Emilio Alvarez, associate provost at Asbury Theological Seminary and archbishop of the Union of Charismatic Orthodox Churches, provides an academic yet intimately personal and pastoral work in *Pentecostal Orthodoxy*. As a scholar-practitioner within the movement he is describing, he credibly articulates Pentecostal orthodoxy as a movement within Pentecostalism that attempts to recover the Great Tradition of the church and blends the three historic streams of the church (sacramental/liturgical, evangelical, and Pentecostal/Charismatic). This blending or “amalgamation” is not designed to exclude or assert superiority over other traditions but to create an “ecumenism of the Spirit” (142). The “ecumenism of the Spirit” that is portrayed gives “segments of Pentecostalism” the “opportunity to recover the Great Tradition” (11). This recovery of the Great Tradition precipitates the first aim of the work, to show the shift of some North American Pentecostals from their fundamentalist roots to a more historic Christian faith (5). The second aim of the work is to show how this recovery of orthodoxy is not at odds with Pentecostalism (5). Finally, the work outlines “the theological and historical qualifications” for Pentecostal orthodoxy, noting in particular the contributions of Afro-Latino Pentecostals to this movement (5).

After a laudatory foreword from John Behr, Alvarez introduces his aims, relevant terms with their definitions, and the organization of the work. Chapter one outlines several historical movements within paleo-orthodoxy seeking to recover and blend the three historic streams of the church, covering evangelical orthodoxy, the convergence worship movement, the ancient-future movement, and Pentecostal orthodoxy in detail. Chapter two posits that Pentecostalism is not antithetical to orthodoxy by showing the continuity between Pentecostal orthodoxy and the Great Tradition, Christian monastic traditions, and Christian mystical traditions.

Chapter three proposes that Pentecostals need not abandon their tradition because of their theological retrieval of the Great Tradition (77). Alvarez then provides his journey of recovering the Great Tradition for himself and three other individuals’ stories, showing that he is not alone in his experience. Chapter four develops the case for a Pentecostal orthodoxy more by focusing on Afro-Latino Pentecostals doing this work and the pitfalls of the “politicization” and misuse of and ignorance concerning clerical garb, ranks, apostolic succession, and authority. In chapter five, Alvarez problematizes spiritual ecumenism and its focus on human action and prayer, proposing
instead an “ecumenism of the Spirit,” which provides the opportunity for “creating amalgamated ecclesial communities” (142). Finally, Alvarez finishes chapter five by proposing how Pentecostal dialogues with Catholics, Orthodox, and others could be strengthened by adopting Pentecostal orthodoxy.

Alvarez mostly meets his three aims. First, Alvarez fulfills the aim of showing the shift of some North American Pentecostals from fundamentalist evangelicalism to a more historically grounded faith via the recovery of the Great Tradition. This is done especially well in chapter one’s outline of various paleo-orthodox movements and chapter two’s linkage of Pentecostal orthodoxy with monasticism and mysticism. Second, Pentecostalism is shown not to be at odds with recovering the Great Tradition. This is shown through the traditioning of Pentecostal orthodoxy within the monastic and mystical Christian traditions (45). However, it is even more poignantly demonstrated via the personal stories provided in chapter three. Third, the work attempts to outline the theological and historical qualifications of Pentecostal orthodoxy and admirably shows the contributions of Afro-Latino Pentecostals to the movement. Alvarez does provide extensive quotations from the early church, which provide a theological base for his understanding of the church’s “classic consensual teaching” (21–22). Some fascinating historical moorings for Pentecostal orthodoxy are also included, including William Seymour’s surprising use of liturgical ordination rites and an episcopal polity (104). However, the brevity of the work inhibits the expansive theological and historical work that could be done to cover the movement more fully. Alvarez is to be commended for highlighting the presence and importance of Afro-Latino Pentecostals in their recovery of the Great Tradition and for recognizing the white-normative bias of many that can be seen within the scholarship as well as noted from Alvarez’s personal observation (101, 115).

*Pentecostal Orthodoxy* will prove useful for scholars in the fields of Pentecostalism, liturgical studies, ecumenical studies, and those studying doctrinal development. This work provides the first major exploration of the Pentecostal orthodoxy movement. More can be done to express the theological and historical underpinnings of Pentecostal orthodoxy. For instance, Alvarez emphasizes orthopathy in regard to Pentecostal orthodoxy, but the blend of orthopathy, orthodoxy, and orthopraxy can be observed within Pentecostalism and would be fruitfully commented on in further work. This work can be done within each stream of the historic church, but especially within Pentecostalism. In ecumenical studies, some of the hypothetical questions and possibilities that Alvarez posits in his final chapter could provide fruitful material for theological and historical exploration. For the pastor, this work provides the nascence of steps forward, particularly through the inclusion of personal stories, to retrieve the Great Tradition while remaining authentic to one’s tradition.
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