply with their wishes. They show disregard for the rights and feelings of others and they tend to be narcissistic, impetuous, and impulsively aggressive. These two types of charismatic leadership are not mutually exclusive. A leader can simultaneously display characteristics of both of these leadership types.⁷

With the findings of the research of House, Howell, and Kanungo, we have sufficient criteria from which to assess the paradigms of Spirit-empowered leadership. Before engaging in the assessment piece, we will exposit the five global paradigms of Spirit-empowered leadership. Then we will conduct a summative assessment.

Apostle Paradigm

Are there modern-day apostles?

The apostle is the first of the leadership gifts in Ephesians 4:11. There is no universal agreement in the Spirit-empowered Movement concerning the inclusion of the “position” of apostle in contemporary leadership. There are, however, several Pentecostal and Charismatic groups that view the apostolate as integral to their scheme of leadership. These would include proponents of the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), to be discussed below. Other groups, such as the American Assemblies of God, have chosen not to incorporate apostle in their leadership nomenclature, due to a concern voiced by Donald Gee, who stated, “It is a sorry fact that grave errors and extravagances quickly marred both the use of the prophetic gift and the office of the self-styled ‘apostle’ leader.”⁸

While some Pentecostals are hesitant to endorse the office of apostle, nevertheless, there is wide agreement on the apostolic dynamic of Spirit-empowered Christianity. This agreement stems from the early Pentecostals who aspired to restore the apostolic faith and power of the New Testament church. Hence, the apostolic paradigm pertains whether or not a Spirit-empowered group views the position of apostle as currently viable. This is evidenced, Warrington avers, by his observation that “many Pentecostal leaders function analogously to the early apostles in their leadership of churches and denominations.”⁹ Below we will describe the components of the apostle paradigm and offer a brief formative assessment.

Components of the Apostle Paradigm

The apostle paradigm rests on the assumption that the function of the apostle extends beyond the context of the New Testament church. The strongest advocates for the contemporary office of apostle are affiliated with a movement known as the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), a name coined by C. Peter Wagner, former Professor of Church Growth at Fuller Theological Seminary's School of World Missions. According to Wagner, the NAR is made up of "loosely structured apostolic networks" emerging in "virtually every region of the world," constituting the "fastest growing segment of Christianity."¹⁰ The NAR is largely but not exclusively made up of Pentecostals and Charismatics. Wagner claims that around 2001 the church entered the "second apostolic age."¹¹ He believes that in this second apostolic age the offices and functions of apostle and prophet (Eph 2:20) are being restored.

David Cannistraci defines an apostle as "one who is called and sent by Christ to have the spiritual authority, character, gifts and abilities to successfully reach and establish people in Kingdom truth and order, especially through founding and overseeing local churches."¹² Cannistraci and Wagner believe that apostolic leaders will rise to prominence on the merit of their integrity, Christ-like character, and powerful supernatural gifting and authority. The extent of the NAR is far reaching, with millions of participants accounted for in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.¹³ When Wagner wrote *Churchquake!* in 1999, he contended that the NAR consisted of at least 40,000 "apostolic" churches representing approximately 8 to 10 million members in the USA.¹⁴ He asserted that the NAR is rapidly growing in all of the six continents and is the "greatest change in the way of doing church since the Protestant Reformation."¹⁵ In the Global South, a wide configuration of Pentecostal-Charismatic churches was (as of 2013) aligned with the NAR, including the following groups: Judah Kingdom Alliance (JKA), New Covenant Ministries International (NCMI), Grace International (GI), Congress World Breakthrough Network (C-WBN), and International Strategic Alliance of Apostolic Churches (ISAAC).¹⁶ Taking into account the many Independent/Non-Denominational churches that are affiliated with NAR-type networks, the movement boasts a staggering "369 million" participants.¹⁷

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the NAR is its version of dominion theology, rooted in the seven-mountain mandate, which originated in the Latter Rain Revival of 1948. Wagner states, "Several apostolic networks advocate forms of what some call 'dominion theology,' meaning that Christians are expected to infiltrate social structures at all levels and, once there, use their influence to inculcate biblical values throughout their society."¹⁸ Wagner outlines the strategy for marketplace transformation, and makes an appeal for leaders to take dominion over seven spheres or mountains of culture, encompassing the home; church; school; government and

politics; media, arts, entertainment, and sports; commerce; and science and technology.¹⁹ Wagner describes how each of these seven mountains or spheres will become an “apostolic sphere.” Apostles “are the only ones who will be able to change the power structure at the top of each mountain.”²⁰ How will these apostles accomplish this? These seven spheres or mountains are perceived as having “principalities and powers that control” them. The only way to occupy them will be through high level spiritual warfare, not political activism.

Our primary concern relates to the shape of leadership in the NAR. The NAR is composed of “apostolic networks.” Each network is led by an apostle whose ultimate authority is recognized by the collective of all participating churches and organizations within it. The apostles are the highest authorities and the ones who provide leadership and direction to the network. Using Ephesians 4 as a biblical justification, they assert their leadership role based on the spiritual gifts identified by Paul, who ranks apostles as the highest gift. Next to the apostles are the prophets who are God’s spokespersons, imparting divine counsel and wisdom to God’s people. These prophets, however, are accountable to the apostles while working alongside them to carry out the mission of the movement.

Who are the recognized apostles in the movement? The leading apostle of the NAR is the founder Dr. C. Peter Wagner; others among the staff of recognized apostles are Doris Wagner (wife of Peter Wagner), Samuel Rodriguez, Ed Silviso, Jim Ammerman, Cindy Jacobs (top ranking female apostle), Os Hillman, Julius Oyet, Pat Francis, Bill Haman, Lou Engle, Harry Jackson, Lance Wallnau, and John Benefiel. Todd Bentley ranks among the leading prophets.²¹ Earlier in 1998 Wagner edited a book called *The New Apostolic Churches* where he listed nineteen groupings of proponents of the NAR. Their leaders included: Professor C. Peter Wagner, Apostle John P. Kelly, Apostle John Eckhardt, Pastor Michael P. Fletcher, Bishop Wellington Boone, Larry Kreider, Pastor Roberts Liardon, Rice Brooks, Bishop Bill Hamon, Pastor Billy Joe Daugherty, Pastor Dick Iverson, Pastor Ralph Moore, Dr. David (Kwang Shin) Kim, Pastor Lawrence Khong, Pastor Paul Daniel, William F. Kumuyi, Bishop Dr. Eddie C. Villanueva, and Dr. Joseph C. Wongsak.²²

What do apostles do? Cannistraci delineates seven responsibilities of an apostle. Apostles plant churches, oversee and strengthen churches, develop leaders, ordain elders and deacons, supervise and coordinate ministries, manage crises, and network with other leaders and their ministries. The roles they play can be synthesized as establishing, nourishing, communicating, teaching, preaching, writing, imparting, fathering, and networking.²³ What they do not do is micro-manage a local church or ministry site. Apostles think of themselves as servants who lead by cooperation and consultation instead of control and domination.²⁴ Yet they see their authority as extensive, based on divine certification proven by an ability to draw large audiences, impart supernatural

power, convey vision through revelation, pray for healing, cast out territorial spirits, decree judgment of evil and sin, and raise the dead.²⁵ This is heady stuff!

Of all the radical claims made by the apostle, Wagner regards the most radical of all as the amount of trust that is afforded to leaders, which is founded upon spiritual authority delegated by the Holy Spirit to local level pastors and translocal level apostles.²⁶ In the apostolic paradigm the pastor (whether local or translocal) sets the vision, focuses on leadership rather than management, makes policy decisions and delegates the rest, forms the management team, holds his/her position for life, and selects his/her successor.²⁷ It is up to the apostle himself or herself to start a network, and if this is done, the number of churches per network must be kept at a manageable level so that the apostle can devote sufficient attention to mentoring upcoming charismatic leaders, hence forestalling routinization of charisma. The same principle is applied to the multiplication of networks.²⁸

Formative Assessment

In closing, let us look to Michael Brown's balanced analysis. He acknowledges that there are *not* modern-day apostles akin to the apostles of the New Testament. Yet, if one takes the term "apostle" in its general sense as an emissary of the gospel, one can affirm the existence of modern-day apostles. These would include not only those who have pioneered movements and planted churches, but also those who preach the gospel and serve as denominational superintendents. Brown believes that the ascension leadership gifts in Ephesians 4:11, including the apostle, given to the church by the risen Christ, were intended to continue until the church arrives at maturity in the faith, which clearly is a goal in the process of being accomplished.²⁹ As stated earlier, perhaps it is best to think of the ministry of modern-day apostles in the general sense of apostolic ministry as adumbrated by Brown, rather than in terms that equate them with the Twelve.

Prophet Paradigm

Are there modern-day prophets?

The prophet is the second of the leadership gifts in Ephesians 4:11. The prophet paradigm is founded on the assumption that prophecy is an essential component of Spirit-empowered leadership. This assumption is grounded in the tradition of biblical prophecy and the place of prophecy in the history of Pentecostalism. In the interest of understanding how the prophet paradigm is currently practiced, we will describe the components of the prophet paradigm. Second, we will delineate two forms of prophecy, making correlations to leadership. Third, we will offer a brief formative assessment of the paradigm.

Components of the Prophet Paradigm

The prophet paradigm is based on the biblical assumption that “no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation; for prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet 1:20–21). The prophet paradigm is also informed by the Luke-Acts narrative of Pentecost in Acts 2 and 10 and the Pauline discourse on the charisms of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12–14, including the charism of prophecy. The prevailing view of Pentecostals is captured by Amos Yong:

From the days of Azusa Street onward, Pentecostals have understood the modern outpouring of the Holy Spirit as a fulfillment of prophecy. If the original day of Pentecost was foretold by Joel, it was only the “early rain” awaiting the abundant showers of a “latter rain” (Joel 2:23). Insofar as modern Pentecostalism was understood to fulfill this prophecy of a “latter rain” revival anticipating the last days, the template for organizing and explaining this later experience has been drawn from the early Christian experiences recorded in the book of Acts.³⁰

Mark Cartledge notes that “a broad definition of prophecy should start with the revelatory experience through which Christians believe that God communicates.”³¹ Cartledge explains that this means that contemporary revelatory experiences, e.g., the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, the discernment of spirits, and the interpretation of tongues, are integral to the practice of prophecy.³² In the prophet paradigm, the prophetic mode of intermediation is epiphanic in the sense that the deity is revealed, not only through the revelatory message, but also through the divine presence that is experienced as an awe-inspiring power that empowers the human recipient to speak the revelatory message.³³

The charismatic manifestation of prophecy is thus an embodiment and expression of the divine presence that is experienced through a sacramental encounter with the Holy Spirit. According to Frank Macchia, professor of theology at Vanguard University, the speaker becomes a human channel of divine grace as the Spirit flows into and through one in an immediate, intimate, and, sometimes, intense fashion. This observation has profound inferential significance in that, not only does the prophetic leader sacramentally participate in divine presence, but he or she also becomes a sacrament, or a sacramental channel of the charism of prophecy through whom the hearers participate, sacramentally, in the divine presence.³⁴ The charismatic spirituality of the prophetic leader mediates a revelatory experience of divine presence in congregational settings, often presaged by visionary experiences, voices within or words coming to mind. A charismatic encounter is often a prerequisite for the manifestation

of a prophetic revelation in the setting of worship, and the sharing of that prophecy serves to enliven a congregation with revelatory edification, encouragement, and consolation.

As Mel Robeck states, prophecy continues to play an important role in the spirituality of contemporary renewal movements.³⁵ However, the world view of the Spirit-empowered Movement not only makes room for the prophetic, but also cherishes the prophetic as a core value in leadership, through which the Holy Spirit uses a human vehicle to speak a divine word. Prophetic revelations may come through visions, dreams, impressions, divine coincidence, or verbal proclamations. The functions of prophecy are to edify, encourage, and comfort; provide correction and warning; and guide and direct ministers and leaders.

Forms of Prophecy

According to Pentecostal sociologist Margaret Poloma, the major forms of prophecy found in contemporary Pentecostalism are two-fold: (1) a democratized charism available to all Spirit-baptized persons; and (2) an ecclesiastical office that is being restored to leaders.³⁶ The prophet paradigm of leadership directly pertains to the latter form, but as we will see the two are interconnected.

Democratized Charism

The form of prophecy as a democratized charism is aptly represented in Roger Stronstad's highly regarded work, *The Prophethood of All Believers*. Stronstad's thesis is that all believers are prophets and the church is meant to be a community of prophets. Jesus, "a prophet in word and deed" (Luke 4:19), passed his prophetic mantle to the church as Elijah did for Elisha.³⁷ At the end of his ministry, Jesus transferred the Spirit to the church, empowering Christians to be mighty in word (prophetic speech) and power (signs and wonders).³⁸ As the prophethood of all believers was a lived reality in the early church, so it is now. Stronstad locates the basis for his view in "Luke's portrait of the people of God of the new age, who, by virtue of having the Holy Spirit poured forth upon them, have become the eschatological community of prophets upon whom Jesus, himself the eschatological prophet, has poured forth the Spirit of prophecy—both for their own generation, for their children's generation, and for each succeeding generation."³⁹

Lee Roy Martin complements Stronstad's perspective by looking to the Old Testament in formulating a broad democratic vision of prophetic speech that also conceives of the church as a community of prophets. Moses had wished that all of God's people would be prophets (Num 11:29), and Joel had promised that the prophetic Spirit would rest upon sons and daughters, old and young, and even upon

servants (Joel 2:28 [3:1]). The gospel narrative portrays Jesus as the prophet par excellence, who then calls his church to be a prophetic community. For Pentecostalism, prophecy emerges not from individuals but from within the body of Christ. Therefore, the leader is one prophet among many.⁴⁰

Ecclesiastical Office

Poloma credits the democratization of the charism of prophecy with contributing to the development of a second form of prophecy.⁴¹ As waves of neo-charismatic renewal were sweeping through the globe in the 1990s, a trend emerged with the appearance of prophetic ministries and publications on the restoration of the ecclesiastical office of the prophet. Leaders of these ministries, such as Cindy Jacobs, Dutch Sheets, Chuck Pierce, Ted Haggard, and Bill Hamon, attested to having received a call to the office of prophet. They not only served as teachers and role models of prophetic ministry, but also insisted along with Peter Wagner that God was restoring the ecclesiastical office of prophet. Further, they claimed that as holders of the gift of prophet, they were divinely tasked with imparting prophetic messages on behalf of the church. Of these claimants, Bill Hamon stands out as a leading proponent. Cindy Jacobs, herself a widely acknowledged prophet, describes Hamon as a pioneer of prophetic leadership.⁴² Hamon sees the office of the prophet as one of the five leadership gifts (Eph 4:11) that Christ Jesus imparted for the building up God's people and maturing them to the full measure of Christ.

There is an interconnection between the leadership office of the prophet, reserved for a select few, and the democratic charism, available to all believers. All Spirit-filled believers have the potential to move in the prophetic realm (Stronstad), but only some are accorded the leadership office of prophet (Hamon). The difference resides in the span of authority and influence. Individuals or groups of believers can edify one another with their prophetic words. Yet a leader who is recognized as a prophet has a wider span of gifting and authority. It is the second form of prophecy that has prevailed in the Global South.

The prophet paradigm flourished in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, yet African soil has proven to be the most fertile for the prophet paradigm. The advent of the office of prophet in African Christianity can be traced back to two points of origin. The first would be the Aldura (praying) churches, which originated outside of a traditional missionary context. An example of a leader of an Aldura movement would be Samuel Bilewu Joseph Oshoffa (1909–1985), the prophet-founder of the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) in Nigeria in 1947. Oshoffa had visions in which God showed him how to organize a purified church based on a distinct liturgy, organizational structure, and code of rigorous ethical and doctrinal principles.⁴³ The second point of origin would be the churches that remained in the orbit of Western missionaries. An example of a

prophetic leader who traces his heritage to missionaries would be Ezekiel Guti, founder and leader of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God. Guti established the Highlands Revival Centre, near Harare. His followers regard Guti as an apostle and prophet. He claims over a million adherents in Zimbabwe. Churches affiliated with Guti are found in Malawi, Zambia, Mozambique, and other African countries. Outside of Zimbabwe his movement is known as Forward in Faith.⁴⁴ Both of these wings of Spirit-empowered Christianity in Africa embraced the prophet paradigm of charismatic leadership.

Formative Assessment

Lee Roy Martin observes that in pursuit of the prophetic ideal, Pentecostal preachers have traditionally relied upon the Holy Spirit to supply themselves with inspired messages appropriate to unique occasions. Pentecostal preachers, therefore, believe themselves to be proclaiming an inspired message, a word from the Lord, given for a specific time and place. However, a leader's claim of prophetic inspiration can open the door to abusive practices. The leader who claims divine inspiration may be tempted to assert infallibility and unquestioned authority. For this reason, a strong ecclesiology is required that insists upon accountability of leaders to the community of faith and includes a system for ensuring the theological orthodoxy and ethical integrity of ministers and leaders. No leader should be allowed to operate outside the authority and accountability of the church as a whole.⁴⁵

Healing Evangelist Paradigm

The evangelist is the third of the leadership gifts in Ephesians 4:11. The healing evangelist paradigm is an expression of the Pentecostal conception of the full gospel. Many early Pentecostal leaders coupled healing and evangelism as key components of the full gospel. For Pentecostals evangelism involves more than simply seeking conversions. It entails empowerment with the Holy Spirit as the source for proclaiming Christ's victory over sickness and demonic oppression, i.e., healing. According to Allan Anderson, "The Pentecostal understanding of the full gospel meant that these 'signs and wonders' should accompany the preaching of the Word, and divine healing in particular was an indispensable part of the Pentecostal evangelical methodology."⁴⁶ In this section we will begin by briefly highlighting the major components of the paradigm. Then we will trace the global mediation of the healing evangelist paradigm by means of its two most formative leaders, Oral Roberts and David Yonggi Cho. Finally, we will offer a formative assessment.

Components of the Healing Evangelist Paradigm

In her study of global Pentecostal and Charismatic healing, Candy Gunther Brown finds that “Pentecostalism attracts adherents primarily through its characteristic healing practices.”⁴⁷ Based on case studies of leading healing evangelists in a variety of global contexts, Gunther Brown argues that “divine healing is the single most important category—more important than glossolalia or prosperity—for understanding the global expansion of Pentecostal Christianity.”⁴⁸

Gunther Brown’s viewpoint is confirmed by the findings of the Pew Spirit and Power survey of Pentecostals and Charismatics in ten countries (2006). The data revealed that in the USA 62 percent of Pentecostals claimed to have witnessed or experienced divine healing, compared with 46 percent of Charismatics and 28 percent of other Christians. The same pattern was found in three countries in Latin America, except that the percentage of Pentecostals who had witnessed or experienced divine healing was higher, 77 percent in Brazil, 77 percent in Chile, and 79 percent in Guatemala. In Africa, the survey found that the percentage of Pentecostals who had witnessed or experienced divine healing was 87 percent in Kenya, 79 percent in Nigeria, and 73 percent in South Africa. In Asia the percentages were slightly lower, with 74 percent in India, 72 percent in the Philippines, and 56 percent in South Korea.⁴⁹ This corroborates the finding of the Pew Study that a disproportionally higher percentage of Pentecostals and Charismatics believe in praying for healing and deliverance than their non-Pentecostal/Charismatic Christian counterparts.⁵⁰

Global Mediation of the Healing Evangelist Paradigm

Oral Roberts

Oral Roberts (1918–2009) had a deep influence on Pentecostalism in Africa by means of his healing evangelism campaigns in South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, and Nigeria, and his worldwide media ministry of radio, television, and distribution of cassette tapes, books, and magazines. Through these visits and media, Oral Roberts inspired and influenced many leading Pentecostal leaders in Africa, including the late Archbishop Benson Idahosa of Nigeria, a protégé of Oral Roberts. Idahosa and his wife were both recipients of honorary doctorates from Oral Roberts University. It was Roberts’ influence that led the Idahosas to establish All Nations Bible School in Benin City, Nigeria. Many contemporary Pentecostal pastors were trained in that institute, including Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-Williams of Ghana, a Word of Faith preacher and pioneering founder of the Action Chapel International.⁵¹

Oral Roberts visited South Africa in 1955 and it was reported that his meetings attracted up to 125,000 people and reportedly gained more than 20,000 conversions to

Christ. Roberts popularized the idea of the “healing crusade” in Africa. In 1988, Oral Roberts visited West Africa, including Ghana. A report in the publication *West Africa* put the figure attending his crusade in Ghana, held at the sports stadium in the capital Accra, at about 70,000 people.⁵² His media ministry influenced many of the pioneering founders of neo-Pentecostal churches in Africa. Hence, Roberts is credited with the Pentecostal/Charismatic theology of seed faith, which purports that a person’s blessing is directly related to the level of giving in tithes, offerings, and gifts “sown” in the lives and ministries of the anointed of God. Asamoah concludes, “One of the most enduring legacies of Oral Roberts in Africa is his influence on the preaching of prosperity messages, especially the formulaic theologies of sowing and reaping. This legacy, however, leaves more questions than answers regarding the workings of the grace of God. Oral Roberts will remain a historical figure of great importance in the development of world Pentecostalism, including its African versions.”⁵³ Roberts’ international impact was not confined to Africa, but also extended to Asia via his relationship with David Yonggi Cho, pastor of the Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, South Korea.

David Yonggi Cho

Of the Asian healing evangelists, David Yonggi Cho is considered by far the most influential in terms of the productivity of his leadership. His charismatic leadership extended beyond Korea to the worldwide Spirit-empowered Movement. Cho’s full gospel theology clearly falls within the purview of the healing evangelist paradigm. Like other healing evangelists, Cho’s experience of healing set the tone for his ministry of healing. He formulated an indigenous Korean theology that aligned the full gospel of Pentecostalism to the context of the Korean culture. Cho formulated two constructs that have been immensely significant in the development of an indigenized Korean theology. These are the three-fold blessing (salvation, healing, prosperity) and the five-fold gospel (redemption, fullness of the Holy Spirit, blessing, divine healing, second coming). According to Hyeon Sung Bae, the five-fold gospel serves as the theological theory in Cho’s doctrine of the full gospel, whereas the three-fold blessing is the practical application of it.⁵⁴ Cho writes, “The Gospel deals not only with the hope of eternal life and the salvation of spirit and soul but also with prosperity in life and physical health and wellness that would keep the balance between spirituality and reality.”⁵⁵

Cho conceived of the miracle of healing as “a sign of God’s sovereignty in this present life” and “a sign of the coming of the kingdom of God to the earth.” According to Cho’s successor, Sang Yun Lee, this means that the experience of healing can be seen as a means of experiencing the kingdom in the here and now of this life.⁵⁶ Whereas the Christian hope points to a future dimension, it also has a present reality. Cho’s holistic

message tracks with other healing evangelists in that it is based on 3 John 2: “Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well” (NIV). Some have suggested that Cho derived his teaching on prosperity from Oral Roberts and that the provenance of his theology is found in American Pentecostalism. However, Cho himself insists that his brand of the full gospel is the product of a revelation he received in 1958, giving rise to his preaching and ministry since that time.⁵⁷ Allan Anderson paints a sympathetic picture of Cho, averring that no matter its source, his theology is typically Pentecostal and should be seen as a key factor in the worldwide growth of Pentecostalism. There is little question concerning the influence of Cho as a pacesetter in the dissemination of the healing evangelist paradigm of Spirit-empowered leadership.

Formative Assessment

As Allan Anderson sees it, Cho and likeminded healing evangelists proclaim “a salvation that encompasses all of life’s experiences and afflictions, and they offer an empowerment providing a sense of dignity and a coping mechanism for life.” This message has played well in the Global South, so much so that Anderson states, “The main attraction of Pentecostalism in the Majority World is still the emphasis on healing and deliverance from evil.” Because it is a message that promises solutions for present felt needs, the full gospel of Pentecostal preachers has been readily and widely accepted.⁵⁸ However, in spite of its wide appeal in many sectors of the Spirit-empowered Movement, the holistic dimension of the full gospel has come under a penetrating critique for its materialistic implications, as seen in prosperity theology. Critics asserted that the full gospel preached by Cho and others focuses primarily on material possessions, physical well-being, and success in this life, abundant financial resources, good health, clothes, housing, cars, promotion at work, success in business, as well as other material benefits. Further, critics take umbrage at the claims proffered by many healing evangelists, beginning with Oral Roberts and Cho, that believers have the right to the blessings of health and wealth and that they can obtain these blessings through positive confessions of faith and the “sowing of seeds” through the faithful payments of tithes and offerings.

Sang Yun Lee, a staff pastor at Cho’s church, offers a balanced critique of prosperity theology intended not as a declamation but as a corrective, noting that “Christian faith cannot be reduced to being equivalent with a secularized desire or a selfish wish for a prosperous present life since there is also the kingdom to come with the second advent of Christ.”⁵⁹ He contends, “However, it is necessary to resist the idea that the kingdom of God can be reduced to prosperity theology and what humans need and want.” Lee calls for balance between the kingdom here and now and the kingdom

to come. To maintain this balance, he suggests that Korean Pentecostals ought to take to heart three theological affirmations: (1) The kingdom is not intended solely to fulfill personal desires for a prosperous life; (2) Suffering can be used by God to grow faith in his people; and (3) What is most important is to participate in the eternal now of the kingdom, not to claim the promises of health and prosperity in the present life.⁶⁰ While the judicious critique of Sang Yun Lee is theologically astute, it may fall short of getting to the heart of the problem with prosperity theology.

Pastorpreneur Paradigm

The pastor is the fourth leadership gift of Ephesians 4:11. The pastorpreneur paradigm of Spirit-empowered leadership represents an adaptation of the fourth ascension gift to a new situation. The pastorpreneur combines traditional functions of the pastoral office with entrepreneurial savvy and business acumen, an amalgam that resonates with today's consumer society. The upsurge of megachurches in the 1970s necessitated a rethinking of the shape of pastoral leadership. Previously, the role of the pastor in Pentecostal circles focused on the pastoral care of constituents in a congregation of small to medium size.⁶¹ The organizational complexity of the megachurch called for a shift in thinking about the role of the pastor. The Hartford Institute of Religion Research defines a megachurch as a Protestant church with regular attendance of 2,000 or more adults and children.⁶² Pastors of megachurches came to recognize the pragmatic value of business models of leadership and the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. Increasingly the success and notoriety of pastors of megachurches set the bar for the aspiration of most pastors to grow their churches.

In this section we will first define the term “pastorpreneur” and explicate its evolution. We will then delineate the components of the pastorpreneur paradigm and present two case studies of notable leaders in the Spirit-empowered Movement who are considered to be pastorpreneurs. Finally, we will offer a formative assessment of this paradigm.

Components of the Pastorpreneur Paradigm

The notion of the pastorpreneur is associated with the explosion of megachurches, which can be classified as growth churches.⁶³ Mark Jennings reasons that this is not surprising, given that growth churches are typically led by powerful entrepreneurial figures. “Pastorpreneur,” a portmanteau of “pastor” and “entrepreneur,” is a neologism coined by John Jackson.⁶⁴ Jackson defines a pastorpreneur as “a pastoral innovator and creative dreamer who is willing to take great risks in ministry in the hope of great gain for Christ and his kingdom.”⁶⁵ He states, “I believe a Spirit-led burst of entrepreneurial

activity will lead the church into greater cultural impact than ever before. Even now, God is calling a church-transformation and church-planting movement into being across the country that demonstrates an entrepreneurial passion to reach the lost in our generation.”⁶⁶ Although not acknowledged by most scholars who investigate the pastorpreneur phenomenon, Jackson’s model is the product of a well-established trend in pastoral leadership.

