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C B R F J O U R N A L 9

**Special Issue**

# **PENTECOSTALISM**

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## SPECIAL ISSUE

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### PENTECOSTALISM

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The Christian Brethren Research Fellowship

## PREFACE

This issue of the *Journal* deals with a topical and an important subject, and it attempts to deal with it objectively, if forthrightly. For that reason it is felt that this number may have a value beyond the normal circulation of the C.B.R.F. *Journal*, and it is being made available to the general public. At the same time, several of the usual domestic features of the *Journal* are held over for later issues.

It must be emphasised at the commencement of this issue that we have the deepest respect for the Pentecostal churches as such, and that we are glad that we can number many of their members among our friends: as we number them also among our many true brethren in Christ. Readers from among Brethren who have read Lesslie Newbigin's valuable book *The Household of God* cannot have failed to notice that many of our views on the nature of the Church fit into that category which Newbigin calls Pentecostal far more readily than into either of the other two categories. This very similarity highlights the importance to churches of Brethren of the subject dealt with in these pages. There are those who suggest that in the particular views which distinguish Pentecostal churches from others, there are new aspects of the work of the Spirit of God which represent fresh light beyond that which may characterise the insights of our own churches. Why, they ask, should these churches refuse to go beyond the insights which gave rise to their own movement?

The similarity which Newbigin's book throws into relief may, however, have other implications. It is in just those tendencies which they share with Pentecostal churches, that so many of the weaknesses which have caused distress within the ranks of Brethren have arisen. There is the excessive individualism and its tendency to division: there is also the too glib profession of acquaintance with divine things, and of the guidance of the Spirit. There is therefore another school of thought, not obscurantist in the face of new light, but nevertheless fearful whether this may not be an advance at all, but a strengthening of all too regrettable tendencies from which many have been struggling to break free.

Two men from among assemblies were recently invited to attend a Conference on 'Basic Questions of the Understanding of the Church' held at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland. At the conference there were present many others who were not committed to the ecumenical movement itself, and it was one leading evangelical from the U.S.A. who, in speaking of pentecostalism, sketched the dilemma of the Church today suspended between 'institutional deadness and charismatic chaos.' It is a provocative thought: and in that dilemma Brethren also may have something to say.

Which of the two above-mentioned attitudes to pentecostalism as a system of doctrine (not to Pentecostal churches as such) is the more valid? The decision is to be made. It is to be hoped that this issue of the C.B.R.F. *Journal* will be of help to many in making it.

**THE NEXT ANNUAL MEETING**  
**SATURDAY 30th OCTOBER, 1965**  
**at KINGSWAY HALL, W.C.2.**  
**(near Holborn Underground Station.)**

**4 p.m. and 6.30 p.m.**

*The Guest Speakers will include*

**Professor D. J. E. INGRAM OF KEELE UNIVERSITY**

**CHRISTIAN LITERATURE FOR A NON-CHRISTIAN  
WORLD**

This is the title of an interesting new competition announced by the IVF, for literature for those who "couldn't care less", for "the hardened outsider, cynical of anything to do with Christianity". Details from the Publications Secretary, Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 39 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1.

**OUR LAST ISSUE**

A very considerable correspondence has resulted from the last issue of the *Journal*. This is gratifying, as the whole purpose of that issue was to stimulate objective consideration of a serious subject. It is hoped to deal fully with this correspondence at a later date, and possibly to devote another issue to a survey of points raised, and to contributions from persons who have moved to Brethren from other connections. Contributions from members are invited, and should be sent to the secretary.

# INTRODUCTION—

## THE DIVINE ENCOUNTER

When we approach any subject which arouses such deep emotional conflict as does that of pentecostalism, among defenders and opponents, we are wise if we define the main point at issue in our discussion clearly and early.

The main point in the pentecostal dispute reduces itself to this: at what part of human experience may we expect that God will most strongly and intimately encounter the individual? All schools of pentecostal thought have this in common: that they believe that the most powerful encounter takes place, or at least is signified, in the extraordinary; in an experience which superficially appears supernatural. For that experience, they encourage men to seek of God.

### **What is NOT our concern**

Our concern in this issue of the C.B.R.F. journal is *not* related to the Pentecostal Churches themselves. They have at least faced and wrestled with many of the issues which we are only beginning to discuss, and even where we may disagree with their emphases, we readily acknowledge their deep devotedness, and the grace of God which has been given to them. God has mightily used their evangelistic gifts and their zeal, and we believe that their own experiences in seeking to contain sign gifts within a stable church life will lead many among them to acknowledge the strength of many of the points made here.

