

# EDITORIAL: THE BEST LAID PLANS

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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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