The pastorpreneur paradigm did not appear out of nowhere. It was an outgrowth of sustained attempts at redefining pastoral leadership. We will review a series of proposals for updating the traditional biblical/theological conception of pastoral leadership with secular, psychological, and sociological theories.⁶⁷ Over recent decades, the focus of publications on pastoral leadership has shifted from tending the flock by means of enabling and equipping leadership to visionary executive leadership as the primary responsibility of the effective, successful pastor. Pastors have turned to resources beyond an ecclesial context, gravitating toward leadership literature inspired by methods derived from the corporate business culture.

In bringing the notion of the pastorpreneur to the discussion on pastoral leadership, John Jackson had no qualms about dependence upon business acumen. He calls for risk-taking entrepreneurial leaders to develop innovative and effective strategies for reaching the culture, beginning with an unmistakable call from God and a bold vision that addresses the needs of those we hope to reach. Jackson states, “Entrepreneurs know they must do this to conduct a profitable business venture, and pastorpreneurs must likewise see the community around them in human terms.”⁶⁸ He recalls a comment made by Bill Hybels of Willow Creek Community Church at a leadership conference: “It is a blight on the church that the average McDonald’s owner knows more about his community than we do.”⁶⁹ Jackson’s point is that methods of ministry must be constantly adapted to be relevant. These methods must be fashioned in a way that is appealing and memorable. For instance, Jackson notes that the church he pastored in Nevada found Rick Warren’s baseball model to be helpful in articulating a strategy for faith development, from which Jackson came up with a three-step plan: Invite—Connect—Serve.⁷⁰ Hence, pastorpreneurs will lead the church to embrace entrepreneurial strategies to reach people without ever compromising the message.⁷¹ Jackson delineates five basic strategies: (1) Grab the community’s attention; (2) Build strategic partnerships; (3) Conduct big faith-building events; (4) Challenge people to find their niche; and (5) Multiply your impact.⁷² Each of these strategies is explained in detail in Jackson’s book, with practical examples and action plans that can be adapted to a local context.

We will turn to a case study to demonstrate the extent to which Jackson’s strategies have been replicated on a global scale in the Spirit-empowered Movement.

Case Study: Southeast Asia

Terrence Chong⁷³ provides an analysis of Spirit-empowered leaders in Southeast Asia in “The State of Pentecostalism in Southeast Asia: Ethnicity, Class and Leadership.” He posits the thesis that charismatic leaders in Pentecostal churches enjoy great deference and sway over large congregations. He identifies two main types of leaders of Pentecostal churches in Southeast Asia: the Joshua Generation Leader and the Redemption Story Leader. The former type describes those who are passing the torch from older to young leaders, akin to Joshua succeeding Moses. The latter type includes those with a dramatic redemptive life-story, involving a background of vice, immorality, serious illness, and/or socio-economic deprivation, who then find Christ and proceed to lead life anew. Chong finds the leadership style of both to be authoritarian, because “the charismatic leader is supposedly entrusted to articulate God’s will and vision for the church.”⁷⁴ Chong provides sketches of both types.

Kong Hee, a Joshua Generation Leader, founded City Harvest Church in Singapore in 1989, starting with twenty members. When Kong Hee returned to Singapore after completing a doctorate in theology in the United States, Harvest Church began to grow rapidly. In 2009 it opened a megachurch facility that cost 34 million dollars. Kong Hee was well connected in the upper echelon of Spirit-empowered leadership, as a board member of Dr. David Yonggi Cho’s Church Growth International (South Korea) and Dr. Luis Bush’s Transform World (Indonesia). Kong Hee was a protege, friend, and mentee of Phil Pringle, the founder and senior pastor of C3 Church Global (Australia) and advisory pastor to City Harvest Church. Sadly, Kong was implicated in unscrupulous business practices that landed him in jail. His story serves a cautionary tale for leaders with a ministry model based on a linkage between the Pentecostal megachurch and the upwardly mobile middle class.

Philip Mantofa, an Indonesian Redemption Story Leader, had a childhood of illness, suffered ethnic marginalization, and drifted into crime before he heard the voice of Jesus calling out to him at the church altar, where he experienced evil spirits leaving his body. In her research on clashing orientations of emerging trajectories of Javanese religion, Chao En-Chieh describes the context of Mantofa’s rise to prominence.⁷⁵ Mantofa earned a degree in theology from Columbia Bible College, British Columbia, Canada. Since 1998, he has served as lead pastor of Mawar Sharon Church, a growing church of 30,000 in Surabaya, Indonesia. Currently, he is the assistant head of the Gereja Mawar Sharon denomination, which has a network of seventy local churches. Since his youth, he has brought more than 100,000 souls to Christ. His passion is to ignite the fire within the younger generation to become pastors and spiritual leaders all around Asia. According to Chong, such biographies of redemption are powerful cultural models for congregations. They serve as crucial narratives for Pentecostal

conversion among the Indonesian Christian youth where sin and sickness are replaced by salvation, and are thus attractive to young urban youths lost in the market economy or the cosmopolitan jungle.

Whether a “Joshua Generation” or a “Redemption Story” leader, it seems that charismatic leaders in Southeast Asia tend to fit the pastorpreneur paradigm. Power and authority are attributed to the head or senior pastor who is entrusted to articulate God’s will and vision for the church. In this manner, the charismatic leader’s legitimacy is beyond question because it lies with God who has chosen him (usually a male) to shepherd the flock over matters of theological direction, administrative organization, and even business decisions. The charismatic leader will thus not tolerate dissent or alternative views that may undermine or reduce the ethical integrity of his leadership position.

Formative Assessment

Miranda Klaver posits that the kinds of churches that pastorpreneurs plant depend heavily on the leadership of the pastorpreneur. Such churches are “personalized and embodied” in that they become shaped in the image of their leaders.⁷⁶ Hence, pastorpreneurs, ready to risk all to follow the bold call of God, both models for their congregations the risky neoliberal individual and implicitly valorizes risk itself.⁷⁷ It is clear from the leadership literature in recent decades the role of pastor has been recast from shepherding and servanthood into a trope of leading and power wherein the pastor is depicted as the chief executive officer of a congregation. Shawchuck and Heuser state that “the metaphors for leadership most often used by Jesus—Servant and Shepherd—seem not to fit well with current understandings and practice of church leadership.”⁷⁸ They credit Peter F. Drucker, whom they regard as “. . . the master without peer in the fields of leadership and management” for his influence upon their thinking and writing.⁷⁹ Shawchuck and Heuser define leadership as “. . . seeing to it that the right things are done.”⁸⁰ In attempting to shift the pastoral role from one of management to one of leadership, they quote Warren Bennis and Bert Nanus to describe how leadership differs from management: “By focusing the attention on a vision, the leader operates on the emotional and spiritual resources of the organization, on its values, commitment, and aspirations. The manager, by contrast, operates on the physical resources of the organization, on its capital, human skills, raw materials, and technology.”⁸¹

It should be readily apparent that recent leadership studies heavily favor a personalized and directive style of pastoral leadership. The business model prevailed due to the wide influence of more pragmatic approaches to pastoral leadership, which

privileged the importance of a take-charge leader and set the stage for the emergence of the pastorpreneur paradigm.

Teacher/Scholar Paradigm

The teacher/scholar paradigm is adapted from the fifth leadership gift of Ephesians 4:11—teachers. I will explicate the teacher/scholar paradigm by differentiating two distinct approaches to leadership. On the one hand we have the *pragmatic* teacher/scholar and on the other hand the *academic* teacher/scholar. In early Pentecostalism most of the teacher/scholars were of the pragmatic sort, whereas today we are seeing an upsurge in the academic sort of teacher/scholars. The difference between the two relates to the level of formal education.

In this section we will start by expositing the components of the *pragmatic teacher/scholar*. We will discuss the challenges of anti-intellectualism in the discourse of early Pentecostalism, resulting from a distrust of formal academic education and critical scholarship. Then we will shift to the *academic teacher/scholar*, expositing its components and narrating the transition in the Spirit-empowered Movement from rudimentary Bible institutes to accredited universities and seminaries, academic societies, journals, scholars, and publishers. We will conclude with an assessment of the success of academic teacher/scholars in cultivating a research culture in the Spirit-empowered Movement.

Components of the Pragmatic Teacher/Scholar

As stated above, there are two sorts of teacher/scholars in the Spirit-empowered Movement—the pragmatic and the academic. Both sorts of leaders are highly gifted and capable, yet each brings different skill sets and assets to the table. By the close of this section, it is hoped that the reader will understand not only the value of the pragmatic teacher/scholar but also the need for its counterpart, the academic teacher/scholar.

Early Pentecostalism was blessed by a preponderance of leaders who exemplified the pragmatic teacher/scholar paradigm. Early Pentecostal leaders may not have been academic scholars, yet many were scholars nonetheless in a practical sense, in that they were knowledgeable students of the Bible who engaged in creative theological reflection as they probed the meaning of the Pentecostal experience. According to Grant Wacker, “The plain truth is that the pentecostal sky was studded with stars, luminaries of the flesh and blood variety, and their trajectories both illumined and ordered the world around them. Together they defined the movement’s identity more than most imagined.”⁸² Wacker names several such leaders who were the founders and heads of

Pentecostal denominations, including Eudorus N. Bell of the Assemblies of God, Florence Crawford of the Apostolic Faith, G. T. Haywood of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, Joseph H. King of the Pentecostal Holiness Church, Charles H. Mason of the Church of God in Christ, Aimee McPherson of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and A. J. Tomlinson of the Church of God (Cleveland).⁸³ These leaders were pragmatic teacher/scholars who published treatises laying out the formative doctrines of their confessional communities.

While we can credit the pragmatic teacher/scholars of early Pentecostalism for their creativity in the literary fete of constructing classical Pentecostal doctrine, we also must acknowledge a problem that was endemic in the outlook of pragmatic teacher/scholars toward academic scholarship. The founders of early Pentecostal schools were so deeply affected by belief in the imminent return of Christ that they focused on preparing students as quickly as possible for deployment in local churches and the mission field. They saw no need for formal education and opted for schools that offered basic practical training in Pentecostal beliefs and experience. Often the only faculty member was the founder of the school and the only textbook was the Bible. Hence, these schools were known as Bible institutes. The method of instruction was indoctrination rather than intellectual development. Courses were designed to encourage faith in the power of the Word as opposed to critical analysis.⁸⁴ The merits of early Pentecostal education must be weighed against an inherent limitation, namely, an attitude of anti-intellectualism. Its proponents ensconced this attitude within the mindset of early Pentecostal thought leaders, largely because of a distrust of academic scholarship. Had the pragmatic teacher/scholars acquired a more sanguine attitude toward academic research, they might have been equipped to diagnose the root of the problem of anti-intellectualism and offer a corrective remedy to it.

Many Pentecostal scholars maintain that contemporary Pentecostalism still harbors an ethos of anti-intellectualism. Pentecostal theologian James K. A. Smith writes, "Pentecostal faith and practice is strongly opposed to any intellectualizing of the faith."⁸⁵ Olson takes the view that the allegation of anti-intellectualism is difficult to shed.⁸⁶ Russell Spittler states, "Abiding anti-intellectualism is one of our flaws."⁸⁷ Veli Matti Kärkkäinen argues that Pentecostalism is marked by a strong anti-intellectualism that persists to this day.⁸⁸ Wolfgang Vondey acknowledges, "Continual education and dedication to the life of the mind were simply not practical aspects of Pentecostal worldview and spirituality."⁸⁹ Lee Roy Martin finds this to still be the case, given that Pentecostal ministers are the least educated group within the Christian ministry. Hence, he proposes an approach to theological education that prizes the competencies of a Pentecostal world view and provides a safe place in which to engage the philosophies and questions of modern culture.⁹⁰ Pentecostal anti-intellectualism abated to a certain extent with the development of Pentecostal scholarship in the 1970s and 1980s. The

Society of Pentecostal Studies (SPS) was founded in 1970, coinciding with an increase in research on Pentecostal biblical studies, theology, and church history. Pentecostal scholars must navigate a course between succumbing to the rigorous claims of secular academics on one hand and regressing to the old ethos of Pentecostal anti-intellectualism on the other hand. The best way forward may be a concerted renewal of the Pentecostal distinctive of thinking in the Spirit, which leads to our analysis of the academic teacher/scholar.

Components of the Academic Teacher/Scholar

The second sort of teacher/scholar in the Spirit-empowered Movement is the academic. Above we hypothesized that the problem of anti-intellectualism in Pentecostalism could be remedied by means of critical scholarship. The aim of this section is to test that hypothesis against the outcomes of the emergence of academic scholarship in Pentecostalism. To begin, we will acknowledge a few of the first generation of academic teachers/scholar in the Spirit-empowered Movement and recognize the legacy these leaders left for subsequent teacher/scholars in the Pentecostal academy. Then we will consider newer global developments in the development of a research culture in the Spirit-empowered Movement. By the close of this section, it is hoped that the reader will appreciate the important role played by academic teacher/scholars as counterparts to pragmatic teacher/scholars.

From the 1970s on, there has been a significant increase in the development of Pentecostal teacher/scholars. The first generation of academic scholars in the Spirit-empowered Movement published academic articles and books, and were recognized as leaders who showed the way for others to follow. There are many that could be mentioned, yet the most notable would include Walter Hollenweger (1927–2016), Vinson Synan (1934–2019), Kilian McDonnell (1921–2019), Gordon Fee (1934–2022), Stanley M. Burgess (1937–), and Russell P. Spittler (1931–). The first wave of leading academic teacher/scholars in Pentecostalism laid the groundwork for the development of a research culture in the Spirit-empowered Movement. Subsequent teacher/scholars in the Spirit-empowered Movement have carried on the legacy of the first wave and built institutions that prize the value of a research culture.

A research culture encompasses the behaviors, values, expectations, attitudes, and norms of a given academic community. It influences the importance afforded to the production of research, accessibility to research tools and facilities, and the provision of opportunities to publish that research. It shapes researchers' career paths and determines the way that research is conducted and communicated. Dave Johnson writes, "The school's leadership must be committed to the vision of a research culture and be willing to provide the time and resources necessary to make that dream a reality. . . . Creating a

research culture can be costly.”⁹¹ The leadership of two schools in the Spirit-empowered Movement, Regent University and Oral Roberts University, demonstrates a requisite level of commitment to the development of a research culture by allocating significant resources for the initiation and accreditation of PhD programs. The author of this article is closely acquainted with both of these programs. The Regent program reconceptualizes the study of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements as “Renewal Studies,” launching in 2003 with tracks in theology and church history, then adding biblical studies. The ORU PhD focuses its program design on “Contextual Theology,” aimed at Spirit-empowered theological initiatives in the Global South, launching in 2019 with a single track. Both of these PhD programs are accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) for modular format with a combination of online instruction and short-term residencies.

The process of building a research culture is underway in many areas of the world other than the USA. Academic teacher/scholars are developing graduate programs in the UK, Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Notable examples include Dave Johnson in the Philippines, Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu in Ghana, Opoku Onyinah in Nigeria, Peter White in South Africa, and Wolfgang Vondey in England. The development of a research culture in Spirit-empowered circles is reflected in the appearance of academic journals, the first of which was the *EPTA Bulletin*, which originated in 1985 and was renamed as the *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* in 1996. Next came *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, established in 1979 with the aim of publishing five types of articles, including exegetical, historical, theological, social science, and practical. Other journals appeared afterward, including the *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* in 1992, *Pneuma Review* in 1998, the *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* in 1998, *Australasian Pentecostal Studies* in 1999, *PentecoStudies*, the journal of GloPent, the European Research Network on Global Pentecostalism, in 2002.⁹² *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology* relaunched in 2017 after the publication of a single issue in 1985. Asamoah-Gyadu observes, “PentecoStudies offers a distinctly interdisciplinary forum for the study of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity. Authors from the social sciences, the humanities, cultural studies, religious studies and theology are welcome to submit research on global expressions of Pentecostalism defined in its broadest sense.”⁹³ Since that time a number of digital platforms for dissemination of research on global Pentecostalism by non-Western scholars have appeared in the Global South. Wolfgang Vondey surmises from this that “Pentecostal scholarship seems poised to become a central player in the theological academy.”⁹⁴ This is a significant development when one considers the former “persistent stance of anti-intellectualism, a rejection of higher education and learning, and criticism of the academic world.”⁹⁵

Formative Assessment

While we have credited the pragmatic teacher/scholars of Pentecostalism with significant positive accomplishments, they were also responsible for a number of negative effects, namely, a strain of anti-intellectualism found in attitudes toward education. As Daniel Topf has pointed out, Western Pentecostal missionaries brought these limitations with them when they established institutions of theological education in the mission fields of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.⁹⁶ These limitations hindered the development of a research culture in both the United States and the Majority World. Nevertheless, as of today academic teacher/scholars are making progress in addressing the problem of anti-intellectualism in the global Spirit-empowered Movement. In fact, some would agree with Asamoah-Gyadu that the “virtual rejection of intellectual approaches to life and hostility demonstrated toward theological education at the academic level by Pentecostals in the past have changed dramatically.”⁹⁷ Yet more work remains to be done by today’s teacher/scholars. It is incumbent on those of us who are engaged in educating the next generation of Spirit-empowered leaders to carry forward the work of building a research culture in the Spirit-empowered Movement.

Summative Assessment

Two Pentecostal scholars weighed in on the research on charismatic leadership theory. Roger Heuser and Byron D. Klaus, formerly faculty members of Southern California College (now Vanguard University), an affiliate of the Assemblies of God, published an article entitled “Charismatic Leadership Theory: A Shadow Side Confessed.” While acknowledging that charismatic leaders often succeed in accomplishing extraordinary feats, there is also “a potentially darksome side to leaders who employ leadership charisma.” Pointing to recent research by leadership theorists, Heuser and Klaus contend that a charismatic leader whose interior life is unexamined can “potentially take on a dark side that is eventually projected on to the entire organization.” Such leaders “come to a place where they embrace dispositions and practices that are not from God.”⁹⁸ It is evident to Heuser and Klaus that Pentecostal/Charismatic leaders are at the forefront of a global movement that is authentically liberating, yet “it also yields a potential opportunity for abusive leaders to thrive.” They raise concerns about “non-accountable dynamic leaders who fashion a following with the ‘sound bites’ of God-like utterances in the context of manipulative phenomenology, thus creating an image of powerful ministry leadership.”⁹⁹ Hence, the authors conclude, “The mixed bag of phenomenal growth world-wide and the shadow side of charismatic leadership is a paradox that needs to be acknowledged and subsequently addressed.”¹⁰⁰

Stephen Fogarty, Principal of Alphacrucis College in Australia, adopts the terminology of Conger (1990) in his analysis of the “dark side” of charismatic leadership. Fogarty’s analysis is particularly relevant to our study because he is affiliated with the Spirit-empowered Movement. While acknowledging the strong positive effects that charismatic leaders can have on organizations, Fogarty states that charismatic leaders can also “produce significant negative outcomes” to the detriment of both the leader and the organization. Working from House and Howell’s typology of personalized and socialized charismatic leadership, Fogarty compares the characteristics and consequences of personalized and socialized charismatic leadership, and then offers strategies for minimizing the risks of the dark side of charismatic leadership.

Fogarty observes that personalized charismatic leaders are typically authoritarian and narcissistic. Their goals serve their own interests and they manipulate followers to get their way. Hence, they can be exploitative. They have an extreme need for power. They demand that followers identify with and support their leadership. They display low regard for legitimate channels of authority, and they are likely to pursue courses of action that enhance their power within the organization and attract credit for their achievements.¹⁰¹ In contrast, socialized charismatic leaders govern in an egalitarian manner and serve the interests of the organization and their followers. They seek to empower followers and govern through established channels to accomplish their goals. Their relationship with followers is focused less on the personality of the leader and more on the leader’s message about the organization and its ideals and goals. Followers are able to place constraints on the leader’s influence. They are considered non-exploitative and concerned for their followers’ needs.¹⁰²

Fogarty summarizes the negative consequences of personalized charismatic leaders: they tend to have an undue need for power, negative life themes, and narcissistic tendencies, contributing to a view of the world where personal safety is achieved through domination of others. The negative consequences include unethical and destructive leadership behavior. Unethical charismatic leaders have a desire to produce dependent and compliant followers. The resultant outcomes include the nurture of blind loyalties and the suppression of criticism.¹⁰³ When these behaviors become systemic and repeated, they are classified as destructive.¹⁰⁴

Fogarty offers a strategy for minimizing the risks presented by the dark side of charismatic leadership. The long-term solution would be to cultivate socialized as opposed to personalized charismatic leaders. However, this is not always feasible, given the need for more immediate counter measures. Fogarty draws upon the research of Diane Chandler, professor of leadership studies at Regent University, who finds that leadership failure can be attributed to (a) unresolved childhood needs, (b) personality determinants, (c) moral values and character weakness, and (d) internalized success stressors.¹⁰⁵

In view of Chandler's findings, Fogarty offers three proactive safeguards that are intended to maximize the unique contributions of the charismatic leader while minimizing potential negative consequences. First, Fogarty suggests that an effective *accountability structure* should be put in place at the time of appointment of the leader. Effective accountability measures might include careful oversight by a board of directors, agreement on financial and decision-making parameters, and enactment of a system of checks and balances. Leaders who are held accountable are more likely to consider the consequences of unwise actions and consider the interest of the organization and its members. Second, Fogarty commends a viable *support system* for the leader. This could include personal confidantes, developing mentoring relationships, formal and informal training (including ethics education), and the provision of personal and professional development opportunities. A support system can prevent the demise of an otherwise successful leader due to isolation. Third, Fogarty insists that the *selection process* should include an assessment tool that differentiates between socialized and personalized charismatic leaders. Other assessment tools could measure such leadership orientations as need for power, negative life themes, and narcissism.¹⁰⁶

To conclude, succession of leadership in charismatic circles is often hampered by a lack of insight into the dynamics of power motivation. It would be in the best interest of the organization to transfer leadership to a leader who has a socialized power motivation corresponding to Jesus' teachings on servant leadership (Matt 20:25–28). As Fogarty puts it, "A socialized charismatic leader is likely to create an organizational culture which is egalitarian, non-exploitative, and altruistic."¹⁰⁷

In the five affiliated articles that follow, ORU PhD students will apply the preceding summative assessment to case studies of notable Spirit-empowered leaders in diverse contexts. It is my hope that their work will bring to light both the upsides and downsides of the paradigms of global Spirit-empowered leadership, and, as we pursue corrective measures where fitting, our movement will be better served.



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PROFILE OF A SPIRIT-EMPOWERED LEADER

OPOKU ONYINAH, THE “AFRICAN PAUL”

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Abstract

Spirit-empowered leadership takes its shape from both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. God raised up, transformed with the Holy Spirit, and set aside some men and women to impact their generations and influence the trajectory of the church. Most operated within the apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral, and teacher/scholar paradigms to execute God’s plan for their lives. In contemporary times, however, questions arise as to whether other individuals qualify as effective modern-day Spirit-empowered leaders who operate within the boundaries of these paradigms through the Holy Spirit’s enablement. Consequently, this research sought to examine the spiritual and theological infrastructure behind the life and ministry of Ghanaian and African Pentecostal theologian and Christian leader Opoku Onyinah and ascertain what defines and qualifies him as an effective Spirit-empowered leader. The study concludes that Onyinah’s mentoring style of leadership, apostolic and teacher/scholar paradigms, socialized charismatic orientation, and tremendous influence at national, continental, and global levels position him as an effective modern-day Spirit-empowered leader.

Introduction

Definition of Leadership/Spirit-empowered Leadership

A Chinese leader, Li Hung Chang, once said this when asked about leadership: “There are only three kinds of people—those who are immovable, those who are movable, and those who move others!”¹ Leaders move others, and at the apogee of many organizational goals is the need for good leadership. However, the subject of leadership is a complex one because of the many variables it exhibits. Leadership is an intriguing idea that affects all human structures, drives change, and is difficult to articulate for all its elements. Authors Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus have discovered over 850 different definitions of leadership.²

John C. Maxwell defines leadership as the power to influence others to do what they usually would not have determined to do. He adds that everything in life rises or falls on leadership.³ Maxwell's definition receives support from Roger Hughes, who also defines leadership as the ability to influence others to achieve goals and possess a "big picture vision that is effectively shared and decision making that is clear and decisive."⁴ Oswald Sanders does not differ, stating that if a leader does not have followers whom their influence affects, they cease to be leaders.⁵ Hence, leaders do all they can to increase their influence. Therefore, influence is at the heart of leadership, an effect a person should have on others to achieve transformational goals.

Nonetheless, since this study centers on "Spirit-empowered leadership," it is apropos to define leadership in terms of its spiritual elements. Sanders again declares that Spirit-empowered leaders "are not elected, appointed, or created by synods or churchly assemblies; God alone makes them."⁶ Perhaps Jesus' statement to his disciples in John 15:16 bolsters Sanders' assertion: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you." Therefore, this article defines Spirit-empowered leadership as being chosen by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve others and God's purposes. Spirit-empowered leadership focuses on moving people towards God's plan through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Jay Gary defines Spirit-empowered leadership based on a three-dimensional paradigm—personal development, interpersonal influence, and generational emergence—all facilitated by the Holy Spirit.⁷ Gary's definition suggests that the cardinal infrastructure for Spirit-empowered leadership is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's energizing and transformative drive activates the leader's personal qualities and charisms and gives them a vision that causes them to influence and serve others. Ultimately, such leaders leave generational imprints in the sands of history. Therefore, this research regards an effective Spirit-empowered leader as someone who utilizes the mosaic of spiritual deposits they receive from the Holy Spirit to develop their personal ministry, influence others to follow them, and ultimately create generational paradigms for the future. The personal ministry development component usually falls within the five-fold ministerial paradigms manifested in the New Testament—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. The question is, can the same be said of earthly figures such as African theologian Opoku Onyinah? Does he qualify as a Spirit-empowered leader in contemporary times?

The Man Opoku Onyinah

Opoku Onyinah, Ghanaian and African Pentecostal leader and theological scholar, is described by some of his peers as the "African Paul."⁸ In *Essays in Honor of Apostle Opoku Onyinah*, Lord Elorm Donkor describes Onyinah as a distinguished and

“efficient theologian, ecumenist, missiologist, theological educator, and Christian leader on both national and international platforms.”⁹ Donkor sees Onyinah as a leader whose theological contributions have significantly enhanced the maturity of African Pentecostalism and effectively communicated the gospel to African cultures, just like Paul was able to transpose the new covenant from a Jewish milieu to the Greek cultural milieu.¹⁰ He adds that Onyinah’s leadership acumen, tenacious ecumenical instincts, and academic insight into the subject of *witchdemonology*, which had hitherto been untouched theologically in African Christianity, demonstrates that Pentecostalism is producing the type of Paul needed for Christendom.

Donkor’s assertions receive support from David D. Daniels, who analyzes the historical antecedents of the Church of Pentecost (CoP) and describes Onyinah as a “revered Pentecostal theologian and leader who has advanced progressive Pentecostalism theologically as a movement and a phenomenon within the Church of Pentecost.”¹¹ Daniels suggests that the CoP has placed social ministry and Christian philanthropy at the apogee of its ecclesial commitments partly because of Onyinah’s influence. He concludes that Onyinah is ministerially an apostle, a university professor, a respected author, a faithful pastor, a committed disciple of Jesus Christ, and a Spirit-empowered leader who has deepened and widened social ministry within the CoP.¹²

Cecil M. Robeck Jr. notes that Onyinah’s significant work on exorcism has broadened theological understanding and created a synergy and influence on the larger ecumenical community, mainly through his many academic publications.¹³ And Allan Anderson, who became Onyinah’s doctoral dissertation supervisor at Birmingham University, describes his ministry as influential throughout Ghana’s largest Pentecostal community and further afield in national affairs and many nations where the CoP has imprints.¹⁴ Anderson surveys Onyinah’s spiritual and ministerial gifts and adds that although he is an academic, Onyinah has distinguished himself as an “inspiring minister of the church, a creative innovator, musical composer, and an extraordinary administrator.”¹⁵ Christian Tsekpoe adds his voice and describes Onyinah as a “bilingual” scholar and pastor who understands and articulates the languages of both practicing Pentecostal ministers and those in academia concisely and has elevated the elements of African Christianity to a critical zenith.¹⁶ Indeed, the reflections by these theologians agree with Gary’s three-dimensional paradigm and confirm Onyinah as an effective Spirit-empowered leader.

Another theologian who comments on the leadership qualities of Onyinah is his fellow Ghanaian compatriot, J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu. He believes Onyinah epitomizes a dalliance between the academy and the world of Christian spirituality.¹⁷ Onyinah agrees with Asamoah-Gyadu that theology and spirituality should coexist for better Pentecostalism.

Finally, the CoP describes Onyinah, who served the church as Pastor, Regional Head, International Executive Member, Rector of Pentecost University, International Missions Director, and Chairman of the church, as a “spiritual giant, a transformational leader, an exemplary and faithful steward, a team player with impeccable work ethics, a generational leader, a mentor and coach, a courageous reformist, an innovative leader, an identifier of talents, and a national asset.”¹⁸ These testimonials confer on the apostle the stature of a Spirit-empowered leader with transcendent theological and ministerial influence.

Birth and Early Education

It is said that great men are not born great; they grow great. Perhaps the humble beginnings that surrounded the life of Opoku Onyinah give credence to this claim. On July 22, 1954, he was born to Opanyin Kwame Onyinah and Maame Akosua Addai at Aduman, a small town in the Ashanti Region of Ghana, West Africa.¹⁹ As a young boy, Opoku attended the Catholic Church, so he was baptized as an infant and confirmed in the Yamfo Catholic Church in 1966.²⁰ He obtained his elementary education at Yamfo in the Brong Ahafo Region and later at Sunyani Technical Institute, where he excelled in the Intermediate City and Guilds of London Institute examination in Carpentry and Joinery in 1974.²¹

Conversion to Pentecostal Christianity—“The Holy Ghost Man”

When Onyinah attended the Sunyani Technical Institute, his love for music led him to associate with the school choir. Consequently, when he once participated in a Scripture Union (SU) meeting organized by Bible-believing Christians with mostly Pentecostal-Charismatic inclinations, he encountered the Lord and got converted through Rev. Brew Riverson’s gospel message.²² His life after the conversion was very transformational. As a result, Onyinah fully joined the SU group, which also morphed him into a full embrace of Pentecostal Christianity.²³ The CoP became his new church during this time. Onyinah got baptized in the Spirit and experienced *glossolalia* during this time, an experience that ushered him into a transformative spiritual catharsis he had never found before.²⁴ Spiritual disciplines such as fasting and prayers for many days became regular in his newfound life.

Eventually, the baptism of the Holy Spirit enabled him to pray in tongues for many hours, and he developed a passion for personal evangelism. Ultimately, the spiritual experience prepared him as a leader who attracted other “spiritual seekers” to experience their own baptism in the Holy Spirit. Therefore, he founded a Town Fellowship in Yamfo, where other believers met regularly for their own Pentecost experiences.²⁵

After completing his education at Sunyani Technical Institute in 1972, Onyinah proceeded to Tamale Technical school, where he studied carpentry and joinery.²⁶ His passion for the SU's activities continued, and he was appointed secretary of the SU in the first year and later its president in his second year. Onyinah confirms that God's mighty hand was heavily evident in his life and ministrations, such that people gave him the moniker "The Holy Ghost Man."²⁷ His ministry took a strong start from then on, characterized by fervency in prayers, accuracy in prophetic utterances, and spiritual power in ministrations.²⁸

Theological Education

Onyinah is a consummate teacher-scholar whose formal theological education began in 1986–1988 when he enrolled at Elim Bible College, United Kingdom.²⁹ In 1996, he furthered his education at Regents Theological College at Manchester, obtaining a Master of Theology Degree in Applied Theology.³⁰ While there, Onyinah's impressive academic performance and insightful theological reflection attracted the attention of New Testament scholar, Siegfried Schatzmann, who encouraged him to pursue doctoral studies at the University of Birmingham.³¹ Schatzmann further introduced Onyinah to another doctoral student, Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, who linked him to professor Allan Anderson, who later became his doctoral supervisor. Onyinah's Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program was completed in 2002.³² Following his extensive research and publications, the University of Ghana conferred on Onyinah the title of Associate Professor in 2017.

Call into Full-Time Ministry

The CoP's foremost criterion for accepting someone into the full-time ministry is the demonstration of an authentic call of God in the person's life. In most of his sermons, Onyinah stresses the delicate nature of the full-time ministry and asserts that no person should entertain entry into the sacred ecclesial venture of full-time ministry without an authentic call by God. Hence, in the CoP, a superior minister usually identifies the call of God in a person's life and recommends them to the full-time ministry. Besides the call of God, leaders sometimes look for other qualifications in the person's life before their calling is authenticated. These are the critical "c"s of Pentecostal leadership, some of which include "true conversion, commitment, charism, character, consecration, class (minimum of high school education), capacity, competence, and consequences."³³

The biblical accounts indicate that when the gracious hand of God is upon a person, he or she demonstrates charisms exceptionally in ministry and life, and others take notice. Such was the experience Onyinah had before his recommendation into the full-time ministry of the CoP.

When he worked at Tamale in the Northern Region of Ghana, his Area Head at the time, Apostle A. D. Aninkorah, was convinced that Onyinah's leadership and administrative skills were relevant for the ministry, so he took a keen interest in him.³⁴ Aninkorah gave him several preaching and leadership responsibilities, which he handled excellently with grace and skill. Not long afterward, Onyinah was called into the full-time ministry of the CoP at the young age of 22 years.³⁵ After a few years as Overseer and later as a Pastor, Onyinah was called into the office of Apostle of the CoP at the young age of 32 years when leadership identified the apostolic calling in his ministry.³⁶ Furthermore, the tangibility of the office of the teacher and Bible scholar was fully recognized in Onyinah's life. However, teachers are not explicitly called into a delineated ministerial category in the CoP.³⁷

This article seeks to delineate the characteristics of the combined apostolic and teacher/scholar leadership paradigms, as articulated by Paul in Ephesians 4:11, to ascertain if Onyinah fits the category of a modern-day Spirit-empowered leader.

Apostolic Ministry

Since its founding, the CoP adopted the five-fold ministry praxis of church governance from the New Testament where apostles are the church's highest administrative and spiritual heads. David Cannistraci's study of the five-fold ministry notes that an apostle is "one who is called and sent by Christ to have the spiritual authority, character, gifts and abilities to successfully reach and establish people in Kingdom truth and order, especially through founding and overseeing local churches."³⁸ Cannistraci affirms the CoP's belief that apostles are called and anointed to plant churches, supervise and strengthen churches, raise and ordain church leaders, break new missionary frontiers, coordinate other ministries, manage crises, and share God's vision for the church's future.³⁹

In the CoP, Onyinah was called into the apostolic ministry because the church's leadership recognized that these unique gifts and abilities were exhibited in his life and ministry. Consequently, Ofoe affirms this calling to apostolic ministry of Onyinah:

He utilized the grace of God on his life to introduce projects whose impacts on Christianity are miracles in their own right. This satisfies what 2 Corinthians 12:12 presents as characteristics of an apostle. Opoku Onyinah shows himself as an apostle by consciously training and impacting people. He exemplifies those qualities that identify one as an apostle of Christ.⁴⁰

Moreover, the CoP honored Onyinah by highlighting his work in preaching the gospel, opening new frontiers, and breaking new ground with the gospel. The church recognizes that Onyinah's ministry provided spiritual leadership as he championed many reforms in Christianity, introduced miraculous projects, exhibited signs and wonders, mentored many leaders, and impacted many lives.⁴¹ Not only that, Onyinah taught and championed sound Christian doctrine in the church, vehemently opposed false doctrines, and spearheaded the church's growth, establishment, and empowerment.⁴² Once again, these assessments confirm the authenticity and ethos of the apostolic paradigm of Spirit-empowered leadership in Onyinah's ministry.

The Teacher/Scholar

Onyinah fits into the category of an Apostle Teacher. The teacher/scholar paradigm of the five-fold Spirit-empowered leadership praxis manifests palpably in his life and ministry, as evidenced by what the CoP says about him: "He has, with admirable simplicity, consistently taught the undiluted Word of God to the understanding of many. He knows how to rightly divide God's Word as if he were one of the Bible writers."⁴³ Onyinah's teacher paradigm falls within the caliber of an *academic* teacher/scholar, bringing his theological expertise and education to bear upon his teaching ministry, combining sound theological knowledge with deep spirituality, and making the Word of God relevant to the times.⁴⁴ As an astute African Pentecostal scholar, he has the creativity to theologically reflect and probe deeper meanings of Pentecostalism from the Word of God. For example, his leviathan academic work on *witchdemonology* has become a breakthrough point in our understanding of the subject.

Additionally, Eric Newberg lists Opoku on the list of academic teacher/scholars who are impacting Spirit-empowered research and elevating graduate academic education for his many authored books and articles in global Spirit-empowered journals and has served as a member of the editorial boards of the *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* and *International Review of Missions*, among others.⁴⁵

Leadership Attainments

Over the past four decades and beyond, the life and leadership influence of Onyinah has been seen across the CoP, the national Pentecostal and Charismatic community in Ghana, the African Pentecostal fraternity, and the global Spirit-empowered Movement and its mosaic of theological circles. This section looks at the leadership attainments of the professor across these spectrums.

Leadership in the Church of Pentecost

The active ministry of Onyinah in the CoP spanned over forty-two years until his official retirement in 2018 at the age of 64 years. During the historic leadership journey, Onyinah served the church in many capacities of influence. He rose through the leadership ranks of District Overseer, District Pastor, Regional Head, International Executive Council member, International Missions Director, and finally as Chairman of the church globally, among many other roles. Being Chairman of the church meant he served as the administrative and spiritual head of the CoP worldwide.⁴⁶ His leadership recorded multifaceted and generational achievements.

For example, during Chairman Onyinah's ten-year leadership, membership doubled from 1.6 million to over 3 million, whereas the church's presence in the world increased from seventy to one hundred nations.⁴⁷ Again, he is credited with moving the CoP into a technological era by establishing Pentecost Television (Pent Tv) and other media platforms. He broadened the horizon of the church's national presence. Onyinah's chairmanship era foresaw the ushering of the CoP into continental and global theological forays.⁴⁸ In addition, his leadership opened the door for many young people to enter the full-time ministry of the church and accelerated the development of an epochal moment for young adults to participate in church leadership.

Further, during the chairmanship of Onyinah, the concept of Pentecost International Worship Centers (PIWCs) was conceived. The PIWCs are multinational cross-cultural churches within the CoP with a modernized and multicultural ethos, created to welcome people from all nations and cultures to enjoy Pentecostal worship experiences. This laudable vision has attracted the youth to the church, who, before its inception, were leaving in droves for other churches.⁴⁹ Thousands of young people, particularly graduates from academic institutions, were leaving the CoP for other churches each year until the establishment of the PIWCs truncated the anomaly. Currently, it is estimated that the church's youth constitute at least 40 percent of its population, a sign of a solid generational strength for its future.⁵⁰

Leadership in Ghana Pentecostalism/Ecumenism

Onyinah's influence and contributions to Christianity run beyond the CoP in Ghana and the world. An ecumenical figure, he served as the Chairman of the Ghana Evangelism Committee and as President of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC), positions the Christian community in Ghana believes he served effectively.⁵¹ Mainly, Onyinah was highly sensitive to the well-being of churches and saw Christians as major players in Ghana's economic development agenda and the country's moral health. His leadership led to stronger ecumenicity among the churches in Ghana.

Leadership in African Pentecostalism

Opoku Onyinah's leadership has not only been effective and influential in the CoP and the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic community, but also in the African Pentecostal fraternity. Beyond the many theological papers he has authored on African spirituality and African Christianity, Onyinah has served as Co-Chairman of Empowered21 Africa since 2013, a platform for Pentecostal dialogues and spiritual advancement in Africa and the world.⁵²

Leadership in Global Pentecostalism

Beyond being influential in the leadership of Christianity at denominational, national, and continental levels, Onyinah's leadership credentials have enabled him to serve and impact lives in the global Spirit-empowered Movement and other international fraternities. For example, as a Pentecostal scholar, Onyinah has been a member of the Committee of World Pentecostal Theologians in the dialogue of Pentecostals and Catholic Churches since 2011. He has also served as a member of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches since 2007. His leadership in these fraternities has added knowledge and Pentecostal leadership excellence to global Christianity's growth.⁵³ As an astute theologian, Onyinah has spoken at numerous international conferences and meetings on several matters related to Christianity and Pentecostalism.

Personalized or Socialized Spirit-empowered Leadership?

A critical assessment must also be made of Onyinah's leadership style through the prism of what Stephen Fogarty categorizes as the "dark side" of charismatic leadership. Fogarty's analysis reveals two kinds of Spirit-empowered leaders: *personalized* and *socialized*. Whereas personalized charismatic leaders are authoritarian, narcissistic, and centripetally manipulate church systems to enhance their power, socialized leaders, in contrast, are egalitarian and centrifugally serve the interests of their followers and organizations.⁵⁴ In this study, Onyinah is assessed to be an ethical, open-hearted, consensus-building, and mentoring leader who cherishes the decentralization of power to his followers, associates, and subordinates. He is a socialized Spirit-empowered leader who selflessly and seminally builds church structures around others, particularly the younger generation. This trait is typified by the hundreds of young men and women who joined the full-time ministry of the CoP during his leadership and many others he continuously mentors.

Conclusions

Effective Spirit-empowered leadership emanates from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, which enables a person to marshal all innate resources and divine deposits to serve God, influence others to serve God, and raise a generation to continue to do so. Oral Roberts University's three-pronged yardstick for measuring Spirit-empowered leadership involves personal spiritual development, influences on others, and generational impact. This study discovered that Opoku Onyinah, one of Ghana's and Africa's leading Pentecostal leaders and scholars, is a Spirit-empowered leader who has a mentoring style of leadership, manifests a combination of the charismata in the apostolic and teacher/scholar paradigms, and has impacted generations significantly as a modern-day Pentecostal and theological leader.



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JOHN PAUL II: A ROLE MODEL OF PARTICIPATIVE, TRANSFORMATIVE, AND EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

This article sets out to revisit charismatic leadership theory through the concepts of servanthood, participation, transformation, and empowerment. We will argue that only servant and participative leadership reflects the relational nature of the Holy Trinity and has a potential to transform and empower followers, offering a remedy to the issue of power in Spirit-empowered Christianity. We propose that this emerging paradigm of charismatic leadership is exemplified by Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II). The assessment employs the criteria of personal and socialized charismatic leadership, as well as the apostle and teacher/scholar paradigms of leadership derived from Ephesians 4:11. The study also features an evaluation of John Paul II's contribution to the development of the contemporary Spirit-empowered Movement.

Introduction

The world torn by hostilities and abuse of power is in desperate need of charismatic leaders who exercise power in a way that serves and empowers others. This contribution seeks to present a profile of a Spirit-empowered leader, Karol Wojtyła, who as a pope assumed the name of John Paul II. An actor, playwright, sportsman, philosopher, and theologian, but first and foremost he was a spiritual father and charismatic leader. The article will begin with a biographical sketch of John Paul II, followed by a definition of charismatic leadership. Next, we will evaluate Wojtyła's leadership style, advancing a claim that only servant and participative leadership, epitomized by him, can be truly transformative and empowering. In the assessment of Wojtyła's leadership, we will employ the criteria of personalized and socialized charismatic leadership. It will also be argued that the pope exemplifies the apostle and teacher/scholar paradigms of charismatic leadership adapted from Ephesians 4:11. Lastly, we will contend that, as a

global leader, John Paul II was instrumental in the development of the contemporary Spirit-empowered Movement, particularly through his significant contributions in the fields of Spirit-led mission and pneumatology.

Biographical Sketch

Karol Wojtyła was born on May 18, 1920, to Emilia and Karol Józef Wojtyła, who lived in the town of Wadowice, located in the south of Poland. Karol Junior, affectionately called Lolek by the family members, learned the shapes of integrity and love from his parents, who were also his role models on the paths of prayer and spiritual life. Always a diligent student, Lolek fell in love with sport and theatre already in his early teen years. Karol's philological studies at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków were curtailed abruptly by the outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939. The horrors of the six-year-long Nazi occupation turned out to be a forge for his character.

Pre-papal Period

During the war Wojtyła prepared for the priesthood in the clandestine seminary, and was ordained on November 1, 1946. After completing his PhD degree in Rome in 1948, Father Wojtyła came back to Poland, where he immediately started pastoral work. University students and young families soon became the focal point of his pastoral care. Christian ministry was officially forbidden by the Soviet regime and had to be carried out secretly under the prying eye of the oppressive government. Undaunted by these precarious circumstances, Wojtyła adapted his pastoral strategy: he would often take his students for a mountain trek or kayaking. During those weekend trips, many pressing moral and spiritual matters were discussed in the beautiful sceneries of Polish mountains and lakes that also provided a perfect setting for a prayerful retreat.

Accompanying young people in their struggle to remain faithful to the gospel under the constant pressure of the communist dictatorship enforcing atheist ideology, the future pope learned what it meant to be a servant leader fully committed to the moral and spiritual formation of his followers rather than his own self-realization. Always available, with seemingly limitless capacity to listen, Father Wojtyła soon became a magnetic nexus of covert ministry operations in Kraków. The time and energy invested in young people in those early days of Wojtyła's service would pay dividends during his papal years.

Having become a bishop in 1958, Wojtyła took part in the Second Vatican Council that convened between 1962 and 1965. The young Polish bishop was instrumental in drafting many documents of this landmark council. His deep appreciation of human culture in its diverse contextual manifestations helped him lead

people in their inevitable encounter with a culture of death, emerging from the anti-gospel visions that reduced the human being to the mere means of production or a disposable liability.¹

Papal Period

On October 16, 1978, Cardinal Wojtyła was elected as pope, breaking with a 455-year-long tradition of choosing only Italian bishops for the pontifical office. He accepted the decision of his fellow bishops in the obedience of faith, assuming the name of John Paul II. His inaugural homily was full of hope and encouragement to accept the saving power of Christ: “Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ. Be not afraid to welcome Christ and accept his power.”²

John Paul II defined his vision of leadership in clear terms right from the start: “Christ, make me become and remain the servant of your unique power, the servant of your sweet power, the servant of your power that knows no eventide. Make me a servant. Indeed, the servant of your servants.”³ He did not come from Kraków to Rome to be served, but to serve and give his whole life as a gift to many.

On May 13, 1981, an assassination attempt was made on the Polish pope during his meeting with the pilgrims gathered in St. Peter’s Square in Rome. One of the two shots fired by Ali Agca at point-blank range miraculously missed vital organs in the pope’s abdomen. After a long surgery, he spent four days in intensive care and a few months convalescing. This attempt on the pope’s life nearly ended his three-decade-long pontificate. Apparently, God had different plans for his chosen agent.

Since his first pastoral assignments, Wojtyła was well aware that youths are the church’s future. From the local church in Kraków all the way to the global community of believers, he focused his ministry on young people, naturally commanding their trust and respect. As a pope, he ardently motivated youngsters to reach *beyond* what the world has to offer, guiding them in their search for the ultimate meaning of life. In 1986 he inaugurated the World Youth Day, celebrated biennially in different places around the world to this day. The pope’s message for the seventh World Youth Day, held in 1991, encouraged young believers to embrace their calling to Spirit-empowered evangelism: “The same Spirit who made us children of God compels us to evangelize. The Christian vocation, in fact, implies a mission. . . . This is the new inspiration which the Holy Spirit is giving to our times: how I wish that it would penetrate each of your lives!”⁴ As a true “fisher of men,” the pope would often challenge youths to “put out into the deep” and explore the infinite horizons of their friendship with God.⁵

Furthermore, John Paul II’s pastoral approach was ecumenically oriented. His consistent efforts to restore the unity among divided Christians embraced both Western and Eastern churches. His visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in November 1979,

followed by the visits of the Ecumenical Patriarchs Dimitrios and Bartholomew to Rome, were important milestones toward the reconciliation between the Catholic church and Eastern Orthodox churches. The pope also engaged in a dialogue with other Western denominations. On one occasion, he stated in no unclear terms that “the Catholic Church is committed to the ecumenical movement with an irrevocable decision.”⁶

The climactic expression of Wojtyła’s ministry of reconciliation was arranging the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi on October 27, 1986. More than 160 leaders representing thirty-two Christian denominations and eleven other world religions gathered there to pray and fast together for peace in the world tormented by cultural and religious tensions.

Afflicted by a progressing Parkinson’s disease, John Paul II continued to serve the Christian community, following in the footsteps of the suffering servant of the Lord depicted by Isaiah. He who “had grown up like a young plant” in the vineyard of the Lord, now became “a man of suffering, acquainted with infirmity,”⁷ and despised by his numerous critics. That was the final and possibly the most significant lesson Karol Wojtyła taught us without words when his speech was seriously impaired: true leaders are not afraid to display vulnerability and weakness, in which “the power of God is perfected”⁸ and revealed to the world. John Paul II died on April 2, 2005, in the twenty-seventh year of his long and fruitful pontificate, leaving behind the legacy of meaning.

Definition of Charismatic Leadership

We now set out to define charismatic leadership before we examine Wojtyła’s unique leadership style. Seeking to discover the nature of charismatic leadership, Max Weber proposes that “pure charisma represents, wherever it occurs, a ‘calling,’ a ‘vocation’ in the emphatic sense: as a ‘mission’ or a personal ‘task.’”⁹ Though secular *per se*, Weber’s definition is derived from the use of the term “charisma” by early Christians.¹⁰ Through theological reflection and missionary engagement, the nascent church developed an original understanding of charisma. In a biblical sense, charisma is primarily a gift of the Spirit, which requires the obedience of faith to be received and realized:

The first thing to say about a theology of the charismata is that they derive from the Spirit of God in and from Christ. . . . Christians therefore engage with the charismatic life only if they become docile and vulnerable to the unanticipated character of the Spirit whose wind blows “where it chooses,

and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes” (John 3:8).¹¹

It is the Holy Spirit who equips his chosen agents to carry out their specific mission in the church and in the world. This notion of charisma paves the way for a Christian concept of Spirit-empowered leadership understood in terms of a God-given calling. “With that commissioning goes also the empowering of the Holy Spirit.”¹² What is the nature of that charismatic calling to leadership?

Toward a Relational Understanding of Charismatic Leadership

First and foremost, we propose that charismatic leadership is relational by nature. It follows that particular leaders can be called charismatic only insofar as they are intentional about forging personal bonds with their followers. True leaders remain attuned to the diverse needs of people around them and feel responsible for fostering the personal development and spiritual growth of their followers. According to Jill Strange and Michael Munford, charismatic leaders “evidence responsiveness to followers whose reactions provide a source of meaning, and maintain a relatively close supportive relationship with followers.”¹³

Conversely, a self-seeking attitude is contradictory to genuine charisma, which remains intrinsically other-oriented and self-effacing. Self-promoting and exploitative attitudes undermine the relational foundation of charisma, as they inhibit a leader’s responsiveness to the needs of others as well as his or her ability to engage in a supportive and participative relationship with followers.

In their study on personality traits of charismatic leaders, Robert House and Jane Howell attempt to define the difference between personalized and socialized charismatic leadership:

Following McClelland (1975), we define socialized charismatic leadership as leadership which (a) is based on egalitarian behavior, (b) serves collective interests and is not driven by the self-interest of the leader and (c) develops and empowers others. Socialized leaders tend to be altruistic, . . . self-controlled and follower-oriented rather than narcissistic.

Also, following McClelland (1975), we define personalized charismatic leadership as leadership which (a) is based on personal dominance and authoritarian behavior, (b) serves the self-interest of the leader and is self-aggrandizing and (c) is exploitive of others (McClelland, 1975). Theoretically personalized leaders . . . show disregard for the rights and feelings of others and they tend to be narcissistic, impetuous, and impulsively aggressive.¹⁴

This theory of charisma carries significant implications for Christian charismatics, especially those in positions of power. “Only when charisma is the expression of love of neighbour, it is to be welcomed and valued; whereas when charisma lacks love, it becomes a threat to community and a spiritual menace to the charismatic himself.”¹⁵ Love remains the ultimate criterion for evaluating the authenticity of charisma: true Spirit-empowered leaders will display this essential gift of the Spirit, who is the personified love between the Father and the Son.

Assuming Control or the Role of the Servant?

Robert K. Greenleaf propounded that leadership “begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then a conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead.”¹⁶ If this desire to serve rather than be served matures in a person, it drives him or her to “show, by their example, how one may be a servant in what appears to be a cold, low-caring, highly competitive, violence-prone society.”¹⁷ Leaders from highly competitive and success-oriented cultures, like the Western one, are susceptible to callousness and misuse of influence. However, as James Burns observed, “[N]aked power-wielding cannot be transforming; only leadership can be.”¹⁸ Spirit-empowered leaders come to serve rather than lord it over others, always ready to put themselves at the disposal of their followers, willing to sacrifice their own comfort. In this way, they fulfill the royal calling and reveal dignity,

expressed in readiness to serve, in keeping with the example of Christ, who “came not to be served but to serve” (Matthew 20:28). If, in the light of this attitude of Christ’s, “being a king” is truly possible only by “being a servant,” then “being a servant” also demands so much spiritual maturity that it must really be described as “being a king.” In order to be able to serve others worthily and effectively, we must be able to master ourselves, possess the virtues that make this mastery possible.¹⁹

Hence, servant leadership presents itself as a remedy for the issue of power abuse: “When we choose service over self-interest, we say we are willing to be deeply accountable without choosing to control the world around us.”²⁰ Larry C. Spears observes that “[s]ervant leadership assumes a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion rather than control.”²¹ Assuming the condition of servant instead of assuming control resonates with the ideal of humble servanthood depicted in the Christological hymn found in Philippians 2:5–11. “If the head of the body can renounce his privileges and prerogatives and take on the role of a servant, indeed, even die a slave’s death, then no one in the Christian community should perceive servanthood as

beneath their dignity. . . . Indeed, the Son manifested the form of God in the form of a human servant.”²²

Tenacious Charisma

The genuine charisma of a leader is also manifested in perseverance and tenacity in the face of adverse circumstances, opposition, and disappointment. From the Old Testament times, God’s chosen agents display an “internalized and unrelenting resolve to fulfill the God-given mission.”²³ Spirit-empowered leaders will not grow faint until they have established God’s justice in the earth.²⁴ They are well aware that the power to overcome hardships comes from God alone whenever they are afflicted, perplexed, persecuted, or struck down, carrying in the jars of clay the precious gift of spiritual life.²⁵

Empowered to Empower Others

Perhaps the most distinct characteristic of Spirit-empowered leaders transpires in their ability to inspire and empower their followers. While the world promotes the vision of leadership focused on a personal development of the leader, “servant leaders place the interest of their followers before theirs and emphasize personal development and empowerment of followers.”²⁶ This approach marks a paradigm shift in our understanding of charismatic leadership. Spirit-empowered leaders empower their followers to become future leaders in their own right. “Transcending leadership is dynamic leadership in the sense that the leaders throw themselves into a relationship with followers who will feel ‘elevated’ by it and often become more active themselves, thereby creating new cadres of leaders.”²⁷

John Paul II’s Leadership Style

Having defined the nature of charismatic leadership, we are now in a position to evaluate John Paul II’s leadership style from this perspective.

Transformative and Participative Servanthood

It would not be an exaggeration to claim that John Paul II embodies the servant paradigm of leadership. He was consistent in taking responsibility for the sheep he loved and for which he cared. Unassuming and other-oriented, he remained a sign of contradiction to a world chasing the idols of prosperity, power, and self-realization. In the typology proposed by House and Howell, the pope would exemplify the “socialized” rather than “personalized” type of charismatic leadership, since he was

follower-oriented, committed to empowering others, and serving their best interests. Such an attitude stands in contrast to narcissistic, exploitative, and self-aggrandizing behavior of “personalized” leaders, as discussed above.²⁸ At the same time, the philosophical and theological writings of John Paul II were founded on the idea of *personal* participation, in the inner life of the Triune God and the life of the other. This premise underlies Wojtyła’s original personalism,²⁹ as well as his participative approach to ministry. In both cases, personal and social perspectives converge in one singular focus: a transformative participation in the community of divine Persons, resulting in the empowerment for service.

On the whole, John Paul II’s leadership style can be defined in terms of a relational and transformative engagement driven by the Spirit of solidarity and servanthood. Everything he taught and did as a leader was aimed at the transformation of an individual, the community of believers, and culture. Thus, there is a discernible transformational dynamic in his leadership style.

Tenacious Role Model

John Paul II manifests charismatic leadership also in that he was able to inspire and motivate his followers to commit to a shared vision, serving as a role model of the mission in which he led them by personal example. “Charismatic leaders demonstrate their own courage and conviction in the mission and thus both earn credibility and serve as a role model of the values of the vision and the mission.”³⁰

Furthermore, John Paul II displayed tenacity characteristic of charismatic leadership. When leading the Catholic community with unwavering resolve, he consistently displayed the unblurred clarity of vision and strength of character. “He was not a man who accepted compromise. Under the cheer, the charm, and the charisma, there was pure steel.”³¹

Scholar and Teacher

Finally, John Paul II appears to represent the teacher/scholar paradigm of Spirit-empowered leadership. As a charismatic teacher,³² he creatively combined the academic approach with the pragmatic one. During his pre-papal years, Wojtyła continually pursued his academic interests and soon became an esteemed essayist and lecturer in ethics, philosophy, and theology. His lectures given in Kraków and Lublin between 1953 and 1961 attracted the crowds of students thirsty for a relevant truth that could save the meaning of their perilous existence. And they were not disappointed. Every student standing in the packed lecture hall would be challenged to *be* rather than *have*, to understand the dramatic quality of human freedom transpiring through concrete life choices. Freedom, according to Wojtyła, is more than just freedom *from* constraints; it is

above all freedom *to* seek the truth and live by its liberating demands. Loving demand to become the best version of oneself was embraced by the students as it was transparently lived out by the young professor who assisted them on the paths to the greatness they were meant to achieve. Years later, as a pope, he would remind them about this higher call: “You must demand of yourselves, even if others would not demand of you!”³³

Contributions of John Paul II to the Spirit-empowered Movement

The profile of John Paul II as a formative Spirit-empowered leader would be incomplete without evaluating the contributions he made to the global Spirit-empowered Movement. This section will investigate the pope’s involvement in the Charismatic Movement from three complementary perspectives: promotion of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, his contribution to Spirit-empowered missions, and—last but not least—his groundbreaking pneumatology.

John Paul II and the Charismatic Renewal

John Paul II actively supported the growth of the Charismatic Movement within the Catholic church, continuing the work initiated by his predecessor Paul VI and actively promoted by Cardinal Leo Suenens.³⁴ In December 1979, he addressed the international leaders of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal: “The world is much in need of the Holy Spirit [who] comes to the human spirit, and from this moment we begin to live again, to find our very selves, to find our identity, our total humanity. Consequently, I am convinced that this movement is a very important component in the total, spiritual renewal of the church.”³⁵ Every genuine renewal takes impetus from a spirituality focused on the Spirit.

Spirit-led Mission

John Paul II fostered the growth of the Spirit-empowered Movement also by situating Spirit-led mission at the heart of Christian life. “The much needed rediscovery of the Spirit’s role in the life of the church necessarily includes a missionary dimension. Under the impulse of the Spirit, the Christian faith is decisively opened to the ‘nations.’ It is the Spirit who is the source of the drive to press on, not only geographically but also beyond the frontiers of race and religion, for a truly universal mission.”³⁶ Furthermore, the pope believed the Holy Spirit to be “the principal agent of mission . . . who is now to continue the salvific work rooted in the sacrifice of the cross.”³⁷ As the ultimate

source and driving force of mission, the Holy Spirit empowers Christian missionaries to assist him in ushering in the kingdom of God.

Further, it can be argued that the pope represents the apostle paradigm of charismatic leadership. As the shepherd of the Catholic church, John Paul II occupied the apostolic seat in Rome for almost three decades. However, it was not only Catholics or even fellow Christians that fell into the scope of his global mission. John Paul II's concept of apostleship was broader, truly universal in fact: he wanted to accompany the whole human family along the path to fulfillment. For him, crossing the threshold of hope meant moving across racial, cultural, religious, and conceptual boundaries. The frequent letters of encouragement, as well as countless travels and pilgrimages of the Polish pope, were driven by the transcending dynamic of his apostolic leadership. John Paul II not only taught about Spirit-driven mission but also personally engaged in it, visiting 129 countries during his 104 foreign trips. That was his leadership style: to lead by personal example embedded in theological reflection.

Pneumatology of John Paul II

Perhaps the most substantial contribution of John Paul II to the Spirit-empowered Movement is to be found in his theological writings and pastoral teachings. We argued above that the pope typifies the teacher/scholar paradigm of charismatic leadership. In this section we will attempt to further substantiate this claim by evaluating his groundbreaking pneumatology.

This brilliant theologian acknowledged the necessity to reclaim the person and agency of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church. In response to this need for “a fresh discovery of God in his transcendent reality as the infinite Spirit,”³⁸ the pope devoted his fifth encyclical titled *Dominum et Vivificantem* to an in-depth theological reflection on the Holy Spirit, meant to encourage believers to engage in a personal relationship with the often neglected Third Person of the Trinity. The role of the Spirit in salvation history was subsequently elaborated upon in the series of twenty-eight teachings (catecheses) given weekly between April 1989 and July 1991.

The pope draws an image of the Spirit who restores the good core of humanity and renews the face of the earth, fractured by sin and selfishness.³⁹ As the giver of life, the Holy Spirit communicates God's own life to human beings and makes them capable of a loving response to that fundamental gift of spiritual life. Sadly, the free will granted to human beings in the act of creation implies the possibility of the “rejection of the Spirit who is love and gift.”⁴⁰ According to John Paul II, the whole drama of redemption focuses on healing human freedom from this sin of rejection to make it capable of breathing, as it were, the breath of divine life again.

As previously stated, the notion of the gift is key to the understanding of Wojtyła's theological thinking. Building upon the phenomenological foundations laid in his pre-papal years, the pope fully develops this original concept within the Trinitarian framework, stressing the unique role of the Spirit in the dynamic of self-donation:

It can be said that in the Holy Spirit the intimate life of the Triune God becomes totally gift, an exchange of mutual love between the divine Persons and that through the Holy Spirit God exists in the mode of gift. It is the Holy Spirit who is the personal expression of this self-giving, of this being-love. He is Person-Love. He is not only the gift to the person, but is a Person-Gift.⁴¹

It is precisely the gift of personal love between the Father and the Son—the gift freely given and freely received—that enables us to participate in the mystery of “mutual love between the divine Persons.” The deepest meaning of human existence is to be found in self-giving love that reflects the interior life of the Triune God.

Pentecost marks a crucial milestone in the ongoing self-giving of God: “Linked to Christ's paschal mystery, ‘God's self-giving’ is fulfilled in Pentecost. The theophany of Jerusalem signifies the new beginning of God's self-giving in the Holy Spirit,”⁴² just as the theophany at the Jordan had revealed Jesus as the beloved Son of the Father, whose “entire activity would be carried out in the active presence of the Holy Spirit.”⁴³ Embracing the personal gift of the Spirit-Love outpoured during these two theophanic events opens the possibility of true communion with God and each other:

The Spirit is the love and the personal gift which contains every created gift: life, grace, and glory. . . . The Spirit himself makes us “one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28) and thus integrates us within the same unity which binds the Son to the Father. We are left in wonder at this intense and intimate communion between God and us.⁴⁴

The pope points to the Spirit who alone enables us to “share in Jesus' filial love for the Father. . . . [The Spirit] enables the Father to be loved by us as the Son has loved him, i.e., with the filial love which is shown in the cry of *Abba* (cf. Gal 4:6; Rom 8:15), but it pervades the entire activity of those who, in the Spirit, are children of God.”⁴⁵ Having received the Spirit of adoption, Christians can now participate in the life of the Triune God: “Thus human life becomes permeated, through participation, by the divine life, and itself acquires a divine, supernatural dimension. There is granted the new life, in which as a sharer in the mystery of Incarnation ‘man has access to the Father in the Holy Spirit.’”⁴⁶

The underlying logic of Spirit-enabled participation is characteristic of Wojtyła's vision of an intimate relationship between God and human beings: "The hidden breath of the divine Spirit enables the human spirit to open before the saving and sanctifying self-opening of God."⁴⁷ It is through the Spirit that the interior of the Trinity opens up to lovingly embrace humanity in order to sanctify it. Believers can access this transformative reality through prayer: "Because of the human spirit's constitutive openness to God's action of urging it to self-transcendence, we can hold that 'every authentic prayer is called forth by the Holy Spirit, who is mysteriously present in the heart of every person.'"⁴⁸

Finally, faithful to biblical revelation, John Paul II considers forgiveness of sins as the work of Christ mediated through the Spirit that brings us peace flowing from reconciliation with God. "The Holy Spirit, who accomplishes in individuals the forgiveness of sins through Christ's sacrifice, is for human beings the operative principle of that fundamental peace which consists in reconciliation with God."⁴⁹ At the same time, the Spirit remains the ultimate joy-giver: "Only the Holy Spirit gives a profound, full and lasting joy, which every human heart desires. The human person is being made for joy, not for sadness."⁵⁰

To sum up, John Paul's pneumatology, developed within the Trinitarian framework and informed by his phenomenology of the gift, is groundbreaking in that it allows us to reimagine our relationship with the Holy Spirit from the perspective of participation in the innermost life of God who is other-oriented, relational, and self-giving. At the same time, it presents the Spirit as the Person-Love who enables Christians to become adopted children of God, bearing credible witness to the Gospel through "a humble service of love" and "the awareness of the power of the Holy Spirit who is at work in the Church."⁵¹

Conclusion

This study presented a profile of a Spirit-empowered leader, John Paul II (Karol Wojtyła). It argued that relationality—the fabric of God's character and a hallmark of Wojtyła's leadership—is the crux of charismatic leadership. Christian leaders can convincingly manifest the relational character of God insofar as they invest in developing personal relationships with their followers instead of controlling them. Furthermore, it proposed that John Paul II represents the socialized rather than personalized type of charismatic leadership, while noting the significance of the personalism he developed. It assessed his leadership style as one exemplifying the apostle as well as teacher/scholar paradigms of charismatic leadership derived from Ephesians 4:11. It also pointed to some leadership traits embodied by the Polish pope: self-mastery, unswerving commitment to the empowerment of followers, tenacity, and

clarity of purpose. Last but not least, John Paul II may serve as a role model of Spirit-empowered leadership since he was an unrelenting servant leader who never shied away from taking responsibility for his followers and was willing to accept sacrifice for their sake. His person and ministry proves that servant leadership offers a promising solution to the issue of power that adversely affects charismatic leadership.



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Notes:

¹ At the end of the second millennium, John Paul II pointed to the “the emergence of a culture which denies solidarity and in many cases takes the form of a veritable ‘culture of death.’ This culture is actively fostered by powerful cultural, economic and political currents which encourage an idea of society excessively concerned with efficiency.” John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae* [The gospel of life], 1995, §12, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae.html (25 September 2022).

² John Paul II, *Homily for the Inauguration of the Pontificate*, 22 October 1978, §5, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1978/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19781022_inizio-pontificato.html (25 September 2022).

³ John Paul II, *Homily for the Inauguration of the Pontificate*, §5.

⁴ John Paul II, *Message for the VII World Youth Day*, 1991, §6, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/youth/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_24111991_vii-world-youth-day.html (25 September 2022).

⁵ Cf. Matt 4:19; Luke 5:4, 10.

⁶ John Paul II, “The Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity: Address to the Roman Curia,” *Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity Information Service* 59 (1985), 10.

⁷ Cf. Isa 53:2–4.

⁸ Cf. 2 Cor 2:19.

⁹ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. and trans. K. Tribe (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 377.

¹⁰ “The concept of ‘charisma’ (‘gift of grace’) is taken from ancient Christian terminology.” Weber, *Economy and Society*, 342.

- ¹¹ Amos Yong and Jonathan A. Anderson, *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 69.
- ¹² Lesslie Newbigin, *The Kingdom of God in the Life of the World*, in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Reader*, ed. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, 4th ed. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 9.
- ¹³ Jill M. Strange and Michael D. Munford, "The Origins of Vision: Charismatic Versus Ideological Leadership," *Leadership Quarterly* 13:4 (2002), 346. Cf. David C. McClelland, *Power: The Inner Experience* (New York: Irvington, 1975).
- ¹⁴ Robert J. House and Jane M. Howell, "Personality and Charismatic Leadership," *Leadership Quarterly* 3:2 (1992), 84.
- ¹⁵ James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975), 296.
- ¹⁶ Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2002), 27. "The essence of leadership, says Greenleaf, is the desire to serve one another and to serve something beyond ourselves, a higher purpose." Joseph Jaworski, *Synchronicity: The Inner Path of Leadership* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1996), 59.
- ¹⁷ Robert K. Greenleaf, *The Power of Servant Leadership*, ed. Larry C. Spears (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998), 104.
- ¹⁸ James McGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 142.
- ¹⁹ John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis* [The Redeemer of Man], 1979, §21, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis.html#%2451 (25 September 2022). The concept of self-mastery, or self-governance, was crucial in the development of Wojtyła's anthropological vision.
- ²⁰ Peter Block, *Stewardship: Choosing Service over Self-Interest* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2013), 16.
- ²¹ Larry C. Spears, "Characteristics of Servant Leaders," in *Servant Leadership in Action*, ed. K. Blanchard and R. Broadwell (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2018), 42. "What is important for a leader is that which makes him a leader. It is the needs of his people." Frank Herbert, *Dune* (London: Gollancz, 2007), 371.
- ²² Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), 140, 145.
- ²³ Wonsuk Ma, "Prophetic Servant: Ideology of Spirit-Empowered Leaders," *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology* 5:2 (Fall 2020), 231. The author convincingly argues that "[p]ower or empowerment can be seen as a capacity, a persevering or persistence in fulfilling God's mission, especially in the face of adversaries, difficulties and even persecution." Wonsuk Ma, "Isaiah," in *Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit*, eds. Trevor J. Burke and Keith Warrington (London: SPCK, 2014), 37.
- ²⁴ Cf. Isa 42:4.

²⁵ Cf. 2 Cor 4:7–11.

²⁶ Brien N. Smith, Ray V. Montagno, and Tatiana N. Kuzmenko, “Transformational and Servant Leadership: Content and Contextual Comparisons,” *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 10:4 (2004), 80.

²⁷ Burns, *Leadership*, 34.

²⁸ Cf. House and Howell, “Personality and Charismatic Leadership,” 84.

²⁹ “Participation represents a feature of the person itself, that innermost and homogeneous feature that determines that the person existing and acting together with others does so as a person. Participation is responsible for the fact that a person acting together with others performs an action and fulfills himself in it.” Karol Wojtyła, *The Acting Person*, trans. A. Potocki (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1979), 269.

³⁰ Boas Shamir, Robert J. House, and Michael B. Arthur, “Motivational Effects of Charismatic Leadership: A Self-Concept Based Theory,” *Organization Science* 4:4 (November 1993), 585.

³¹ Tad Szulc, *Pope John Paul II: The Biography* (New York: Pocket Books, 2003), 307.

³² Cf. Eph 4:11.

³³ John Paul II, *A Speech to Youth Gathered for the Appeal in Jasna Góra*, 18 June 1983, §5, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1983/june/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19830618_giovani-czestochowa.html (25 September 2022).

³⁴ Suenens played a key role in the growth of the Charismatic Movement within the Catholic church, coordinating the work on four Malines Documents, “whose publication meant to encourage, support, and defend the harmonious development of the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church.” Mateo Calisi, “The Future of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal,” in *Spirit-Empowered Christianity in the 21st Century*, ed. Vinson Synan (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2011), 74.

³⁵ John Paul II, *The Address to the Lay Movements and Ecclesial Communities at Pentecost*, 1998, n.p., <http://www.ccr.org.uk/old/champion.htm> (25 September 2022).

³⁶ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* [The Mission of the Redeemer], 1990, §25, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html (25 September 2022).

³⁷ John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, §21.

³⁸ John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem* [The Lord and Giver of Life], 1986, §2, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jpii_enc_18051986_dominum-et-vivificantem.html#%2412 (25 September 2022).

³⁹ John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §52, §60. Cf. Ps 104:30.

⁴⁰ John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §39.

⁴¹ John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §10, §22.

⁴² John Paul II, “Pentecost: God’s Gift of Divine Adoption,” in *The Spirit, Giver of Life and Love: A Catechesis on The Creed* (Boston, MA: Pauline Books & Media, 1996), 64.

⁴³ John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §20. Christians are called to imitate the Lord whose words and deeds “flow from that fullness of the Spirit which is in him, which fills his heart, pervades his own ‘I,’ inspires and enlivens his action from the depths.” John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §21.

⁴⁴ John Paul II, *The Holy Spirit as the Source of Communion*, 29 July 1998, §2, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1998/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_29071998.html (25 September 2022).

⁴⁵ John Paul II, “The Spirit: Life-Giving Source of New Love,” in *The Spirit, Giver of Life and Love*, 408.

⁴⁶ John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §52. Cf. Eph 2:18, where we hear that this bold access to the Father is granted “through Christ and in one Spirit.”

⁴⁷ John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, §59.

⁴⁸ John Paul II, *General Audience*, 9 September 1998, §2, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1998/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_09091998.html (25 September 2022).

⁴⁹ John Paul II, “The Spirit: Principle of Peace,” in *The Spirit, Giver of Life and Love*, 413.

⁵⁰ John Paul II, “Only the Holy Spirit Gives True Joy,” in *The Spirit, Giver of Life and Love*, 418.

⁵¹ John Paul II, “The Spirit: Source of All Ministry,” in *The Spirit, Giver of Life and Love*, 358–59.

JIMMY SWAGGART

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN SPIRIT-EMPOWERMENT AND HUMAN WEAKNESS

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Abstract

This article explores how Jimmy Swaggart fits the profile of a Spirit-empowered leader. It summarizes Swaggart's life and ministry, focusing on his calling, role as a defender of the faith, moral failure, and demise. The article then reflects on Swaggart's story within the context of Spirit-empowered leadership, exploring how Swaggart fits Lee Roy Martin's paradigm of a prophetic preacher while demonstrating various negative leadership traits. Stuck between the convictions of his calling and his weaknesses, Swaggart appears as a conflicted individual not immune from making serious errors. The article discusses this aspect of Swaggart's life to consider how his story contributes to Spirit-empowered leadership.

Introduction

Jimmy Swaggart was a monumental figure in the 1980s. David E Harrell, Jr., describes him as “probably the most widely known Protestant in the world.”¹ His ministry earned \$140 million yearly and had mission outposts in over fifty countries. His radio show aired on over 650 stations and his television program was in 143 countries.² His ministry sent out millions of record albums, video cassettes, and audiotapes each year. Swaggart's ministry received over one million letters each month, so much that the postal service assigned the ministry its own zip code. The 7,000-seat Family Worship Center brimmed over, and Swaggart was among the top twenty employers in Baton Rouge. In 1987, his 1,500 Bible college students contributed about \$3 million to the local economy.³ Swaggart's entire organization employed over 1000 people.⁴ Swaggart remains a significant figure even today, not only because his ministry was so huge or for his role in the downfall of Jim Bakker and Praise the Lord (PTL), but because of his own prostitute sex scandals. These scandals, which resulted in the collapse of much of

his global empire and the Assemblies of God (AG) defrocking him, anchor his life story within the Pentecostal community's memory.

Swaggart's story functions within the Pentecostal community as Kenneth J. Archer says all life stories function: "Life stories are a weaving together of personal, familial, and community identity, which gives meaning and purpose, moral guidance, and perspective, direction and anticipation, to persons-in-community."⁵ The community's natural reaction to Swaggart's moral failures might be to understand Swaggart's story so it functions like the stories of the false prophets or some of the Bible's other antagonists. Through such a lens, the "purpose, moral guidance, and perspective, direction, and anticipation" Swaggart's story provides is to warn "persons-in-community" against personal vice and moral failings. This article attempts to view Swaggart differently. Elizabeth Barnes believes that faith communities, and we can include Pentecostal communities, should act as Christ's household where the Spirit invites the lame, the outcast, the weak, and the infirm to participate in Christ's story. She argues that Christ's story is the place where personal stories of failure, faithlessness, hope, renewal, and resurrection become stories that challenge the community to see those who failed through a redemptive lens.⁶ Considering Barnes' comments, this article attempts to view Swaggart through a formative lens to consider how his story might contribute to Spirit-empowered leadership.

The article begins with a summary of Swaggart's life and ministry and then reflects on Swaggart's story within the context of Spirit-empowered leadership. The article explores how Swaggart fits Lee Roy Martin's paradigm of a prophetic preacher and Stephen G. Fogarty's typology of a "personalized charismatic leader," which contains many negative leadership traits like authoritarianism, narcissism, selfishness, and the need for power. Stuck between being a prophetic preacher and a personalized charismatic leader, Swaggart appears as a conflicted individual not immune from making serious errors. The article then discusses this aspect of Swaggart by examining the Spirit's work in his life. Overall, Swaggart is presented as a Spirit-empowered leader who struggled with his weaknesses while trying to enact what he believed was God's will.

Swaggart's Story

Swaggart's Calling

Jimmy Swaggart was born in 1935 in Ferriday, Louisiana. In her biography, Ann Seaman paints a vivid picture of Swaggart's conversion and Spirit Baptism occurring within poverty, hardship, infantile death, family problems, and personal issues. She writes, "God did not work His fingers gently underneath the little Swaggart child and

carefully lift him, shining, above his humble origins . . . the truth is that the God who chose Jimmy treated him no better than he treated His own son.” Still, there is present in Swaggart’s upbringing the realization, at least from other family members, that God had called him. For instance, shortly after his marriage to Frances Anderson, Swaggart’s mother said to her, “The Lord called Jimmy into the ministry when he was eight years old, and he will never be able to escape that call. One day he’s going to preach the Gospel.”⁷

Until Swaggart came to that point, he was a rebellious teenager whose life into adulthood spiraled out of control.⁸ He stole, gambled, and played pool, but despite living in poverty and being prepared to do anything to survive, he would not play piano in bars and clubs. Swaggart believed God had given him his musical ability and promised God he would not use his talents for the world. Seaman describes how Swaggart’s road out of poverty grew narrower: “The memories of being saved at eight, of being the first and youngest cousin to speak in tongues, of speaking the prophecies the Lord had given him at the age of nine, of being Nannie’s favorite and of praying at the log altar in back of his house, were fading.”⁹ Then in 1952, Swaggart’s newly-saved brother convinced him to attend a prayer meeting with him where Swaggart dedicated himself to God and was Spirit baptized.¹⁰

Swaggart was seventeen when he began the transition to becoming a Spirit-empowered leader. He married 15-year-old Frances Anderson shortly after becoming a Christian. They spent the early years of their marriage on the evangelistic trail. In 1968, they moved to Baton Rouge, where Swaggart founded Jimmy Swaggart Ministries. His break came in 1969 when he began broadcasting his radio show *The Camp Meeting Hour*. The station canceled the show after a few broadcasts because Swaggart could not afford the airtime, but the station continued to play the recordings and put out an appeal for funds. A mailbag appeared on the Swaggart family doorstep three days after. It contained 900 letters and \$3,000 to pay the bills.¹¹ At its height, the show aired on over 650 stations nationwide.¹² Thus began Swaggart’s ministerial ascent to leadership, culminating in him having one of the largest ministries in the world and eventually going to war against those he thought were destroying the American nation with their false beliefs and immoral actions.

Defender of the Faith

Swaggart believed that the family unit affected America’s strength and determined the country’s state and direction. This belief drove him to fight for the preservation of the family and attack everything he felt eroded traditional family values. Adultery, incest, pedophilia, easy divorce, the feminist movement, homosexuality, alternative lifestyles, pornography, abortion, and Christian and secular humanism all received a holy tongue-

lashing.¹³ Swaggart also believed Jim Bakker was harmful to America and argued that a link existed between Bakker's preaching and theology and the ideologies corroding American society. Swaggart condemned Bakker's core message, which he called "the gospel of self-esteem," as "man-made and man-oriented" and "totally unscriptural." He criticized Bakker for never speaking about sin, hell, judgment, and the need for salvation. Swaggart wrote, "Tragically, [those who] listen to these philosophies . . . end up on a road that leads nowhere. God have mercy on the souls of preachers who lead such astray. Especially Jim Bakker."¹⁴ Swaggart even referred to Bakker as a "cancer" in God's kingdom and described him as one of those "pretty little boys with their hair done and their nails done, who call themselves preachers."¹⁵

Swaggart's harsh criticism eventually seemed justified when in 1987, Bakker's wife, Tammy Faye, caused a minor scandal by publicly admitting she was drug dependent. A few days later, on March 19, Jim Bakker suddenly resigned from PTL just before the newspapers got wind of his sexual liaison with Jessica Hahn in 1980 and PTL's \$265,000 cover-up.¹⁶ Bakker admitted his guilt when the scandal broke in the news and handed control of PTL to Jerry Falwell. It turned out that Bakker had been more than sexually promiscuous because a court later imprisoned him for tax fraud.¹⁷

Swaggart's Moral Failure

Swaggart may have been a moral crusader leading the war against those he felt undermined the nation and the family, but the Spirit did not protect him from his own moral failings. These took place with prostitute Debra Murphree in a series of year-long meetings.¹⁸ Swaggart's liaisons with Murphree came to light due to a private investigation by fallen minister Marvin Gorman, who set up a photographer to capture images of Swaggart and Murphree entering a motel room.¹⁹ Gorman had been a prominent AG pastor in New Orleans whose church grew throughout the 1970s from 100 people to 5,000 with an annual budget of \$8 million. By the early 1980s, Gorman was in the running to be the next AG Superintendent. However, allegations of sexual infidelity with at least three women grew at the same rate as his ministry. On July 15, 1986, Swaggart and a few others confronted and exposed Gorman in what Gorman later referred to as a "brotherly lynch mob."²⁰ Swaggart insisted that the seriousness of the accusations meant that Gorman should abandon his ministry. Gorman resigned from his church, and the AG later expelled him. A local television documentary portrayed Gorman as an embezzler and sexual predator. Gorman declared bankruptcy with his career ruined.²¹

After Gorman failed to haggle a deal with Swaggart about the incriminating photos, he approached the AG and Swaggart's ministry elders. This revelation probably placed the AG in a tenuous situation with Swaggart's impending scandal coming not

long after the Bakkers' and Gorman's disgrace. Swaggart also contributed over \$10 million to the AG mission fund annually, which must have added to the tension.²² As things proceeded, Swaggart publicly confessed to an undisclosed moral failing at his church in Baton Rouge on February 21, 1988.²³ Swaggart's elders were the only ones present at the service that knew the sordid details behind the confession. The public were not made aware of the specifics of Swaggart's failure until after his confession when Murphree went public.

Swaggart stepped down and handed control of his ministry to the AG shortly after his confession. Ten days later, the Louisiana AG leadership barred Swaggart from preaching for three months and required him to undergo a two-year rehabilitation program. The national AG leadership thought Louisiana's ruling was too lenient. They overruled the Louisiana district and imposed a year-long ban on Swaggart preaching. The Louisiana leadership was adamant about its decision, and a three-week argument ensued within the AG. The national leadership eventually claimed superiority and banned Swaggart from preaching for a year and from distributing his recorded sermons. Swaggart defied the National Council's decision and abided by the Louisiana District's three-month suspension. He believed the National Council's decision was too severe and that staying out of the limelight for too long would adversely affect the college and ministry.²⁴

Swaggart's Demise

One iconic picture from Swaggart's confession shows him looking to heaven with tears streaming down. As part of the confession, Swaggart said, "I have sinned against you, my Lord, and I would ask your precious blood would wash and cleanse every stain until it is in the seas of God's forgiveness, never to be remembered again."²⁵ Many of the 7,500 attending his Family Worship Center sobbed while others called on Jesus. The *New York Times* described how praying in tongues undulated through the congregation, coming to a crescendo with Swaggart's final request for forgiveness. The altar became a "sobbing pastoral confession" as hundreds gathered around Swaggart at the end of the service. People fell to their knees and "appeared to grant his wish."²⁶

Just like Samson's final appeal to God (Judg 16:28–30), it appears God did listen to Swaggart's plea for forgiveness because he was still in a position for the Spirit to use him in leadership when he returned to the pulpit after serving his ban. Bauer reports that 5,000 people sat in his church. A year later, his television show reached 800,000 households, and donations were up to \$60 million for the year. Bauer links the resurgence of Swaggart's ministry after the scandal with the rhetorical integrity with which he confessed and how it aligned with the Christian narrative of sin, forgiveness, and redemption.²⁷ By comparison, in 1991, Swaggart did not follow that same

rhetorical pattern when the police arrested him for a traffic violation and found a prostitute in his car. Rather than confessing and asking for forgiveness, he informed his congregation that God told him to return to preaching and that “the Lord told me it’s flat none of your business.” According to Bauer, Swaggart’s non-Christian rhetoric subverted his followers’ earlier loyalty.²⁸ As a result, his followers seeped away, and his ministry showed no signs of returning to its glory days. It seems that the Spirit gave Swaggart a second chance in 1988, but Swaggart’s second scandal shows he chose not to take that chance. Like Samson, Swaggart is perhaps more interested in himself than the needs of his community or God’s will.²⁹

Swaggart’s Story in the Context of Spirit-empowered Leadership

The Prophetic Preacher

Despite his moral failings, my analysis of Swaggart’s life and ministry suggests that he sits in a prophetic paradigm of Spirit-empowered leadership. I make this link tentatively, recognizing that Swaggart’s behavior might compel some to see him more as a false prophet than an actual God-sent prophet. But viewing Swaggart within the prophetic paradigm enriches our understanding of him and contributes toward an understanding of Spirit-empowered leadership. Swaggart’s role as a prophetic preacher is primarily evident in his preaching. Martin notes that the prophetic preacher is animated and uses creative artistic delivery modes.³⁰ Stephen Pullum elaborates upon the vastness of Swaggart’s ministry in the mid-1980s and his public appeal describing how Swaggart mesmerized his audiences like a magician mesmerizing a school child.³¹ Pullum quotes ABC’s Steve Fox on *Good Morning America*: “He [Swaggart] is one of the most dramatic, entertaining, and powerful preachers on television.”

Prophetic preachers also proclaim a message that is God-inspired and given for a specific time and place. While the message is contextual and applicable to the present-day situation, the message is rooted in the Bible and has God at the center. Martin notes that “much of today’s preaching consists of reflection on current events, self-help advice, and inspirational anecdotes that paint the Christian faith as utilitarian and consumer oriented.” The prophetic preacher is concerned with more profound matters that may point to judgment or salvation, culture’s fallenness, the church’s error, and calling people back to God.³² These traits are evident in Swaggart’s preaching against the people and ideologies he felt were destroying Christianity and the American nation. His disapproval of the self-esteem gospel and pop psychology was grounded in his belief that they had become a substitute for the altar of God and the Holy Spirit’s power in the believer’s life. Swaggart thought the Bible was the only book of psychology that

anyone needed.³³ Psychology and its influence on Christian preaching were Satan's tools to destroy the family and the American nation. So, whether it was adultery or a watered-down pop-psychology gospel, these were things Swaggart could not ignore for Christianity's and the nation's sake. Martin writes, "Prophetic preaching challenges assumptions, interrupts apathetic slumber, exposes sin and hypocrisy, and requires repentance."³⁴ To quote one of Swaggart's ministry pamphlets: "The call of Brother Swaggart's life and the focus of the Ministry never veers from the path that God has ordained . . . to go and be a witness whenever and wherever God leads . . . sounding the clarion call for a return to righteousness."³⁵ Swaggart's rhetoric and its focus on themes like holiness and separation resonated with his Pentecostal audience's cultural needs and tastes and their belief that their movement was becoming too acculturated and compromised too much with modernity.³⁶

The "Personalized Charismatic Leader"

Despite Swaggart's strong prophetic message, he might fit Fogarty's typology of a "personalized charismatic leader." According to Fogarty, these types of leaders are authoritarian and narcissistic. They need power, serve their own interests, manipulate followers to get their way, demand followers identify with and support their leadership, and display low regard for legitimate channels of authority.³⁷ We see some of these traits in Swaggart. For instance, among the criticism Swaggart received for attacking Gorman and Bakker was that he was after their ministries.³⁸ In retrospect, it would not be surprising if this accusation were true. Also, when we view some of Swaggart's criticisms against Bakker, referring to him as cancer and a "pretty little boy," one wonders if these comments befitted a Christian representative in Swaggart's position. Then there is also the fact that after Swaggart's own moral failing with Murphee, he listened to the Louisiana leadership over the National Council arguably because it was more lenient and suited him and his ministry better. Lastly, in 1991 when the police arrested him for a traffic violation and found a prostitute in his car, Swaggart told his congregation that God told him to return to preaching and that "the Lord told me it's flat none of your business."

Fogarty suggests three safeguards to maximize the contributions of personalized charismatic leaders while minimizing negative consequences. First, Fogarty proposes an accountability structure is put in place that provides careful oversight. Second, Fogarty suggests that the leader has a support system that includes confidantes, mentors, and professional development opportunities. Third, the organization's leadership selection process should consist of various assessment tools to ensure the selection of the best leader.³⁹ In Swaggart's case, one wonders how effective these safeguards would be. For instance, developing a leader selection process and assessment tools would be impossible

because Swaggart founded the ministry himself. Creating an accountability structure would also be challenging. Because Swaggart demonstrates the traits of a personalized charismatic leader, one assumes he would resist the implementation of an accountability structure and circumvent its decisions if it were in place. Indeed, we see this in his interaction with the AG and how he paid little heed to the AG's decision and continued his ministry. So, having an accountability structure is only as effective as the willingness of the leader to adhere to it. Granted, the AG did defrock him, but even then, Swaggart continued his ministry and has been in ministry ever since. In some ways, Swaggart's decision to continue in ministry despite the AG's decision corresponds to the individualistic emphasis within Pentecostalism of following the Spirit's lead regardless. Harvey Cox perfectly sums up this trait by describing the interaction between early Pentecostals: "the more they fought, the more they multiplied."⁴⁰

Then there is Fogarty's suggestion of a support system. Considering Swaggart fits Fogarty's definition of a personalized charismatic leader, who would wish to be part of this type of leader's accountability and mentorship structure? Swaggart was one of the most prominent ministers in the world, had one of the largest Christian organizations, and ultimately had the power to make or break other ministers and their organizations. No one would voluntarily be part of that support system, considering a clash of opinions may get you blackballed or worse. The power of global leaders to make or break people's careers is not reserved only for Swaggart. According to Paula McGee, T. D. Jakes is an example of an extraordinarily powerful minister and CEO who has the power to make or break people's careers.⁴¹ In such situations, where ministerial superiors have the power to make or break people's livelihoods, being a "yes man" is the safest option.

Swaggart's Tipping Point

Swaggart's infidelity with Murphree, the later allegations he cruised the red-light district, battled a pornography obsession since his youth, and was a periodic backslider, reveal him to be a conflicted individual who was not immune from making serious errors.⁴² Drawing a parallel between Swaggart and the Spirit-empowered judges helps us think about this aspect of his life.⁴³ The Spirit-empowered judges were leaders in the book of Judges that God's Spirit empowered, energized, and equipped to enact God's purposes and free the Israelites from their oppressors. David Firth argues that the Spirit's presence brought an inner change in the judges only to the extent that the changes enabled them to fulfill God's purposes.⁴⁴ In none of the cases did the Spirit eliminate all the judge's weaknesses. For example, the Spirit moved Gideon from fear to faith, yet he remained hesitant and fearful.⁴⁵ Likewise, the Spirit did not override the judge's own will. For instance, the Spirit came upon Jephthah to free Israel, but the

Spirit did not stop him from making a foolish vow that ended with the terrible sacrifice of his daughter (Judg 11:32–35). Samson provides another example. Though the Spirit came upon him forcefully (Judg 14:6, 19; and 15:14), he continued to do his own thing and ended up a moral failure who never lived up to his potential. In some ways, Swaggart's life story personifies those of the Spirit-empowered judges in the way that, like the judges, the Spirit's presence in his life did not guarantee he would not pursue harmful behavior.⁴⁶

Diane J. Chandler speaks about a “tipping point” that involves “an incident, a thought, condition, intention, or event, which prompts unethical behavior.” According to her conceptual framework, the tipping point occurs when intrapersonal and interpersonal leadership dimensions, follower dimensions, and the situational context all come together to form the “perfect storm.” The storm results in unethical leadership behavior, which she defines as “the organizational process of leaders acting in a manner inconsistent with agreed upon standards of character, decency, and integrity, which blurs or violates clear, measurable, and legal standards, fostering constituent distrust because of personal self-interest.”⁴⁷ Did Swaggart have a tipping point? If so, what is the correlation between the tipping point and him being a prophetic preacher called by God?

One way to think about Swaggart's tipping point is to think of Gideon. The Spirit came upon Gideon, empowering him to fulfill God's purposes by leading the community and delivering them from their oppressors. After Gideon delivered Israel, he made an idolatrous garment from gold and jewels, which he put on display in Ophrah, and “all Israel went and played harlot with it” (Judg 8:22–35). The Spirit once clothed Gideon, but then Gideon covers himself with a garment of idolatry that draws attention to his power and wealth.⁴⁸ How does Gideon's story relate to Swaggart? Swaggart came from poverty, ended up with a worldwide ministry, and became wealthy. Like Gideon, it seems possible he made an idolatrous garment out of his success that tipped over into other areas of life and misled him. Roger Heuser and Byron D. Klaus say that when leaders become successful, it is easy for them to “embrace dispositions and practices that are not from God.”⁴⁹

Another way to understand the parallel between Gideon and Swaggart is to consider the possibility that the Spirit contributed to Swaggart's tipping point. As mentioned, the Spirit empowered Gideon to fulfill God's purposes by delivering the Israelites, yet he made an idolatrous garment that drew attention to his power and wealth. This leads Martin to suggest that Spirit enablement, if uncontrolled or misdirected, could produce a sense of overconfidence that fuels desires that oppose God's purposes.⁵⁰ Is there a correlation between Martin's suggestion and Chandler's concept of a tipping point? Did Spirit-enablement in Swaggart's life tip over into ungodly behavior? And if there is a correlation, how is God responsible for Gideon and

leaders like Swaggart going over their tipping point? Considering the biblical theme of Spirit disempowerment (or Spirit disablement) helps think about these questions. Spirit-disempowerment involves the Spirit empowering some people while disempowering others.⁵¹ King Saul serves as a specific example. One example from Saul's life is when he tries to apprehend and kill David. The Spirit comes upon Saul so forcibly that he prophesies to the point he undresses (1 Sam 19:20–24). For Saul, this experience of the Spirit is so debilitating that it is a negative experience. In some ways, Saul's life perfectly illustrates both Spirit enablement and Spirit disablement in the way that the Spirit enabled him to fulfill God's purposes and battle Israel's enemies but also disempowered him to fulfill God's purpose to protect David.

In the case of the judges, Merrill argues that the Spirit being upon someone gives the interpreter no clue about the Spirit's relationship with that person.⁵² Merrill's claim seems true of Swaggart and is probably true of most Christians. No one knows how the Spirit's activity in Swaggart's life brought him to a tipping point. But Swaggart certainly seems to have believed God was judging him by exposing his actions. Swaggart said in his confession, "God said to David 3,000 years ago, you have done this thing in secret, but I will do what I do openly before all of Israel. My sin was done in secret, and God has said to me, 'I will do what I do before the whole world.' Blessed be the name of the Lord."⁵³ This Bible reference comes from the Prophet Nathan, who delivered God's judgment to David after his sin with Bathsheba (2 Sam 12:7–15). In referencing this scripture, it is evident Swaggart believed God was judging him publicly. The question remains about how God works in the lives of Spirit-empowered leaders to elevate and bring them down. What Martin says about the judges applies to Swaggart and other Spirit-empowered leaders: "The giving of the Spirit, therefore, does not guarantee that the recipient will pursue righteousness and act always in accordance with God's purposes. God grants even a Spirit-empowered leader the freedom to pursue ruinous behavior that can lead to disastrous consequences."⁵⁴ Yet, God also reserves for himself the right to bring destructive behavior to light.

Human Weakness, Inner Change, and the Spirit

Although Swaggart preached and fought for what he believed was right, the same lusts that felled Gorman and Bakker caught up with him. The Apostle Paul's caution is pertinent, "Flee sexual immorality" (1 Cor 6:18a, NLT). As straightforward as this warning appears, it reveals a tension between knowing that one should flee and having the strength to flee. Elizabeth Barnes illuminates this tension by quoting William Faulkner, who said that the only things worth writing about are the "problems of the human heart in conflict with itself."⁵⁵ She elaborates upon Faulkner's comment and argues that conflict and brokenness provide the context where Christians experience

God.⁵⁶ Barnes maintains that God enables Christians to fulfill his purpose while also struggling with their weaknesses.⁵⁷ The analysis of Swaggart's life reveals him as an excellent example that amidst his inward struggles with his own heart, he still partnered with God to enact what he believed was God's will.

Still, Pentecostals and other Christian traditions believe that the Spirit works within believers, helping them with their inner struggles through the process of sanctification. Since Swaggart was a member of the AG, his experience of sanctification must, in some ways, have been consistent with how the AG understands the Spirit's role in the process. *Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective* provides a basic theological foundation for the denomination's sixteen fundamental truths. In this book, Stanley H. Horton and William W. Menzies describe how the Spirit nurtures Christ-like qualities in Christians and helps them live godly lifestyles (Gal 5:22–23), but Christians must cooperate with the Spirit to display these qualities (2 Cor 7:1; Heb 12:13–15).⁵⁸ Horton and Menzies' view is similar to Wonsuk Ma's opinion that the Spirit is not responsible for the failure of spiritual heroes. Instead, they are responsible for not receiving the Spirit's private and internal transformative work.⁵⁹

Heuser and Klaus note that it can be disastrous for the leader and the organization if the leader's interior life remains unexamined.⁶⁰ It is easy to assume this is the case with Swaggart, that he did not internally examine his life and cooperate with the Spirit as his AG colleagues suggested. However, in a ministry newsletter from 1997, Swaggart speaks about how he spent the last six years since the scandals seeking God to understand the root cause of his problem.⁶¹ Swaggart writes, "Countless times, I had sought the Lord earnestly, asking Him how I could have the help of the Holy Spirit in doing the Work of the Lord, but not have His help regarding victory over the world, the flesh, and the Devil. I knew in my heart that this was not the way it was supposed to be, but, at that time, I did not have the knowledge about how perpetual victory could be attained." Taking Swaggart's words at face value, it looks like he reflected on his interior life and wanted to cooperate with the Spirit, but he did not know how. The newsletter may be an attempt by Swaggart to excuse his behavior, but it could also reveal the possibility that he wanted help but did not know where to find it. At this point, the issue arises about how a support structure with a mixture of confidantes, mentoring relationships, and formal and informal training might have helped Swaggart.⁶² And like before, considering his leadership personality, we question how effective such a support system would have been.

Conclusion

After hearing Swaggart's story, it is easy seeing him as an antagonist whose behavior warns against sin and moral failings. However, doing so dismisses his story's

contribution toward Spirit-empowered leadership. In contrast, this article tried to reorientate and reinterpret Swaggart's story to see him as a Spirit-empowered leader who struggled with his own weaknesses from whom we have much to learn. Although he will be remembered for his failures, the hospitality of the faith community requires that it support those who struggle and offer them a home. For Swaggart and other leaders like him who fell despite the community believing they were Spirit-empowered, the challenge is to provide them with hospitality and recognize their roles as Spirit-empowered leaders who struggled to overcome their weaknesses. He may have failed, but perhaps he is still worthy of a place at the table as one who was Spirit-empowered. Perhaps the most prominent thing Swaggart provides the Pentecostal community is the opportunity to see just how vast God's grace is and how needful it is to live as a hospitable community.



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Notes:

¹ David E. Harrell, Jr., "Healers and Televangelists after World War 2," in *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, ed. Vinson Synan (Grand Rapids, MI: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 337.

² "History—Article—Swaggart, Jimmy," *Encyclopedia*, n.d., n.p., <https://online-infobase-com.oralroberts.idm.oclc.org/HRC/Search/Details/2?articleId=170081&q=jimmy%20Swaggart> (3 June 2020).

³ Ann Rowe Seaman, "Altar Ego: The Mystery of Jimmy Swaggart," (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1991), 204–5.

⁴ Stephen Jackson Pullum, "A Rhetorical Profile of Pentecostal Televangelists: Accounting for the Mass Appeal of Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggart, Kenneth Copeland, and Ernest Angle," (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1988), 110–11.

⁵ Kenneth J. Archer, "Pentecostal Theology as Story: Participating in God's Kingdom," in *The Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*, ed. Wolfgang Vondey (New York, NY: Routledge, 2020), 41.

⁶ Elizabeth Barnes, *The Story of Discipleship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995).

⁷ Seaman, "Altar Ego," 202.

⁸ Seaman, “Altar Ego,” 198.

⁹ Seaman, “Altar Ego,” 190–91.

¹⁰ Seaman, “Altar Ego,” 198.

¹¹ Seaman, “Altar Ego,” 204–5.

¹² “History—Article—Swaggart, Jimmy.”

¹³ Pullum, “A Rhetorical Profile of Pentecostal Televangelists,” 140.

¹⁴ John Wigger, *PTL: The Rise and Fall of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker’s Evangelical Empire* (Oxford, US: Oxford University Press, 2017), 251–52, citing Jimmy Swaggart, “The Gospel of Self-Esteem,” *The Evangelist*, March 1987, 4–9, and Jimmy Swaggart, “Christian Psychology,” *The Evangelist*, November 1986, 4–10.

¹⁵ Art Harris, “Jimmy Swaggart and the Snare of Sin,” *Washington Post*, February 25, 1988, n.p., <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1988/02/25/jimmy-swaggart-and-the-snare-of-sin/d07127d2-c412-4738-98d9-3b186d1b92f9/> (3 June 2020).

¹⁶ In December of 1980, 47-year-old Jim Bakker committed adultery with 21-year-old Jessica Hahn. Hahn’s representatives negotiated a \$265,000 deal with Bakker and PTL in 1985. They agreed to pay Hahn \$115,000 upfront and established a \$150,000 covert trust fund paid monthly to Hahn. In return, Hahn had to keep silent about Bakker’s indiscretion and could not sue for 20 years. See “History—Article—Jim Bakker, Scandals And,” *Encyclopedia*, n.d., n.p., <https://online-infobase-com.oralroberts.idm.oclc.org/HRC/Search/Details/2?articleId=206478&q=jim%20bakker> (3 June 2020).

¹⁷ A federal trial in October 1989 found Bakker guilty of twenty-four counts of defrauding the public of \$3.7 million via television, telephone, and mail. They sentenced him to forty-five years in prison and fined him \$500,000. He was released in 1994. During his incarceration his wife divorced him and married one of his best friends. See “History—Article—Jim Bakker, Scandals, And.”

¹⁸ Richard N. Ostling, Laura Claverie, and Barbara Dolan, “‘Now It’s Jimmy’s Turn:’ The Sins of Swaggart Send Another Shock through the World of TV Evangelism,” *TIME Magazine* 131:10 (March 7, 1988).

¹⁹ “The Fall of Jimmy Swaggart,” *People.com*, March 7, 1988, n.p., <https://people.com/archive/cover-story-the-fall-of-jimmy-swaggart-vol-29-no-9/> (3 June 2020).

²⁰ Harris, “Jimmy Swaggart and the Snare of Sin.”

²¹ See Wigger, *PTL: The Rise and Fall of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker’s Evangelical Empire*, 252–53; and Harris, “Jimmy Swaggart and the Snare of Sin.”

²² Ostling, et al., “Now It’s Jimmy’s Turn.”

²³ Susan Wise Bauer, “The Art of the Public Grovel: Sexual Scandal and the Rise of Public Confession,” (Ph.D. diss., The College of William and Mary, 2007), 208–9.

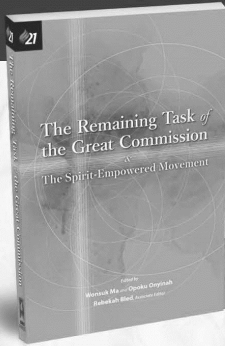
- ²⁴ George Childs Kohn, "Jimmy Swaggart, Sex Scandal And," *Encyclopedia*, 2001, n.p., <https://online-infobase-com.oralroberts.idm.oclc.org/HRC/LearningCenter/Details/2?articleId=205157#?> (3 June 2020).
- ²⁵ For the full transcript of Swaggart's apology sermon, see "Jimmy Swaggart—Apology Sermon (21 February 1988)," *American Rhetoric*, n.d., n.p., <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jswaggartapologysermon.html> (30 June 2019).
- ²⁶ Wayne King, "Swaggart Says He Has Sinned; Will Step Down," *The New York Times*, February 22, 1988, n.p., <https://www.nytimes.com/1988/02/22/us/swaggart-says-he-has-sinned-will-step-down.html> (3 June 2020).
- ²⁷ Bauer, *The Art of the Public Grovel*, 215–16.
- ²⁸ Bauer, *The Art of the Public Grovel*, 214–15.
- ²⁹ Lee Roy Martin, "Power to Save!: The Role of the Spirit of the Lord in the Book of Judges," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 16:2 (2008), 46–47.
- ³⁰ Lee Roy Martin, "Towards a Biblical Model of Pentecostal Prophetic Preaching," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 37:1 (2015), 8.
- ³¹ Pullum, "A Rhetorical Profile of Pentecostal Televangelists," 110.
- ³² Martin, "Towards a Biblical Model of Pentecostal Prophetic Preaching," 4–7.
- ³³ Pullum, "A Rhetorical Profile of Pentecostal Televangelists," 130–31.
- ³⁴ Martin, "Towards a Biblical Model of Pentecostal Prophetic Preaching," 7.
- ³⁵ Pullum, "A Rhetorical Profile of Pentecostal Televangelists," 113, citing Jimmy Swaggart Ministries (pamphlet), n.d., n.p.
- ³⁶ Edith L. Blumhofer, "Swaggart and the Pentecostal Ethos," *The Christian Century* 105:11, (April 6 1988), 333–34.
- ³⁷ Stephen G. Fogarty, "The Dark Side of Charismatic Leadership," *Australian Pentecostal Studies* 13 (2010), 10.
- ³⁸ Harris, "Jimmy Swaggart and the Snare of Sin."
- ³⁹ Fogarty, "Dark Side of Charismatic Leadership," 15–16.
- ⁴⁰ Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (London, UK: Cassell, 1996), 77.
- ⁴¹ According to Paula McGee, T. D. Jakes serves as a modern-day example of an extraordinarily powerful minister and CEO who has the power to make or break people's careers. See Paula McGee, "The Wal-Martization of African American Religion: T. D. Jakes and *Woman Thou Art Loosed*," (Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate University, 2012), 2–3.
- ⁴² Ostling et al, "Now It's Jimmy's Turn"; Harris, "Jimmy Swaggart and the Snare of Sin."

- ⁴³ Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Holy Spirit: In Biblical Teaching, through the Centuries, and Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013), 10, identifies several judges whom the Spirit empowered, whereas Martin, "Power to Save!" 32, identifies Othniel (Judg 3:7–11), Gideon (Judg 6–8), Jephthah (Judg 11–12), and Samson (Judg 13–16) as judges whom the Spirit of Yahweh empowered. There is a natural comparison between how the judges were empowered and the Pentecostal belief that the Spirit empowers people for service. See Allan H. Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 179.
- ⁴⁴ David Firth, "The Historical Books," in *A Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit*, eds. Trevor Burke and Keith Warrington (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 16.
- ⁴⁵ Martin, "Power to Save!" 30, 36–37.
- ⁴⁶ Martin, "Power to Save!" 40.
- ⁴⁷ Diane J. Chandler, "The Perfect Storm of Leaders' Unethical Behavior: A Conceptual Framework," *International Journal of Leadership Studies* 5:1 (2009), 71–73.
- ⁴⁸ Martin, "Power to Save!" 37.
- ⁴⁹ Roger Heuser and Byron Klaus, "Charismatic Leadership Theory: A Shadow Side Confessed," *Pneuma* 20:2 (1998), 166.
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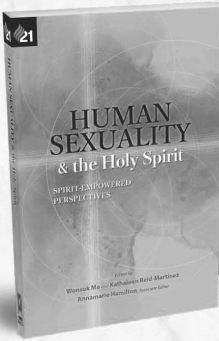
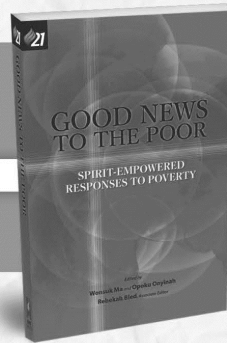
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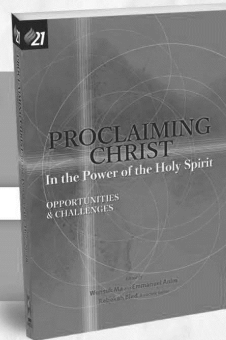
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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF REINHARD BONNKE'S CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP PARADIGM

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Abstract

The study of leadership has evolved over the years, focusing on different approaches. In the early nineteenth century, leadership study focused on the traits, skills, and behavioral and situational approaches of leaders. In recent years the focus has emphasized servant leadership, authenticity, and charisma. This article focuses on the charismatic leadership theory propounded by Max Weber. This article aims at analyzing the charismatic leadership style of evangelist Reinhard Bonnke. The article starts with a definition of leadership followed by an overview of charismatic leadership and then delves into the life of Bonnke with a biographical sketch of his life. The article brings to light Bonnke's influence, contributions to the Spirit-empowered Movement, and leadership style. It concludes with a summative assessment of this leadership paradigm.

Introduction

Leadership is a subject that has dominated the conversations of people from all cultures. There are perhaps as many definitions of leadership as there are schools of thought on the subject. Peter Northouse, in his book *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.¹ Leadership, therefore, involves influence. It entails influencing people towards a specific goal. This general definition of leadership needs to be differentiated from spiritual leadership. While leadership in general entails moving people toward a goal, spiritual leadership entails moving people towards God's agenda.² Spiritual leadership is perceived as being inspired by charismata (1 Cor 12; Eph 4:11–14).

The word "charisma" was first used to describe a special gift that certain individuals possess that gives them the capacity to do extraordinary things. Weber provided the most well-known definition of charisma as an extraordinary personality characteristic that gives a

person superhuman or exceptional powers and is reserved for a few, is of divine origin, and results in the person being treated as a leader.³ Northouse observes, “Charismatic leadership reflects the ability to inspire, to motivate, and to expect high performance from others based on strongly held core values.”⁴ Some of the main attributes of this kind of leadership include being visionary, inspirational, self-sacrificing, trustworthy, decisive, and performance-oriented.⁵

Overview of Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leadership derives its authority from charisma. In this leadership style, the bearer is always an individual leader whose charismatic qualities have been acknowledged as authentic by the followers.⁶ Weber observes further that in charismatic leadership, consent to lead is not sourced democratically and does not express the “will” of the followers, but rather their obligation to follow.⁷

In his lead article, Eric Newberg has identified five styles of charismatic leadership based on Weber’s analysis of charismatic leadership. We shall briefly mention them here to provide the framework for this discussion. The first paradigm Newberg identifies is the *apostolic paradigm*. This paradigm is premised on the belief that the apostolic gift is in operation in the body of Christ worldwide till the church reaches maturity (Eph 4:11–13). The role of the apostles is to “plant churches, oversee and strengthen churches, develop leaders, ordain elders and deacons, supervise and coordinate ministries, manage crises, and network with other leaders and their ministries.”

The second paradigm is the *prophetic paradigm*. Prophets speak the mind of God, imparting divine counsel and wisdom to God’s people. These prophets should be accountable to the apostles while working alongside them to carry out the movement’s mission. The third paradigm is the *healing evangelist* paradigm. This paradigm is an expression of the Pentecostal conception of the full gospel. The Pentecostal gospel entails a proclamation of the message, the kerygma, and the demonstration of the Spirit’s power in healing, deliverance, and working of miracles. The manifestation of the Spirit’s power through the preaching of the gospel serves to draw unbelievers to Christ.

The fourth paradigm is the *pastorpreneur*. The pastorpreneur, as Newberg observes, combines traditional functions of the pastoral office with entrepreneurial savvy and business acumen. The rise of the megachurch concept has occasioned this paradigm. Megachurches have redefined the traditional role of a pastor from that of a shepherd to that of an entrepreneur. The last paradigm is the *teacher/scholar* paradigm. This paradigm consists of two distinct approaches, the pragmatic teacher/scholar and the academic teacher/scholar.⁸

Reinhard Bonnke fits within the healing evangelist paradigm of charismatic leadership. His theological propositions always point to one locus, the urgent need to

spread the gospel.⁹ His ministry was characterized by claims of divine healing, deliverance, miracles, and salvation decisions.¹⁰ Vinson Synan, the renowned church historian who attended Bonnke's Harare crusade, authenticates these claims: "I saw the greatest miracles I have ever seen, blind people received sight; people walked out of wheelchairs. Everybody goes to the Bonnke crusades—Catholics, Muslims, people from all religions, and those with no religion."¹¹ Healing evangelists combine both evangelism and healing as key aspects of the full gospel.

Bonnke's theology and leadership style were shaped by his life experiences. A sketch of his biography is necessary here to give us a perspective on this charismatic leader's motivations and accomplishments.

Bonnke's Background

Reinhard Bonnke was born in Königsberg, West Germany, on April 19, 1940, into a family influenced by Pentecostalism. His grandfather is said to have been healed of rheumatism by a Pentecostal preacher and consequently won into Pentecostalism. His father, Herman Bonnke, served in the army during World War II before fully devoting himself to pastoral ministry after the war. The war separated his family. His father was taken as a prisoner of war by the British, while his mother and his siblings fled to Denmark. The family was later reunited after several years.

Reinhard Bonnke's mother, Meta Scheffler, had a profound spiritual influence on Bonnke's life during his early years. On his tenth birthday, a missionary visited his local church and talked about his work in foreign lands. Bonnke was profoundly impressed and heard another voice in his heart telling him he would preach the gospel in Africa one day.¹² Towards the end of 1951, Pfarer Kukula, a Finnish Pentecostal minister known for helping people to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, came to Bonnke's local church. During his preaching, Kukula explained the truth about Spirit baptism, and what followed was life-changing. Bonnke observes, "We had hardly knelt when the power of God began to pour into and over me. Joy unspeakable filled my heart, and I began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave me utterance."¹³

When Bonnke turned 14 years old, he joined his father every Sunday and attended the services in Krempa. It is here where another life-changing experience happened. Reinhard Bonnke was attending one of the services when he began to sense a strong urge to lay hands on a woman in the church sitting in the opposite row. He laid hands on her, and she got healed instantly.

When Reinhard Bonnke was 17 years old, he had a vision in which he saw Johannesburg marked on a map of Africa. He interpreted this vision to mean God was calling him to be a missionary to Africa. Bonnke took a two-year Bible school training course in Wales to prepare for his ministry. During this period, he had to trust God for

finances. After training in England, Bonnke returned to Germany in 1961, where he worked as an evangelist in northern Germany. Later he married Anni Sulzle, who was a choir director. The couple built up a congregation in Flensburg, a town bordering Denmark.

The call to Africa finally materialized in 1967 when he was commissioned by the Velberter Mission and sent to South Africa. There Bonnke was attached as a preacher to the Apostolic Faith Mission. Soon, however, Bonnke realized that the preacher he was supposed to work with was deeply influenced by apartheid and could not shake hands with his African brethren. This incident deeply shocked him. Later he sought permission to move to Lesotho with his family and begin his mission work there. In Lesotho, Bonnke preached at the bus station and gradually built up a congregation of fifty members. He also started a Bible correspondence course that attracted 50,000 enrollments. He also built up his small printing press, which printed an evangelistic magazine. These materials were distributed by cycling evangelists who sold them throughout Lesotho.

While in Maseru, the capital of Lesotho, Bonnke had a life-changing dream. One night he dreamed of seeing a map of Africa, and as he watched, he saw it being washed in red blood. The Holy Spirit told him that it was the blood of Jesus and whispered into his ear, "Africa shall be saved." As a result of this dream, Bonnke soon had to make radical decisions regarding his ministry in Lesotho and South Africa. His ambitious plans saw him break ties with the Velberter Mission and establish Christ for All Nations (CfaN). He launched his major evangelistic campaigns in large auditoriums and football stadiums. His impact and influence soon grew as he attracted huge crowds to his meetings. Soon the presidents and the poor of Africa became part of the audience in his evangelistic campaigns with claims of mighty manifestations of the Spirit.

Bonnke's Accomplishments

Spiritual leaders, in a way, function within a paradox, for God calls them to do something only he can do.¹⁴ Spiritual leaders cannot produce a spiritual change in people. It is the Spirit of God who works through these leaders to bring about spiritual transformation in people's lives. Bonnke has been described as the man who changed the face of Christianity in Africa.¹⁵ The raw statistics from CfaN indicate that during his nearly five decades of ministry in Africa, he led an estimated 80 million people to Christ. His crusades witnessed some of the largest gatherings ever witnessed in the continent of Africa. For instance, during his six-day crusade in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, CfaN claimed that over 1 million people signed the decision cards.¹⁶

Bonnke was a team player who partnered well with the local African churches to evangelize the continent. In every town where he held his campaigns, the local churches

came together to host him regardless of their denominational affiliation. Bonnke comments, “When it comes to the great and prior interest of evangelism, I work with people of many different spiritual affirmations. CfaN is an evangelist-servant to the churches wherever they labor and whatever their witness or emphasis.”¹⁷ Paul Gifford observes that “there is no doubt that a Bonnke crusade brings about enormous grassroots participation.”¹⁸ Such mobilization promoted ecumenical cooperation and reduced competition among the local pastors.

Bonnke promoted methods of mass evangelism designed to reach as many people as possible for Christ. Some of his methods have been adopted widely by many local evangelists and churches in their evangelistic activities. Crusade banners and posters are used to advertise evangelistic meetings. These evangelistic rallies essentially take the format of the Bonnke crusades. The ward-up or praise and worship session is followed by preaching and, finally, an “altar call” for salvation and prayer for personal needs. Bonnke’s books, particularly the new believers booklet *Now That You Are Saved*, have been used widely in local churches as a discipleship tool for new converts.

Bonnke was a very focused evangelist who also influenced the church in Africa to prioritize this divine task. Bill Wilson described him as “the greatest evangelist in the history of the Christian Church.”¹⁹

Bonnke wrote many inspirational books, mainly addressing the subjects of faith, salvation, and healing. These books have been widely circulated and have continued to influence many people’s lives after his death.

Bonnke’s Influence

Reinhard Bonnke had an enormous influence on the continent of Africa. He probably rivalled Billy Graham, but he did not get as much attention as the latter because his ministry was centered in Africa and not the US.²⁰ Bonnke spoke both to the poor and the presidents of Africa. In his first visit to Kenya in 1988, the then President, Daniel Moi, ordered the state-owned national television, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), to broadcast his crusade at Uhuru Park, the venue of the crusade. Its subsidiary radio station, KBC Radio, also aired the rally for those who could not access the TV broadcast. While it would be difficult to estimate how many people were reached with any degree of accuracy, one can say that millions watched this live service broadcasted on national TV and radio stations. President Moi himself attended with several of his cabinet ministers. It is reported that two cabinet ministers responded to the altar call for salvation. Leonard Khafafa, a local columnist, observes that Bonnke wielded tremendous soft power, which he used to improve humanity and advance Christianity.²¹ The Nigerian President described Bonnke’s death as a great loss to Nigeria in his tribute.²²

Bonnke's influence extended to the leadership of the Spirit-empowered Movement. Jack Hayford described him as "the most far-reaching, most dynamically penetrating international evangelist in the world."²³ We shall now discuss his contribution to this global movement.

Contribution to the Spirit-empowered Movement

Reinard Bonnke contributed to the Spirit-empowered Movement in very significant ways. Bonnke directly influenced the Pentecostalization of the African continent through mass Spirit baptism. In his rallies, Bonnke emphasized the baptism of the Holy Spirit and prayed for people to be filled with the Holy Spirit. As Daniel King has observed, when Bonnke prayed for people to be filled with the Spirit, "Suddenly, everyone in the stadium began to speak in tongues. It sounded like a mighty rushing wind as thousands of people lifted their voices in a heavenly language."²⁴ Such an outpouring of the Spirit changed the contours of Christianity in Africa.

Reinhard Bonnke also reminds us that miracles, signs, and wonders have their unique place in global missions. The miraculous manifestations in the form of healing and deliverance serve to witness to the world the uniqueness of Christ. These miracles draw people to Christ. Vinson Synan, commenting on the impact of miraculous manifestations in Bonnke's campaigns, observes, "Blind people received sight, people walked out of wheelchairs. Everybody goes to the Bonnke crusades—Catholics, Muslims, people from all religions, and those with no religion. There is nothing quite like that in the history of evangelism."²⁵ When the gospel is shared with the demonstrations of the Spirit's power, many people often take a step of faith toward Christ.²⁶ Bonnke used the claims of the Spirit's manifestation in signs and wonders to promote his evangelistic campaigns.

Leadership Style

Leadership styles and values vary from culture to culture. Africa is a collectivist society. In this society, relationships are highly cherished and nurtured. An effective leader in this context is one who is perceived as caring, inspirational, collaborative, and not excessively self-centered.²⁷ Leaders who act autonomously in sub-Saharan Africa are seen as ineffective.²⁸

Bonnke was an authentic, charismatic leader who invested in building relationships and networks across the continent and the denominational divide to achieve his vision of the salvation of Africa. He was concerned with the collective good of Africans, and his leadership style can therefore be viewed in one sense as a socialized charismatic leadership.

Socialized charismatic leaders transcend their interests for the sake of others.²⁹ Bonnke transcended his interests to pursue the vision of evangelizing Africa. In another sense, Bonnke's leadership can also be viewed as being revolutionary. Max Weber observes that a charismatic leader is always in some sense a "revolutionary, setting himself in conscious opposition to some established aspects of the society in which he works."³⁰ He went against the established order in the Apostolic Faith Mission, where he was initially posted, due to some apartheid behavior of the leader with whom he was supposed to work. Later on, Bonnke broke away from this mission to establish CfaN, propelling him to the global limelight regarding evangelizing Africa.

Bonnke was an empowering leader. Whenever he held his evangelistic crusade, the morning sessions usually focused on equipping the local ministers to be effective evangelists. Perhaps the most significant conference to address the need for equipping ministers was the Harare Fire conference held in the new Harare Conference Centre from 21–27 April 1996. This conference brought together 4,000 African evangelists from sixty countries. The conference aimed to draw together Africa's leading evangelists to devise a "common strategy to evangelize the great continent."³¹ This conference drew speakers from the US and Africa and covered topics focusing on evangelism and divine healing, Christian education, intercession, church planting, marriage counselling, etc.

Unlike some of his predecessors, Bonnke, as a missionary, did not have a condescending attitude towards Africans. He was a relational leader who genuinely loved Africans. As observed above, Bonnke defied the apartheid regime and associated himself with his African brothers and sisters in Christ. Bonnke viewed Africans as co-workers in the task of evangelizing Africa. He involved them in planning his meetings, giving them a sense of ownership. Robert MacManus and Gama Perrucci observe, "Traditional African followers expect to actively participate in the leadership process rather than simply being directed from the 'top.' Decisions are to be made collectively and in collaboration while building consensus."³² By building collaborative efforts with Africans, Bonnke won Africa's heart and soul.

Bonnke's Appeal

Vision for ministry has been defined as "having a clear mental image of a preferred future imparted by God to His chosen servants and based on an accurate understanding of God, self, and circumstances."³³ Reinhard Bonnke had a divinely imparted vision for the salvation of Africa, and he seems to have rightly understood his role in the fulfillment of this vision. His vision was inspirational, and his passion was contagious. Bonnke focused on this vision without detouring from start to finish. All his efforts, including innovative ways of evangelism, were aimed at realizing this vision. Bonnke's

sensitivity to and dependence on the Holy Spirit is remarkable. As a teenager, he sensed the call of God to be a missionary in Africa. He sacrificed a comfortable life in Germany and overcame all odds to come to Africa. The call took him to the southern tip of Africa, from where he envisioned the salvation of Africa.

Reinhard Bonnke lived a life of integrity and accountability. He avoided scandals that have plagued many charismatic leaders, particularly in Africa. He was accountable to a board that exercised oversight over his ministry. Bonnke also loved Africa. He came to stay when many of his contemporaries made stopovers in African cities. Nimi Wariboko captures this well: “Something that will strike you about Reinhard Bonnke and how he relates to Africa and how he works is that he believes in Africa, and he loves Africa.”³⁴ Africans loved him also and turned up in unprecedented numbers to hear him speak in his rallies.

Lessons for the Spirit-empowered Movement

The Spirit-empowered Movement has had global success unparalleled in the history of global movements. From Azusa Street and other spontaneous outpourings of the Spirit independent of Azusa’s influence, this movement has changed the face of global Christianity. However, the movement now faces the real challenge of modernity. Besides modernity, there is also a phenomenal advancement in social sciences and humanities, which has given us valuable insights into human behavior and interactions. These advancements are of great value in missional studies. The lesson here is that the Spirit-empowered Movement needs to leverage these insights but at the same time maintain its pneumacentric emphasis if it is going to keep the streams of revival flowing in the Global South. Means and methods will not solve the problem of the heart. It is only the Spirit of God who can bring spiritual regeneration and liberation.

The second lesson from Bonnke’s success is the need for an ecumenical approach to evangelism. The Spirit-empowered Movement must not rest on its laurels but seek meaningful partnerships across denominational barriers to carrying on with the divine task of fulfilling the Great Commission. Bonnke transcended denominational boundaries to embrace all Christians in winning Africa for Christ. Bonnke had a winning way of working with the local churches. He would bring together churches that would not normally come together in the mission. Gifford observes, for instance, that of the churches involved in the Nairobi crusade, there were at least fourteen Anglican churches.³⁵

The third lesson touches on leadership transition. Leaders must transition other leaders into their work in order to maintain continuity and effectiveness.³⁶ Perhaps the weakest link in the Spirit-empowered Movement is leadership transitions. Some leaders within this movement are more like the baobab tree in the African Savanah-Woodland

ecosystem. The giant tree suppresses all other vegetation around it to appear dominant. These leaders do not mentor other leaders, and in some cases, they suppress the spiritual gifts of others around them. In the event of their demise, their ministries are often plunged into a leadership crisis. Reinhard Bonnke identified his successor in the person of Daniel Kolenda and groomed him for succession nine years before his death. CfaN ministry continues under the leadership of this young evangelist. In Kenya, Bonnke raised evangelist Teresia Wairimu, who became an evangelist of national and international repute. Her meetings at Uhuru Park attracted crowds as large as Bonnke's earlier meetings.³⁷ Hundreds of people responded to the alter call in one of her meetings that Bonnke attended incognito. There were also claims of manifestations of miraculous healing in this gathering.³⁸ These two examples demonstrate how Bonnke multiplied himself and also prepared for transitions.

The fourth lesson is on the place of evangelism in the local church. Evangelism is key to the future growth of the Spirit-empowered Movement. Any movement that does not propagate itself is only a generation away from extinction. Bonnke was at the forefront of evangelistic campaigns across Africa. He challenged church leaders in the continent to focus also on evangelism. He writes, "Evangelism should be the thinking, the impetus behind every agenda if we want a church that is alive. When church boards downplay evangelism, how can they keep the church from stagnation and sterility?"³⁹ The Spirit-empowered Movement must carry on with the task of evangelism to maintain its spiritual vitality.

Critique of Bonnke

Financial integrity has been the waterloo of many charismatic leaders. Most of these ministries were founded by a charismatic leader who built them from scratch to heights of success. As the ministry grows, the leaders do not sometimes grow with it by setting up accountability systems. This often leads to abuse of church resources. The ministry resources are not often differentiated from personal resources leading to a situation where the ministry is run like a personal enterprise. Bonnke, however, set up a board that was responsible for the operations of his ministry. Although he was not always in agreement with the board concerning the ministry's strategic direction, the board was useful in holding him accountable. CfaN did not nevertheless make public its sources of income nor declare how much came in annually. It is notable, though, that Reinhard Bonnke disclosed that his annual operating budget stood at \$2.5 million in an interview with *The New York Times*.⁴⁰

Reinhard Bonnke has been criticized for his anti-intellectualism stand. Gifford observes that Bonnke regularly tells stories at the expense of "educated people."⁴¹ Bonnke writes, "The Bible puts me through! I am getting through to the throne of God! Alleluia! Experience is all! Don't listen to your head; listen to your heart."⁴²

Bonnke's position here is typical of the Pentecostal attitude towards intellectualism. Early Pentecostals did not put a premium on intellectual development, as noted by Newberg in his lead article. This position has changed with the emergence of Pentecostal scholarship and the establishment of seminaries such as Oral Roberts University and Regent University. Through association with Vinson Synan, Bonnke seems to have undergone some conversion. Synan helped him to see the need to document the number of conversions in his ministry.⁴³ Bonnke later acknowledged that Synan helped him see the "bigger picture" of God's doing in the Charismatic Movement.⁴⁴

Healing is one of the key features of Reinhard Bonnke's crusades across the continent of Africa. His evangelistic crusades often end with a session of praying for the sick to recover. Divine healing is the primary attraction of Pentecostalism worldwide, and consequently, Pentecostalism can be referred to as a healing religion.⁴⁵ Divine healing has addressed existential spiritual needs in African cosmology, contributing to its rapid growth. The manifestation of the Spirit's power portrays Jesus as the most powerful healer, one who can win a competition with the gods of traditional religions through a display of superior healing power.⁴⁶ While divine healing has met felt needs and drawn many people to Christianity, it has been overemphasized at the expense of the sovereignty of God. Yes, the God who saves is also concerned about the well-being of individuals, but he also uses pain, hardships, and even sickness sometimes to deepen our faith. The Apostle Paul, for instance, despite operating in the charisma of healing, had a thorn in the flesh (probably an ailment), which taught him to stay humble and dependent on the grace of God (2 Cor 12:7–10).

Summative Assessment

Jan Willen observes, "Charisma is, by definition, unstable."⁴⁷ The hero wins his authority by personal power and as soon as the power fades the hero also fades.⁴⁸ This challenge is more applicable to the healing evangelist paradigm, especially during the time of transition. Many healing evangelists do not prepare well for the continuity of their ministries, and in the event of their demise, their ministries are plunged into crisis. It is, therefore, necessary for the healing evangelist to build an egalitarian value system in his followers to safeguard his charisma.⁴⁹

Another challenge of the healing evangelist leadership paradigm is pride. Oswald Sanders observes that "personality cults have often developed around great spiritual leaders."⁵⁰ While this danger faces all spiritual leaders, it is perhaps more likely among the healing evangelist paradigm. This is so because of the healing charisma that tends to make them very popular. The working of miracles has tended to attract a lot of attention even from biblical times. Many people followed Christ for his miracles and

not necessarily because they believed in him (John 6:26). This popularity, if not mingled with humility, can often lead to destructive behaviors such as pride and cultic personalities.

Healing evangelists have another challenge—accountability. A number of these leaders run their ministries without effective accountability structures. This makes them very susceptible to manipulating people and distortion of Scripture for personal gain. Some of them have anti-intellectual tendencies because of their charisma. They do not consider seminary training beneficial as they claim to be already “anointed” for ministry. Without a firm biblical foundation, such excesses are inevitable.

Healing evangelists, therefore, should work under some accountability system in local churches or under effective boards that can hold them accountable for their teachings and lifestyles. These safeguards will keep the leaders accountable and provide for the longevity of their organizations.



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S. B. J. OSCHOFFA (1909–85)

THE MIRACLE OF A SHARED LIFE

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Abstract

In the twentieth century, God raised many faith giants among Africans for Africans and the whole world. These faith heroes contributed immensely to the decolonization, indigenization, and expansion of Christianity in Africa and the Global South. Among these highly spiritually invested Africans was a Beninese-Nigerian carpenter, Samuel Biléou Joseph Oschoffa (1909–1985). He was educated in the Methodist tradition before the Lord called him to lead one of the most significant African prophetic-charismatic indigenous movements, the Celestial Church of Christ. This article explores his life, ministerial legacies, and theology.

Introduction

For many decades, the role and the contributions of African faith heroes in decolonizing, indigenizing, and expanding Christianity in Africa and the Global South have been highly phenomenal. Many of these Christian figures were so incredibly spiritually gifted and endowed that they lived a shared life both within and outside of their African territories. Some of their legacies live on today. In the twentieth century, God raised many spiritual giants among the Africans for Africans and the rest of the world who contributed immensely to the Africanization and indigenization of Christianity in Africa. Among these spiritually invested Africans was the Beninese-Nigerian carpenter, Samuel Biléou Joseph Oschoffa, a prophet and an apostle who founded and led one of the most significant African prophetic-charismatic indigenous movements, the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC),¹ for thirty-eight years. Born on October 11, 1909, and died September 10, 1985, he was educated in the Methodist tradition before the Lord called him into the ministry. His ministry's impact and influence blazed the length and breadth of Africa, and the miracles of his shared life transcended geo-ethnic boundaries and nationalities. Although his ministry received

heavy criticism, particularly concerning doctrinal principles, his place cannot be contested in the global Spirit-empowered charismatic, academic, and ecclesial community as a highly charismatic and spiritually gifted leader.

For that reason, this article explores the life, ministry, and the legacies of S. B. J. Oschoffa, who was widely known and respected as a spiritual force due to his spontaneous and iconic miraculous life and ministry.² In this essay, I critically examine his theological and cosmological views, situating his theology within the synthesis of a biblical belief, Christian liturgical traditions, and elements from the Yoruba cultural milieu and worldview.³

Life and Memoirs

Samuel Biléou Joseph Oschoffa was born in Dahomey (now the Republic of Benin) into a polygamous family after the rest of his siblings died either as infants or before their teen years. He was named Samuel Biléou at birth and later adopted his father's name, Joseph. Christened after the biblical Samuel at birth because like Hannah in the Bible, his father (who had suffered the loss of all his children, but one female) specially requested him of the Lord because according to the African tradition, he needed a son as an heir to propagate the family's name and lineage. His name Biléou (or Bilewu), a derivative of a Yoruba epistemological view and in Yoruba language, *Bi 'le aiye wu ko gbe, sugbon mo mo wipe mo ti toro re lodo Olorun*, means: "If the world pleases the child let him stay, but I know I've asked God for you."⁴ According to Samuel Biléou, his father's name Oshoffa, which later became a household name, was obtained from a Yoruba aphorism '*Oju ki ise Ofà ti Ota le ta bani ka subu*', or, in short, '*Oju ko sofa*', which was shortened further to OSOFA', or Oshoffa in the Yoruba language (Anglicized Oschoffa). It means in English, "The human eye is not a missile that an enemy can fire at one to make one fall."⁵ Thus, his full name, Samuel Biléou Joseph Oschoffa.

In fulfilment of the covenant his father had with God that if God gave him a son, he would make him serve the Lord, and the fact that he had no access to Western education, the young Samuel Oschoffa was enrolled in the Methodist catechetical school. However, after some years, the new bishop, who was posted from London at the time, ordered the students to participate in making bricks for a new and modern school building, but because they all refused, Oschoffa and his co-catechists were expelled. This made him end up as an apprentice in his father's professional carpentry business. The young Oschoffa soon became proficient and prominent in the business and became a household name due to his dexterity and professionalism in wood planing, house roofing, and working with ebony, which he purchased from his friends.⁶

Shortly after his father's death on June 15, 1939, Oschoffa found passion for another brand of business, buying and supplying lumber and ebony logs to carpenters and other traders. As this type of business seemed more lucrative than his carpentry job, he pressed deeper into the forest in search of ebony trees. As an avid lover of God's Word, he usually had his Bible with him and equally loved to pray much. Thus, he continued this lucrative trade until one such trip in May 1947 during the floods.⁷

Founding of the Celestial Church of Christ

Unlike the other Aladura churches that assimilated some features from the mainline churches from which they severed, the CCC does not represent an institutional break-away from any already existing mission church, but was founded on September 29, 1947, through a vision from heaven as claimed by its founder.⁸ The vision came earlier, on May 23 of the same year, while Oschoffa was on one of his trade trips collecting ebony to sell to his friends and traders and was marooned in the forest near Toffin, a village in Porto Novo in the Republic of Benin. In his personal testimony as recorded in the CCC's constitution, Oschoffa claimed, "On the 23rd of May 1947, the day of the eclipse of the sun,⁹ as I was praying in the forest on this trip, I heard a voice and could not open my eyes. The voice I heard was 'LULI,' and the same voice told me, 'This means The Grace of Jesus Christ.'"¹⁰ It was this visional event and other subsequent revelational experiences where Oschoffa saw different animals and creatures that spawned the movement, among which were a white monkey with wings, a multicolored bird with yellow legs that resembled a peacock, and a snake about thirty centimeters long.¹¹ Although the vision of these creatures is significant to the worldview of the CCC as they bear key theological import on how the CCC views the world as described by the founder, these visional experiences have generated various theological controversies and have received mixed reactions from other Christian blocks, particularly Pentecostals.

While some groups see this as a demonic event that lacks textual basis, others construed it as Oschoffa's phase of liminality or rites of passage into the occultic world, associating his miracles and exploits in ministry with witchcraft and some strange and esoteric forces based on the event. Underscoring some of the views and reactions to this visional and supernatural experience, Akinwumi muses as follows:

The monkey could not be described as an angel of God because the biblical description of angels of God portrays them as having human features and with two wings with which they fly. Neither could it be described as a bat since bats are not so large and have no tails. The multi-colored bird could not be associated with any divinity because the dove is

the only bird said to be the bearer of good tidings. Viewed from an African perspective, strange birds which are so lovely and sing beautifully are associated with witchcraft. While Oschoffa was still contemplating the meaning of all this and the power behind such an event his attention was drawn to a noise from the ground. He looked down and saw a short snake, about thirty centimeters long. The people of Dahomey (Republic of Benin) at that time considered snakes sacred creatures and it was an abomination or taboo for a Beninese (Dahomean) to kill a snake either intentionally or without any justifiable cause. Snake worship among the Dahomeans was widely accepted and the *Dangbe* god of Porto Novo was a python god.¹²

While this statement represents some of the dissenting views characteristic of the claims that Oschoffa was diabolical and phony, Oschoffa, in his later years, clarified the significance of the creatures he encountered in his visions as he claimed to have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit.¹³ According to him, each of the animals portrays a different category of human characteristics and behaviors among which the church will dwell, explaining why the vision cannot and should not be taken literally, but metaphorically and symbolically. Therefore, it is credible to argue that there is a congruence between Oschoffa's supernatural experiences and other visions in the Bible relating to animals and/or living creatures. The visions of the prophet Ezekiel (Ezek 17), Zechariah (Zech 1:6), and the apostle John in the book of Revelation (Rev 13) all come to mind. It is safe to say that none of these visions bears any literal, but rather metaphorical and symbolic, interpretation. Referencing Oschoffa's and William Wade Harris' experiences, Cornelius Olowola, in his study of African Independent Churches (AIC), contends that the belief in visions and revelations has always been at the center of the doctrinal practices of independent African churches. Many of their leaders claim to have visions or revelations.¹⁴ It was these experiences that heralded Oschoffa's commission into the ministry.

The “Divine Order”

On September 29, 1947, while fellowshiping with some individuals in his house, Oschoffa claimed to have seen a mysterious and divine appearance where a winged angel bathed in an intense light stood before him.¹⁵ The angel, according to Oschoffa, brought a word from God to Oschoffa regarding his commission and the assignment of the mission he was called to lead. The angel conveyed the message to Oschoffa in the Egun language and interpreted it in English as follows:

It is the wish of God to send you on an errand of preaching to the world.¹⁶ Many nominal Christians there are who, when confronted by difficulties and problems of this world, they run after fetish priests and other powers of darkness for all kinds of assistance. Consequently, on their death, they cannot see Christ because, by their action, Satan has left his spiritual mark on them. To assist you in your work so that men may listen to and follow you, miraculous work of Holy divine healing will be carried out by you in the name of Jesus Christ. These works of divine healing and God's spiritual mark on you will testify to the fact God sent you.¹⁷

This message encapsulated what would later be interpreted as both the vision and mission statements of the CCC, in which it defined all its missional activities. It is perhaps one of the things that distinguishes the CCC from any connection with occultism as claimed by its critics. Although people tend to associate the movement with occultism and fetishism, it maintains its self-image as a Christian church *sui generis* and vehemently refuses any connecting nexus with traditional religions and praxis.¹⁸ Reacting and underscoring the significance of the message of the "divine order" as delivered by the angel, Adogame maintains that the vision revolves around the mission against "Satan," "fetish priests," and other "powers of darkness" in the world.¹⁹ Not only that, he also believes that the vision shows that God's benevolent power as portrayed in the message was to be used to counter the power of Satan and other mischievous forces.²⁰ More significantly, the events of May 23 and September 29 both helped establish the prophetic office of Oschoffa, as people began to regard him as a prophet after relating the encounter to them.

Eric N. Newberg, who has done an extensive study on Christianity in Africa, is probably one of the few scholars in the global Charismatic academic and ecclesial guild who avidly testified to the prophetic office of the anointed man of God. Noting his role as one of the leading figures in Aladura movements, Newberg surmises, "An example of a leader of an Aladura movement would be Samuel Biléou Joseph Oschoffa (1909–1985), the prophet-founder of the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) in Nigeria in 1947."²¹ Newberg maintains that Oschoffa had visions in which God showed him how to organize a purified church based on a distinct liturgy, organizational structure, and code of rigorous ethical and doctrinal principles.²² It is Newberg's insightful assertion that possibly helps to simplify both the agenda of the movement as well as Oschoffa's commission to lead a purified church and/or an organized structure. It equally helps to assert his place as a prophet who was commissioned to speak light into the darkness of his own generation. His generation was one of the darkest in the history of Christianity, particularly when Christianity was just mushrooming on the continent of Africa. He is probably one of the people Philip Jenkins would regard as "prophets of Africa."²³

Regarding the name of the denomination, the naming of the movement was believed to have “come down from Heaven by divine revelation” through one Alexander Yanga, who was at the time undergoing spiritual healing under Oschoffa.²⁴ It was reported that Yanga experienced a seven-day-long trance. At the end of the seven days, he wrote the name originally in French as *Le Christianism Céleste*. It was later rendered as *Eglise du Christianisme Céleste*, translated in English as “Celestial Church of Christ.”²⁵ Just as the name of the church was given through a different prophet, many other important components of the church, such as mode of worship, dress code, and hymnodies, were received through different prophets within the fold. This attests to the highly charismatic and democratic leadership acumen of Oschoffa. According to Newberg, *socialized* charismatic leadership is leadership that (a) is based on egalitarian behavior, (b) serves collective interests and is not driven by self-interest of the leader, and (c) develops and empowers others.²⁶ Oschoffa can be classified as one of the few Charismatic leaders who lived the most shared life, building, raising, and empowering other leaders. Rosalind I. J. Hackett, however, has argued that while he was alive the organization of the CCC was ostensibly structured around him, making him the centralized authority, ratifying all major decisions.²⁷ However, eyewitness accounts and the fact that the organization outlived him has attested to the fact that Oschoffa rarely made any major decisions with regard to the organization without consulting with his leaders, particularly the board of trustees. In fact, every CCC parish had and still has a parochial committee that is vested with the responsibilities of making critical decisions in each local assembly.

A Man of Many Miracles

One of the major characteristics of Oschoffa’s ministry was his healing miracles. He was regarded as one of the healing apostles of the twentieth century. In his thirty-eight years of earthly ministry, it was reported that God through him brought fourteen people, including many who have been clinically certified dead, back to life. His healing ministry took effect right in the forest where he had the encounter that turned his life around. During his sojourn in the forest, he was reported to have been transformed through the supernatural encounters with angels and a series of visional experiences. He became transformed and highly spiritually empowered. On the day of the eclipse of the sun, Oschoffa equipped himself with his personal effects, including food and drinking water, in search of ebony trees. Having purchased a personal canoe for his business trips, he hired a paddler since he did not know how to paddle. Arriving at the destination, he asked the paddler to stand on shore while he went into the forest in search of the trees he wanted. While there he noticed a change in the weather as the sky suddenly turned dark and he became terrified. He quickly opened his Bible and read some Psalms in

meditation and prayer. He then realized that the phenomenon was an eclipse of the sun.²⁸

While he knelt to pray, he claimed to have seen many strange visions and heard many strange voices. He then retreated to the location of the canoe. As what will mark his first miracle, he found his paddler writhing in severe pain and he speedily laid hands on him, and he was healed. The paddler later confessed to stealing part of Oschoffa's stew. Right after that he got lost in the forest because his paddler, who now saw him as strange and mysterious, ran away and left him. He was stranded in the woods for three months. During the whole time he experienced different stages of encounters and manifestations until he finally was able to find his way out. After his reappearance in the city, he heard a sound of mourning and wailing in a close by village and decided to visit and find out what was going on with his former neighbor and now his host, Yusufu. On reaching the scene, Oschoffa detailed what happened in one of his sermons as follows: "Here I found a Methodist young man called KUDIHO at the point of death who was reported to have been very ill for a long time. I touched him and Jesus raised him up. He is alive today and so are his children, all in Agange."²⁹

Following this event there was another report of Oschoffa bringing his nephew, Emmanuel Mawunyon, back to life after being confirmed dead. These earliest miracles spawned many public meetings and several evangelistic outreaches where many miraculous activities of healing, renunciation of occultic membership, and testimonies of deliverance were recorded. Another mysterious miracle that was ascribed to Oschoffa was the story of a sea that overflowed its banks to engulf the town at Grandpop in Porto Novo. It was reported that God through Oschoffa performed a miracle by making the sea to ebb back to its original spot. There were countless numbers of other miracles until Oschoffa's name became synonymous with miracles. Akinwumi aptly echoed this: "Oschoffa's name became synonymous with miraculous healings and people in Porto Novo and beyond anxiously awaited the day he would visit them."³⁰ His healing ministry probably explains why he had multitudes of followers within a few years of ministry. While some castigated and discredited the authenticity of his miracles, some who witnessed his miracles firsthand testified to the veracity of those miracles as they were performed in the name of Jesus. Akinwumi explained that the CCC grew by leaps and bounds after the formal proclamation of the Holy Spirit's orders through Alexander Yanga. Adogame shares the same view about Oschoffa's speedy popularity and growth of the church. Speaking on the popularity of Oschoffa's ministry garnered within a short period of time, Adogame explains that it was the nature of its growth and proliferation in Nigeria afterwards that brought the church the popularity it has enjoyed today.³¹

Following Max Weber's theory, Newberg surmises that charismatic leadership is understood as flowing from charisma or giftedness, which is attributed to the leader by

his or her followers.³² In light of this assertion, he goes further to highlight five paradigms of Spirit-empowered leadership adapted from Ephesians 4:11: apostle, prophet, healing evangelist, pastor-preneur, and teacher/scholar.³³ He uses this theory as a test case to assess all the five offices. Concerning the apostle paradigm, he begins by stating that there is no universal agreement in Spirit-empowered movements concerning the apostle as a position in contemporary leadership. However, quoting Michael Brown, he believes “if one takes the term apostle in its general sense as an emissary of the gospel, one can affirm the existence of modern-day apostles.”³⁴ In his assessment of the healing evangelist paradigm, he references Allan Anderson, “The main attraction of Pentecostalism in the majority world is still the emphasis on healing and deliverance from evil.”³⁵ However, he argues, God can use suffering to grow faith in his people, therefore emphasizing a balanced theology.

In his assessment of the prophet paradigm, Newberg begins by asking whether there are modern-day prophets. In answering this question, he asserts that the contemporary paradigm of prophets and prophecy is based upon the biblical assumption that “no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s interpretation; but men spoke from God as they are carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:20–21).”³⁶ While acknowledging this view, he cautions against the temptation of leaders asserting infallibility and unquestionability to themselves and thus advises that no leader should be allowed to operate outside the authority and accountability of the church as whole.³⁷ Thus, in light of Weber’s theory that charismatic leadership thrives on the basis of charisma and the giftedness their followers attribute to them, and Newberg’s approach of biblically contextualized leadership paradigms, particularly within the global Spirit-empowered community, it is safe to say that Oschoffa fits seamlessly into the categories of apostle, healing evangelist, and prophetic paradigms. He also functioned as a pastorpreneur who led a movement to a global reckoning. He enjoyed the grace and anointing of God, as well as the giftedness and the charisma acknowledged by his followers. However, the fact that many of his earliest followers ascribed infallibility and unquestionability to him should be critically assessed as this has led to many heresies and malpractices in the fold. Without doubt he was used by God, but his words, visions, and actions were not allowed to be subject to biblical scrutiny, particularly because he was never accused of or caught in any scandals but polygamy.

The CCC Belief System and Ritual Cosmos³⁸

As has been stated, CCC’s cosmological and theological views, as well as its ritual praxis, give us a window into the theological views of its founder. Adogame contends that a large part of the CCC’s hymnodies aptly echoed some traditional Yoruba aphorism and cosmology.³⁹ In another study, Adogame identified continuities and discontinuities

between the CCC and the Yoruba traditional religion and cultural matrix. However, he argues that the CCC maintains its self-image as a Christian church *sui generis* and vehemently refutes any connection with traditional religious thought and praxis.⁴⁰ According to him, CCC cosmology is a synthesis of biblical belief, Christian liturgical tradition, and elements from the Yoruba cultural milieu and worldview.⁴¹ Therefore one may gain appreciation for the CCC or Oschoffa's cosmological and theological views from Adogame's point of view. And of course, the CCC has been established from its inception as a holiness church with strict regulation against immorality and idolatry. Adogame explains what one could infer from its affinity with its African origin:

It has been shown that Yoruba cosmology influenced the CCC in the construction and shaping of their sacred space. Both worldviews share the belief in the reality of benevolent and malevolent paranormal forces. The attitudes towards these forces remain essentially the same. What has changed in the case of the CCC is the transformation of what constitutes the benevolent powers on the one hand, and the medium of control of the evil forces on the other. CCC gains access to heaven through prayers, prophecy, visions and dreams, and elaborate rituals within the various sacred space as opposed to divination and sacrifice in Yoruba cultural matrix.⁴²

Meanwhile a lot of people who cannot take the painstaking route that Adogame took to understand the ritual and spatial conceptions of the CCC have not been sympathetic towards the theological and liturgical configuration of the church. Underscoring the major components (visions and revelations, prophecies, worship, and prayer) of the Aladura and/or AICs in general, Olowola maintains, "There is no doubt that the independent churches have the idea of Christ as the Son of God, the Saviour of the world and the coming one."⁴³ Furthermore, he declares that the African independent churches have a high view of the Bible. The centrality of the Bible is striking, as earnest Bible study is one of the characteristics of the group.⁴⁴ With regard to the growth and expansion of Aladura churches, particularly the CCC with more than 20 million worshippers worldwide, Olowola believes that the reasons given for the growth are that these churches' goal was to bring Africans to Christ via media that is understandable to Africans and more relevant messages that meet the needs of Africans. Hence, they have extensive outreach through healing ministries.⁴⁵

Conclusion

The ministry of Samuel Biléou Joseph Oschoffa has been considered as one of faithful service to God, liberation of the ordinary people that were overly oppressed by sin and

evil forces, and indigenizing and ensuring that the African peoples understand and worship God in their own way. His theology synthesizes biblical belief, Christian liturgical tradition, and elements from African worldviews, helping Africans to understand and worship God based on their cultural worldview and perspectives. The CCC was probably one of the first few churches that introduced and synthesized elements from African culture like drums and ecstatic dancing into church services and Christian activities. Oschoffa's leadership paradigm was highly charismatic and one of a shared life among humanity. He was highly spiritual and ably gifted by God, a threat to the kingdom of darkness and a beacon of hope to the hopeless. Thirty-seven years after his death, the CCC is still growing in leaps and bounds, liberating and setting the bound free across all the continents of the world with about 20 million worshippers worldwide.



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Notes:

¹ The Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) represents one of the indigenous religious initiatives in West Africa popularly described as the Aladura movement. Other churches that fall within this category are the Cherubim and Seraphim (C & S), Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), Church of the Lord—Aladura (CLA), Evangelical Church of Yahweh (ECY), Church of the Seven Seals of God (CSSG), and their various appendages and splinter formations. These churches are so-called due to the special emphasis they placed on prayer, healing, and other charismatic features like dreams, visions, prophecy, and their pattern of belief in ritual structure. See Afe Adogame, “Doing Things with Water: Water as a Symbol of ‘Life’ and ‘Power’ in the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC),” *Studies in World Christianity* 6:1 (2000), 59–77.

² The most important and reliable source for learning about Oshoffa is the CCC's constitution. According to the CCC's constitution, Oshoffa performed many iconic miracles, including bringing fourteen different people who had been clinically certified dead back to life. His life and ministry were synonymous with miracles. See *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution* (Lagos: The Board of Trustees for the Pastor-in-Council, 1980), 5–8.

³ In this study, it should be stated that both the theology and the doctrine of the CCC is predicated upon the vision, revelation, and the theological views of its founder based on his visionary experiences and his personal hermeneutics. They give us a window into the religious thoughts and praxis of the CCC. In his studies of the continuity and the discontinuity between

CCC and the Yoruba cosmological views, Adogame observes, “The Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) has been identified as a distinct brand of Christianity which has much affinity with the Yoruba cultural matrix.” However, he explains that the CCC, on the other hand, maintains its self-image as a Christian Church *sui generis* and vehemently refuses any connecting nexus with Yoruba traditional religious thought and praxis. See Afeosemime Adogame, “Building Bridges and Barricades,” *Marburg Journal of Religion* 6 (1998), 4.

⁴ Elijah Olu Akinwumi, *Oshoffa, Samuel Bilewu (1909–1985), Celestial Church of Christ (Aladura) Nigeria* (Lagos: Project Luke, 2002), 1–2.

⁵ *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 8.

⁶ Akinwumi, *Oshoffa, Samuel Bilewu (1909–1985)*, 2.

⁷ *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 8.

⁸ Adogame, “Doing Things with Water,” 2.

⁹ According to Wikipedia, there was a series of solar eclipses that occurred between 1946 and 1949, one on May 20, 1947. “Totality was visible from Chile, including the capital city Santiago, Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, Liberia, French West Africa (the parts now belonging to Ivory Coast and Benin), British Gold Coast (today's Ghana), including capital Accra, French Togoland (today's Togo), including capital Lomé, British Nigeria (today's Nigeria).” See “Solar Eclipse of May 20, 1947,” *Wikipedia*, 1 October 2021, n.p., https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solar_eclipse_of_May_20,_1947. Although these events may be considered as natural phenomena with basic scientific explanations, the CCC attached more significance to that of the month of May, as it is believed to be a miraculous event that spawned the movement known as the CCC.

¹⁰ *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 8.

¹¹ *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 8.

¹² Akinwumi, *Oshoffa, Samuel Bilewu (1909–1985)*, 4.

¹³ See the text of Oschoffa's press interview in *The Sunday Times*, May 16, 1982, 11.

¹⁴ Cornelius Olowola, “An Introduction to African Independent Churches,” in *Issues in African Christian Theology*, ed. Samuel Ngewa (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd, 1998), 286–305.

¹⁵ *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 18.

¹⁶ *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 18.

¹⁷ *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 18.

¹⁸ Adogame, “Building Bridges and Barricades,” 1. It should be noted that, according to early sources, Oshoffa, who was a one-time catechist in the Methodist Church at Porto Novo, played a significant role both as a chorister and a church trumpeter. Thus, it was alleged that Rev. Geoffrey Parinder visited when the news of Oschoffa's mysterious power got to him and asked why he did not use his gift in the Methodist church, but decided to form a movement. It was reported that Oshoffa replied that if the Methodist pastor of his church had inquired sincerely about his new powers, rather than reject him, he would have probably remained a Methodist and not founded a

movement. Furthermore, according to the same source, in a bid to affirm the message Oshoffa received about the Christians who had backslid into idolatry, he (Oshoffa) had asked Rev. Parrinder to position himself at the exit door on Sunday to shake hands with every member to pick out members who had neither engagement nor wedding rings. It was such people who publicly professed Christianity but practiced idolatry and occultism by wearing amulets and talismans (*Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 6). See also J. Akinyele Omoyajowo, *Cherubim and Seraphim: The History of an African Independent Church* (New York: NOK Publishers, 1982), 39.

¹⁹ Adogame, "Building Bridges and Barricades," 3.

²⁰ Adogame, "Building Bridges and Barricades," 3.

²¹ Eric N. Newberg, "Paradigms of Global Spirit-empowered Leadership," *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology* 7:2 (Fall 2022), 177.

²² Newberg, "Paradigms of Global Spirit-empowered Leadership," 177.

²³ Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 70. Jenkins, one of the proponents of the Global South being the "Next Christendom," recognizes and applauds the efforts and sacrifices of the "Black Africans" in decolonizing Africa and African Christianity.

²⁴ Adogame, "Building Bridges and Barricades," 3.

²⁵ Adogame, "Building Bridges and Barricades," 3.

²⁶ Newberg, "Paradigms of Global Spirit-empowered Leadership," 170.

²⁷ Rosalind I. J. Hackett, "Thirty Years of Growth and Change in a West African Independent Church," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 11:3 (1980), 212–24.

²⁸ *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 8. See also Omoyajowo, *Cherubim and Seraphim*, 32.

²⁹ *Celestial Church of Christ's Constitution*, 9.

³⁰ Akinwumi, *Oshoffa, Samuel Bilewu (1909–1985)*, 6.

³¹ Adogame, "Doing Things with Water," 2. While further elucidating on the growth and the expansion of the church, Adogame explains that the CCC has transcended geo-ethnic boundaries, thus earning its re-christening as the Celestial Church of Christ "Worldwide."

³² Adogame, "Doing Things with Water," 2.

³³ Newberg, "Paradigms of Global Spirit-empowered Leadership," 173–92.

³⁴ Newberg, "Paradigms of Global Spirit-empowered Leadership," 174.

³⁵ Newberg, "Paradigms of Global Spirit-empowered Leadership," 181.

³⁶ Newberg, "Paradigms of Global Spirit-empowered Leadership," 175.

³⁷ Newberg, "Paradigms of Global Spirit-empowered Leadership," 178.

³⁸ Afe Adogame, "Aiye Loja, Orun Nile—The Appropriation of Ritual Space-Time in the Cosmology of the Celestial Church of Christ," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 30:1 (2000), 3.

Although a Professor of Religion and Global Christianity of the Anglican faith, Adogame has written more on the CCC than any African theologian dead or alive.

³⁹ Adogame, “Aiye Loja, Orun Nile,” 3.

⁴⁰ Adogame, “Building Bridges and Barricades,” 1.

⁴¹ Adogame, “Building Bridges and Barricades,” 1.

⁴² Adogame, “Building Bridges and Barricades,” 1.

⁴³ Olowola, “An Introduction to African Independent Churches,” 301.

⁴⁴ Olowola, “An Introduction to African Independent Churches,” 301.

⁴⁵ Olowola, “An Introduction to African Independent Churches,” 301.

The Holy Spirit Research Center

In 1962, Oral Roberts established the Holy Spirit Research Center with the purpose of preserving the history of the global Spirit-empowered movement. Today, the HSRC is one of the largest and most well-known collections in the world, serving researchers from across the global Spirit-empowered movement with the following resources:

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CALLED, EMPOWERED, AND SENT, KNOWN AND UNKNOWN

A REFLECTION ON MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP

WONSUK MA

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Introduction

This issue of *Spiritus* focuses on Spirit-empowered mission and leadership, dedicated to the work and life of countless Spirit-filled “soldiers” of the kingdom. The movement has produced a host of dedicated leaders whose work is significant. Many publications introduce these figures.¹ While Pentecostal-Charismatic “stars” receive both good and bad attention, the real heroes of empowered witnessing are often forgotten. They are the nameless “ordinary” believers who are in the same way called, Spirit-empowered, and sent by the same Lord.

Theologically Speaking

What makes them—the known and unknown—so motivated to reach every sphere of human society with boldness and courage? The crux of this extraordinary “empowerment” and mobilization lies fully in the Holy Spirit. Called “baptism in the Spirit” by modern Pentecostals, this crisis experience results in two distinct and revolutionary outcomes.

The first is the “empowerment” effect. Christ’s promise of the baptism in the Holy Spirit before his ascension has a strong emphasis on power: “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you” (Acts 1:8).² Their Bible (what we call the “Old Testament”) was full of Spirit-empowered heroes. The Spirit of God came upon the selected leaders, ranging from Joseph to the future king. In Joseph’s case, it was the Pharaoh who attributed Joseph’s ability to interpret the dreams to the presence of God’s Spirit: “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God(s)?” (Gen 41:37). Gideon was also given supernatural wisdom and courage as the Spirit came upon him to muster an inter-tribal army (Judg 6:34–35). And the subsequent decisive victory over the “Midianites, Amalekites, and other eastern people” with a small contingent of soldiers is also attributed to Gideon’s Spirit-empowered military

leadership. This empowering function of the Spirit in the Old Testament reaches a climax in the predictions of the ideal king. Isaiah 11 portrays that “the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him” with three sets of manifested qualities: wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, and knowledge and fear of the Lord (v. 2). “Fear of the Lord” is the recurring virtue (also in v. 3). These qualities (or empowerment) through the presence of the Spirit will cause him to establish righteousness and justice, measured by the protection of the powerless and punishment of the wicked (v. 4). His just and righteous reign will usher in peace and harmony throughout creation (vv. 6–9)—Paradise restored! This historically unfulfilled but long-awaited expectation is the root of the New Testament promise of “power.”

The book of Acts is rightly the Acts of the Holy Spirit as his empowered servants shook Jerusalem, and spread throughout Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the world. The book shows several features of empowered witnessing. Strangely, the first is the presence of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2, the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost was a powerful event, drawing thousands of inquirers and witnesses. Acts 8 is another occasion. Philip’s surprising and successful evangelistic work drew a large Samaritan crowd, both his message of the Messiah and the signs he performed (vv. 5–6). This news reached Jerusalem, and Peter and John came to Samaria. They specifically prayed for the new believers to receive the Holy Spirit (v. 15). When people received it, the event was extraordinary enough that Simon, a newly converted sorcerer, craved the power and offered the apostles money (vv. 18–20). Second, the Spirit gives boldness and courage to proclaim Christ. It comes with such a conviction to challenge the audience and commitment even to the cost of one’s life. Perhaps one outstanding example was Stephen. Among the seven, he has the most number of references to the Holy Spirit associated with him, including at his last moment: “Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God” (7:55). His long historical and apologetic sermon to the Sanhedrin displays extraordinary boldness, charging them for the death of Christ and their rebellious ancestors for killing many prophets (v. 52). Third, Spirit-empowered ministries often include God’s supernatural work, including healing and miraculous experiences. Again, the book of Acts is full of them, such as Paul’s preservation from the viper’s bite after the shipwreck near Malta (28:3–5). All these characteristics are always linked to the proclamation of Christ as the Lord and Savior. And modern Spirit-empowered faith exhibits identical traits and, thus, is rightly called the apostolic faith. Its exponential growth is credited to this unique spiritual and theological belief and experience.

The second is the universalizing extent of this empowering experience, which some scholars call the “prophethood of all believers.” This is what the Old Testament eagerly anticipated for the new age of full restoration. As observed above, the coming of God’s empowering Spirit in the Old Testament was highly exclusive, only upon selected

leaders and prophets. Perhaps the most “massive” experience of the Spirit’s coming was upon the seventy elders (Num 11:17, 25). Despite the impressive number, their experience with the Spirit had restrictions, as the literary clues suggest. God “took some of the power of the Spirit that was on him” (or literally, “took Spirit from on him”), unmistakably indicating their subordinate role to Moses’ leadership. The “quantity” of the Spirit also reinforces their relationship with Moses. As a result of the Spirit’s coming, “they prophesied—but did not do so again” (v. 25). While the text suggests the perpetual presence of the Spirit upon Moses, the seventy had only a temporary manifestation of the Spirit’s coming. Whether the Spirit continued its presence upon the seventy is another question, the literary impression sets Moses apart from them. However, two (among the seventy) did not join the others in the Tent of Meeting (or the designated holy place). Yet, the Spirit also “rested on them, and also prophesied in [their] camp” (v. 27). To Joshua’s objection, Moses expressed his deep desire: “I wish that all the Lord’s people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit on them” (v. 29). Thus, throughout the Old Testament, this expectation was engraved in the vision of the restored age. Joel’s prophecy picked up this ancient faith and elaborated the liberal endowment of the Spirit upon God’s people in the age of God’s full reign:

And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days (Joel 2:28–29).

It is no wonder that Peter quoted this passage on the day of Pentecost to respond to boiling questions of the bewildered crowd: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans?” (Acts 2:7); “Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?” (v. 8); and “What does this mean?” (v. 12). He declared that the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the 120 was the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy (vv. 16–21). God is to “pour out” his Spirit, already suggesting the abundance of his endowment. The cataloging of the prophetic words also enhances the abundance: “prophesy,” “dream dreams,” and “see visions.” However, the most fundamental element here (both in Joel and Acts) is the “democratization” of the Spirit, from exclusive to universal. It is to break all societal barriers: race, status, age, and gender. On the day of Pentecost, the writer of Acts highlights this aspect of the Spirit’s coming. They were “all together” in one place (v. 1), and “all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit” (v. 4). The scripture identifies the members of the group as the apostles (1:12–13), “women,” “Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers” (v. 14). The 120 were simply called the “believers” (v.

15). And they were ALL filled with the Holy Spirit: the apostles, the family of Jesus, women, and men.

In today's Spirit-empowered faith, every believer is called, Spirit-empowered, and sent to proclaim God's good news. Some are sent to far regions of the world, but many others to their workplaces, homes, and classrooms. It is a Messianic commission that we continue today with the crucial empowerment of the Holy Spirit: "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that, he breathed on them and said, Receive the Holy Spirit'" (John 20:21–22).

Learning from the Early Church

The book of Acts presents every believer's crucial role in spreading the gospel. Two examples may suffice to support this argument. The first is the nameless "some" (Acts 11:20), who fled the persecution in Jerusalem and moved northward, perhaps homebound. As they traveled "as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch," they "spread the word" to fellow Jews (v. 19). However, the next verse reveals that their paths, which may have begun to save their lives, were intentional in two different ways. The first is the "men from Cyprus and Cyrene," indicating that some were heading to their homes, but others were moving in the opposite direction from home (that is, Cyrene in Northern Africa). The second is their intentional crossing of the cultural and language boundaries by "telling [Greeks as well] the good news about the Lord Jesus" in Antioch. We assume them Spirit-empowered early believers as "the Lord's hand was with them," often referring to supernatural healing and miracles. As the result of their proclamation and demonstration of God's wonder, "a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord" (v. 21). This proclamation-manifestation-evangelism pattern first appeared in the record of the apostles (e.g., chs. 2 and 3), and then among the "deacons" (e.g., ch. 8). This is now widely shared among the "unknown" heroes. The significance of the church in Antioch cannot be unnoticed as the launch pad for the Christian faith from a Jewish sect to a world religion. Despite the continuing leadership of the Jerusalem church, the second half of Acts finds Antioch as the center of the expanding Christian faith to the broader world. Christ's mandate to reach out to the "ends of the world" with the gospel may have been transferred from Jerusalem to Antioch. While the apostles founded the former through the coming of the Holy Spirit, the unknown Spirit-empowered runaways established the latter.

The second example is the evangelism of "Asia," as recorded in Acts 19. During Paul's two-year stay in Ephesus, he preached Christ's good news and discipled (or "had discussions" with) new believers daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus (v. 9). Through these intense and sustained efforts, "all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (v. 10). In this case, the report presents the primary

role of the nameless mass in this splendid achievement more subtly than the case of the “some” above. The role of Paul and other leaders, such as Priscilla and Aquilla (18:26), was decisive. The church also began with the coming of the Holy Spirit upon twelve men with tongue-speaking (19:6–7). As Paul spoke boldly (v. 8, “proclamation”) and God did extraordinary miracles through him (v. 11, “manifestation”), the outcome was a great harvest (“conversion”), completing the paradigm set throughout the book. Luke recorded the impact: “They [the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus] were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor” (v. 17). As this went on for two whole years—“the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power” (v. 20)—until everyone in Asia heard the word of the Lord. It must have been an ideal partnership between the center (Ephesus) and peripheries (all the provinces of Asia). As Paul and his leaders preached, evangelized, and disciplined new believers, the rest of this faith community took the call to witness to Christ as their vocation as they continued their daily activities. Although not recorded, many could be organically fulfilling God’s call, but others took more intentional steps to reach out to many areas of Asia. As expected, the latter, massive in size, remain unknown or unnamed. But as with Paul in Ephesus, they were the heroes who spoke about the new Lord in every corner of the region.

Today’s Examples

Throughout church history, millions of Spirit-empowered heroes, both known and unknown, have turned the Christian faith into a global movement. I selected three contemporary examples close to my own workplace: Oral Roberts University (ORU), Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA. They lived their lives differently, but all were empowered by the Holy Spirit and took their lives as God’s unique gift to those who came into contact with them. Each section is written by a member of the ORU community, identified in the endnote.

John Chau (1991–2018)³

The phrase “Soli Deo Gloria” is widely regarded as a tenant of the Christian evangelical faith since the coining of the Five Solas during the Protestant Reformation. Most recently, the phrase is connected to the life and legacy of John Chau, a young missionary and beloved member of the ORU community who was martyred in 2018 when he felt called to the unreachable North Sentinel Island in the Bay of Bengal. In copious journal entries and letters, John concluded his thoughts with “Soli Deo Gloria, John Chau.” As the world learned of his preparation and journey to the island, the words have reverberated through the evangelical community, sparking a new

conversation about what it means to be a Spirit-empowered believer in the twenty-first century.

John believed the measure of success in the kingdom was obedience, and his life was marked by radical submission to the Lord long before he reached the island. During his time as a student and beyond, John lived out “Glory to God alone” through local outreach, short-term mission trips, and practical preparation. With a passion for soccer and a heart for serving youth, John poured his time into the Burmese community and an after-school ministry in Tulsa for many years. He also took the gospel to several countries while living missionally in daily life. John embodied the kindness and gentleness of the Spirit, the love of Christ for everyone he met, and had the Father’s heart for the world. His preparation for his mission was unparalleled, from anthropology and church planting training, becoming a wilderness emergency medical technician, to physical preparation with eye surgery and cold showers. Although considered young in many eyes, John had an eternal perspective. His journal reveals his goal in reaching the island: “The eternal lives of this tribe are at hand, and I can’t wait to see them around the throne of God worshipping in their own language, as Revelation 7:9–10 states.”

The life and death of John Chau were marked with grief, hope, and glory. Grief for his passing, but hope that God continues being glorified through the salvation of the Sentinelese. John prayed for others to continue the work, so may the church embrace living “Soli Deo Gloria.”

Ben Chrisostom (1960–2021)⁴

Ben Chrisostom, originally from India, lived a life that was totally committed to serving Christ and helping others. His passion was ministry to the international students he met at ORU through his thirty-two years with Sodexo food services, for many years as a retail manager. Ben helped these students find places to live and jobs, taught them how to drive, and provided food and clothing when needed—with his own money. He mentored these students, taking them with him when he ministered. Ben founded and pastored the Tulsa International Fellowship, which ministers spiritually to recently-arrived international students. Shortly before he died, he was booking speakers for upcoming fellowship meetings from his hospital bed.

Ben was often at his church at 4 or 5 a.m., praying before work. He always took time to comfort and pray for others. Ben once drove from Tulsa to Tennessee (more than fourteen-hour non-stop round-trip driving) to pray for someone in person. Once, a member of the ORU community commented that he wished his mother-in-law had accepted Christ before her passing. Ben told him that he had visited her in the hospital

and had led her to Christ. He cooked breakfast and shared a devotional with the homeless on Sundays at the Salvation Army.

Ben spent twenty-four summers preaching in Hindu villages in northern India. He did this at considerable risk to his own life. He and the pastors with him would take a jeep as far as the roads went and then walk to isolated villages where they preached the gospel in the open air. Sometimes, large groups, even entire villages, came to Christ and were baptized. As a result, many churches were planted. Ben organized conferences to encourage and equip these Indian pastors. He raised support and helped plant orphanages across northern India. A number of boys from these orphanages went on to become pastors and missionaries. Ben was self-supporting and donated any funds he was given to his Indian coworkers or the orphanages he helped plant.

Shortly before he died, Ben ministered in Egypt under a COVID lockdown. He reached out to underground churches with daily broadcasts. Often, Ben did not go to bed till 2:30 a.m. He helped establish a vocational training program in Egypt for COVID widows. Ben was an empowered Christian soldier who empowered many others! And his wife, Maggie, was a close partner in his extraordinary service to the kingdom.

Eugene Quaynor (1999–2022)⁵

Eugene, a Ghanaian international student at ORU, may not have been known by many, but those fortunate enough to meet him could not forget him. Eugene was a walking manifestation of joy and love. His fruit was always on display for anyone and everyone to see. John 13:35 tells us that our pursuit of Jesus will be visible in how we love each other. Everyone knew that Eugene Quaynor loved Jesus.

Eugene perpetually served joyfully. A glowing smile shining across his face, he was always ready and willing to serve: his family, his friends, his teammates, his coaches, and strangers who dropped their bags in the street, always seeking to put others first. Eugene's soccer teammates and coaches have countless stories of being met at a doorway by Eugene, waiting to carry their bags. Even the positions Eugene played on the soccer field were positions of service. One of his coaches characterized Eugene as the best counter-attack defender he has coached. Eugene's commitment to service made him one of his team's hardest-working and most willing competitors, but he never sought praise. He was uncomfortable when his teammates elected him captain. He was uncomfortable winning conference awards. These things were not a part of Eugene's plan. His plan focused on loving others well and supporting his family in any way possible. He was always seeking ways to do those things better. Eugene put his plans on tablets, documenting his walk with Jesus and his spiritual growth. He saw every day as a chance to create opportunities for others: his brothers, his teammates, and those he

casually met throughout the day. Everyone who met Eugene encountered two things: a bright smile and the love of Jesus.

Conclusion

As we receive Spirit-empowerment as a special mission gift from the Lord, we honor “named” as well as “nameless” millions of Spirit-empowered heroes in God’s mission of the past, present, and future. And we commit ourselves to this cause as God’s servants,

fully known to him: “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations” (Isa 42:1).



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Notes:

¹ For example, Dean Merrill, *50 Pentecostal and Charismatic Leaders Every Christian Should Know* (Minneapolis, MN: Chosen Books, 2021).

² Scripture quotations are from the New International Version.

³ By Allie Mendoza, Associate Director of Spiritual Life, Oral Roberts University, October 18, 2022. The source is John Chau and Warren and Donna Pett, “Who Will Take My Place?” *The Voice of Martyrs* 55:6 (June 2022), 4–11, <https://www.persecution.com/stories/john-chau/> (18 October 2022).

⁴ By Robert Leland, Senior Professor of Engineering and Physics, Oral Roberts University on October 18, 2022.

⁵ By Curtis Ellis, Dean of the College of Arts and Cultural Studies, Oral Roberts University on October 18, 2022.

REVIEWS

Apostles & Prophets: The Ministry of Apostles and Prophets throughout the Generations. By Opoku Onyinah. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2022. 387 pp.

Opoku Onyinah's book, *Apostles & Prophets*, is an excellent compendium of the biblical, theological, and historical treatment of two charismatic ministerial portfolios relevant to the Spirit-empowered Movement—apostles and prophets. It presents significant insight into their unique callings, gifts, functions, spiritual formations, flaws, differences, similarities, and manifestations. The apotheosis of the book's discourse resides in the author's apparent response to the unending debate on whether the apostolic and prophetic gifts still exist today or ceased with the closing of the New Testament canon. Onyinah, a former global chairman of a vibrant Pentecostal church in Ghana and co-chair of Empowered21 Scholars Consultation, interacts with a mosaic of rich biblical references, practical narratives, and historical accounts. These add a powerful voice to the debate and affirm the continuity of the two ministerial gifts in contemporary Christianity. Onyinah's central argument is that God has immanently communicated with humanity in each generation principally through prophets and apostles. God has never put their gifts out of operation.

Apostles & Prophets is a stimulating resource with nine parts straddling over thirty-one chapters. Eleven chapters from Part One through Part Four exegete the ministerial forays of Old Testament and New Testament prophets, how God chooses, transforms, and communicates with them, and what gifts constitute the prophetic office. The next ten chapters overlaying Part Five and Part Six, illustrate the biblical and theological nature and the manifestation of the apostolic ministry throughout the generations, from the time of Moses to the New Testament apostles. However, the conversation shifts to five other chapters that orient readers on the factors underlying the historical transition of church governance from the era of apostolic leadership to bishopric leadership. Onyinah follows that with two illuminating chapters that educate the reader on the intricacies any believer can go through to receive revelations from God. Finally, the last three chapters discuss the possible ministerial flaws and limitations apostles and prophets may be entangled in, followed by an appendix, bibliography, subject index, and scripture index.

The author begins and ends the book with the same essential argument: that the God of the universe who has been with humanity from the beginning of time has not ceased speaking with each generation. Nonetheless, whereas the prophet was God's

chosen mouthpiece to communicate his precepts in the Old Testament, the apostle became his primary messenger in the New Testament. The incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ marked a segue between the Old and New Testaments, during which he manifested both the apostolic and prophetic paradigms in bodily form. Generally, three significant arguments emanate from the book to advance the author's thoughts about apostles and prophets and their dalliance with God and his people.

First, although God used some apostolic figures in the Old Testament, such as Joseph, Moses, and Nehemiah, his leading spokespersons were the prophets he raised and called. As gifts to God's people, the prophets were transcendent. Beyond merely prophesying, God imbued them with several gifts such as prophecy, word of knowledge, the discerning of spirits, teaching, exhortation, and sometimes the gift of music. Unlike the Old Testament paradigm, where only a few people were chosen and endowed to prophesy, all New Testament believers are gifted with the Holy Spirit and granted the potential to prophesy. Nonetheless, the death and resurrection of Jesus in the New Testament brought forth an epochal moment where apostles assumed the role of God's primary messengers for the church in place of the prophets. As gifts, apostles are also called and authenticated with unique skills and graces such as leadership, administration, governance, signs and wonders, miracles, faith, and healing to govern the church.

The author's second argument is that the ministry of Jesus Christ encompassed both the prophetic and apostolic—his apostolic credential emanating ontologically from his being as God's preeminent Word. Thus, aside from being the only potentate to serve as king, prophet, and priest, Jesus also moved prophecy from the era of the spoken word to the age of the living Word. In Jesus, the Word came first and resided in human personality; but in the human apostles, the flesh existed first, followed by a revelation of the Word. Therefore, whereas a prophet would say, "thus says the Lord," Jesus did not need to say so because he was the Word.

Finally, God's communication through apostles and prophets has never been truncated at any point in human history. Even the early Church Fathers, who were called bishops following the shift in church governance from the apostolic to bishopric era, operated mainly under the apostles' authority. Thus, apostolic and prophetic offices have never ceased. The apostolic office is not restricted solely to those who saw Jesus physically, such as Peter and John, but also to those who encountered him by revelation, such as Paul and James. Therefore, the primary qualification of an apostle is a revelational "seeing" of Christ, not a physical one. For this reason, the apostolic office of Jesus Christ has been transferred to other apostles today—human personalities who embody the revelation of God's word and lead the church.

In *Apostles & Prophets*, Opoku Onyinah has deftly produced an éclat, valuable for academic and practical purposes. The book's strength resides in its detailed, engaging,

and exceptional fluidity with knowledge and insight on the topic under discussion. It offers sound theological and biblical understanding for emic Pentecostal theologians, church leaders, and etic observers of the tradition. Onyinah educates, excites, stimulates, and elevates the curiosity of his readers on the issue of apostles and prophets as God's messengers for the past, present, and future. The author's tendency to summarize each chapter and restate his argument is an effective way for the reader to follow and understand the conversation well.

The lengthy nature of the book may disinterest some readers from following all the author's arguments. Additionally, some readers may need help understanding and practicing the part on how to receive revelation. Notwithstanding, I unequivocally recommend *Apostles & Prophets* to all scholars, Bible students, church leaders, and Christians who seek a single resource rich with insight and clarity for understanding the call, formation, functions, and manifestations of apostles and prophets.

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Christianity and Depression. By Tasia Scrutton. London, UK: SCM Press, 2020. xvi + 236 pp.

Tasia (Anastasia P.) Scrutton is an Associate Professor at the University of Leeds in the School of Philosophy, Religion, and History of Science. Her research focuses on the interaction between religion and mental health and philosophical approaches to emotion and psychiatry. More generally, she is interested in the relationship between religion, healing, and wellbeing. *Christianity and Depression* examines the different ways Christians interpret depression and the theological and pastoral implications of these interpretations.

The introduction discusses several caveats that help understand her approach. Perhaps the most crucial takeaway is Scrutton's understanding that a person's interpretation of depression will shape his or her experience of the condition. Chapter one discusses the interpretation that sin causes depression, and chapter two discusses the interpretation that demons or evil spirits cause depression. Scrutton emphasizes that both interpretations have a voluntaristic understanding of depression at their core in which errors of omission and commission cause depression. Recovery from depression, therefore, comes through lifestyle changes like giving up sinful behavior, praying more, reading the Bible, and other spiritual activities. The third chapter looks at the interpretation that depression is a biological disease. Scrutton notes that these biological explanations of depression work similarly to interpretations involving sin and demons. These explanations often focus on lifestyle changes and medical intervention as modes of recovery, which may make sufferers feel guilty because they never did or acted the way they should have to avoid depression.

The fourth chapter examines the understanding that depression is a Dark Night of the Soul. Scrutton observes that sin and demonic accounts of depression focus on spiritual failure or distance from God. Dark Night explanations, however, view depression as a condition given to someone by God in light of their piety. Linked to the Dark Night of the Soul interpretation, chapter five examines the understanding that depression is potentially transformative. This interpretation is based on believing that God can bring good from evil. Scrutton maintains that although suffering is evil, people holding this view can find meaning and value in their suffering and are motivated to seek recovery.

Scrutton begins to develop her response to depression in chapter six. The chapter looks at the concepts of divine passibility and impassability. Scrutton shows how holding to either one of these positions can help people positively interpret their depression experiences. She argues in chapter seven that stigmatization is usually still present in the church community regardless of one's position on passibility and

impassability. Scrutton develops her response in chapter eight. She claims that the best way for Christians to understand depression is to see it no differently theologically than any other form of physical illness or suffering. She also emphasizes that Christ stands in solidarity with those with the condition.

Scrutton's writing style is an engaging blend of scholarly thoroughness and easy reading. She has written the book with a broader audience in mind, making it more accessible to general readers than her other academic work. The book has many strengths, the most prominent being her categorization of different interpretations of depression. This is helpful because it gives readers an understanding of the different lenses through which people view depression. Recognizing that there are different interpretations helps us realize that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to understanding and responding to the condition. Scrutton's discussion also helps us consider how conducive our own interpretations are.

Another strength is how she moves the focus of depression, and mental illness in general, away from interpretations of individual sin and demonic oppression towards interpretations more focused on societal sin and demonic activity within systemic structures. Understanding depression in the context of individual sin and demonic oppression is recurrent in the Pentecostal (Spirit-empowered) community. Scrutton's social interpretation may help the Pentecostal community look beyond individual responses that revolve around altar ministry and deliverance to consider how it can be involved in change at a societal level and thereby help people with mental health challenges like depression.

Scrutton operates in the UK outside of the Pentecostal movement, so her focus on depression largely omits discussion about depression in Majority World contexts. This critique is not to the book's detriment because the book accomplished its aims. But one wonders how an analysis of Majority World interpretations might have added to her discussion. Also, considering the breadth of Pentecostalism as a global movement, although the text is informative, it might not meet readers' needs outside the Western context. With this being said, Scrutton still provides an illuminating discussion on depression and Christianity that will help readers reflect theologically on depression and its interpretation in new ways, thereby contributing and enriching the development of Pentecostal theology.

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The Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology. Edited by Wolfgang Vondey. New York, NY: Routledge, 2020. 464 pp.

Wolfgang Vondey, as editor, has set out to accomplish a mountainous task in which he aims to synthesize the uniqueness of Pentecostal theology and fill the many gaps in the field. Rather than presenting a standardized theology, this compilation has gathered numerous authors to create a launching pad and reference for scholars and theologians for future studies. The organization of this handbook is truly well-done. Vondey brought about a thematic approach to Pentecostal theology in five main parts of the volume, utilizing various authors to highlight specific areas of theological framework, sourcing, methods, practices, and challenges.

Part I appears as a crux of this book, creating a formative undertone for the groundwork of Pentecostal theology. In his Introduction, Wolfgang Vondey adequately terms this vast discussion as an “unfolding narrative” (2) that delves into its diversity. Christopher Stephenson (Chapter 1) emphasizes that this handbook reflects the diversity of Pentecostal origins, delimiting the base reality that “there is no such thing as an ‘ideal’ or ‘pure’ Pentecostal theology” (16). As Allan Anderson (Chapter 2) denounces the possibilities of “universal statements of Pentecostal theology” (22), he also conveys the thematic necessities of such Pentecostal expressions of music and dance within the church, describing the identifying factor in the joyous expression of Pentecostal worship. As a narrative, articulated by Kenneth Archer (Chapter 4), Pentecostal theology takes on the historical and current identities of its storytellers, relating experience, testimony, song, and dance as an engaging mission-oriented life “grounded in the story of God told in the Scriptures” (48).

Part II focuses on the main spiritual, physical, and mental sources of the Pentecostal church. The source of revelation, unpacked by Rickie Moore (Chapter 5), as transformative and altering in and of itself, is likened to the transformative power of the flames upon the disciples’ heads at Pentecost and the wonder-filled experience of the Pentecostal believer. Continuing the narrative theme, Scott Ellington (Chapter 6) portrays the source of Scripture as personally relevant to the Pentecostal believer, who becomes one with the narrative of the Word of God through the divine revelation of the Holy Spirit. Through the source of reason, William Kay (Chapter 7) encourages empirical research for the furtherance of Pentecostal theology. The experience of God (Chapter 8) and the struggle of tradition (Chapter 9) provide key elements for Pentecostal development and understanding. Attention to culture (Chapter 10) and worship (Chapter 11) define the movement, just as expressive movement and embodiment bring reflexivity to Pentecostal theology.

Part III portrays the theological methods in place within the Pentecostal movement. Jacqueline Grey and William Oliverio describe the essentials of biblical hermeneutics (Chapter 12) and theological hermeneutics (Chapter 13) and look at their continued development within the global Pentecostal community. In his discourse on pneumatological imagination (Chapter 14), Amos Yong rethinks the method of Pentecostal theology. Yong believes Pentecostal methods need adjustment because of changes in voices in the current “public square” (160). Similarly driven, Mark Cartledge (Chapter 15) focuses on the pneumatological praxis in practical theology, voicing the importance of the development in this field of study in coming years. Wolfgang Vondy finishes this section with a complete overview of the liturgical hermeneutic of the “full gospel” methodological framework (Chapter 16).

Part IV introduces the reader to fourteen subjects of doctrine and practices within Pentecostal churches. Part V contains twelve fringe theologies that require much more development and discussion, yet they are still a vital part of the movement. Some of the theologies discussed in Part IV are divergent, such as Trinitarian and Oneness doctrines. In contrast, some of the theologies discussed in Part IV are more integral to Pentecostal beliefs, such as salvation (Chapter 21), Spirit baptism (Chapter 23), divine healing (Chapter 24), eschatology (Chapter 25), and missiology (Chapter 26).

Part V introduces Pentecostal theologies that remain under construction. These theological themes touch on such issues as ecotheology (Chapter 33), economics (Chapter 34), feminism (Chapter 36), social justice (Chapter 40), and science (Chapter 42). Along these lines, one can only imagine what other theologies of life, practice, or passion may be relevant to the Pentecostal conversation narrative. Steven Félix-Jäger’s chapter about arts and aesthetics (Chapter 31) is particularly interesting. Félix-Jäger delves into the form of theological aesthetics from a Pentecostal perspective, in which the use of art forms like dance, music, visual arts, film, and architecture reflect the pneumatological approach to embodied worship through aesthetics and evangelism.

Several recurring themes run the book’s scope, the greatest being the idea of Pentecostal theology as a *narrative*. Recognizing the uniqueness of Pentecostalism, the *fluid* nature, the *newness* of Pentecostalism, the *pneumatological* emphasis, and the theme of *embodiment* through worship all reveal that the movement has room to grow and adapt to new revelations and narratives as voices arise globally in different contexts and cultures. The strongest voice spoken in this handbook remains the formulation of Pentecostal theology articulated from within Pentecostalism itself. A fundamental gap in this handbook is the lack of cultural representation from the global Pentecostal community. To this void, the writers seem to be aware, prodding further responses from scholarship relevant to the contexts at hand and the contexts in growth. Wonderfully added throughout the handbook are the regular references to other chapters within each

essay. This gives an overarching sense of unity throughout the book, despite its varying authors, perspectives, and emphases.

It was undoubtedly a difficult task, taming the wild and unfettered construct of the Pentecostal movement in an attempt to name its theologies, hermeneutics, practices, doctrines, and heartbeat. Yet, the handbook is impressive. I anticipate that many other handbooks will emerge in its wake, picking up the conversation, continuing the narrative, and emboldening the many voices of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movement to rise to the occasion and write their part of the story.

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