Second, our concern is *not* as to whether or not the Holy Spirit can or does use the sign gifts as His sovereign act. To put the point at its lowest, we acknowledge that He did so in New Testament times, and we acknowledge that it is within His sovereign disposition to bestow them at any other time of His choosing. It is not for us to dictate the workings of God, either by insisting that He must use certain channels of action, or conversely that He never uses certain channels.

Third, our concern is *not* with the personal devotions of the individual. Not one of us has the right to interfere with the direct relationships of a soul with its Maker. We may have our own thoughts, and express our own opinions, but for the ultimate freedom of the individual before God we must remain for ever vigilant.

### **What IS our concern**

Our concern in this journal is with the claims of pentecostal teaching, when it enters local churches which have not known it, often disruptively,

and always to puzzle and disturb many of the Christians in those churches. At that point we are entitled and obliged to ask for its credentials. If an event in my local church is the work of God, then it is my duty to acknowledge it as such, at whatever cost to my prepossessions and prejudices. But how am I to satisfy myself that it *is* the work of God? There can be only one final answer. Experience may help, but the world is full of conflicting experiences. The generally accepted teachings of the Church of God may be immensely important, yet the Church itself has been known to oppress the truth. Ultimately, we can only go back to the Biblical foundations, and ask if the teaching is true to those foundations. This, and not a literalistic bandying of proof texts, is what we mean by the authority of Scripture.

### **The claims of experience**

The necessity of this appeal to the Scriptures becomes plain when the problem faces us at first hand. When men come to us and claim with enthusiastic conviction that they have had certain experiences, that those experiences are in fact *the filling of the Holy Spirit*, and that we too must earnestly seek and find Him by those same experiences or remain for ever upon a lower plane of spiritual life; then we are not permitted to accept those claims at their face value until we have first tested them deeply. God has entrusted to each of us experiences of Himself. We ask whether we do Him despite, and despise our own birthright, if we grasp for these other things as something better—things, as they are, which seem by comparison grotesque and immature. Some of us have known the quiet immensity of silent worship. Others have felt His presence in moments of intense need. Others of us have known Him in a fellow man or woman. Others of us have felt our hearts burn within us at some advance in intellectual understanding. Others of us have ‘thought His thoughts after Him’ in study of His world or of the men He made. Were these experiences but the antechamber of His presence, and does the full glory only await us in experiences of which Paul himself wrote ‘If . . . all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?’ It is when we are faced with teachings thus seemingly arrogant, that we pause to ask whether they have overstepped the balance of Scripture.

### **The contents of this issue**

We have allowed the contributors to this issue full freedom of expression, and for that reason it will be found that their views at times conflict. In this, we do our readers the compliment of believing that they will prefer to have it this way, that they may reach a more informed judgment of their own, and not one presented ready-made by others. If any would have it otherwise, we can only reply that we are sorry, but that we do not believe that a controversial subject can be constructively dealt with by suppression.

This introduction itself will cease at the end of this paragraph to be

mere introduction, and will attempt to cover the Scriptural and doctrinal background to the subject. It is followed by two articles of general information: in the first, Mr. J. C. Cotterill explains from first hand knowledge something of the birth and growth of the Pentecostal movement in the United Kingdom, and in the second Mr. George Patterson surveys a somewhat wider field, with particular reference to his own experiences in the East. Mr. Patterson's own attitude is somewhat ambivalent. He paints the Pentecostal movement 'warts and all', while at the same time taking a standpoint which is different from some of the views expressed in this introduction.

These articles are followed by relevant book reviews. Mr. G. J. Polkinghorne writes on two standard works, Cutten's *Speaking with Tongues* (1927) and the more recent, but less cool, *Speaking with Tongues* by Morton T. Kelsey. Readers of Mr. Polkinghorne's review of this last book will be interested by the much less critical review of the same book which follows, from the pen of Mr. Hugh Thompson. Finally, Mr. Geoffrey Simmons contributes a *Viewpoint* which is representative of the reaction of those who accept some of the recent occurrences outside Pentecostal churches rather less critically than some other contributors to this issue. Those who know Mr. Simmons's personal self-sacrifice and sterling labours in his own district will accept this viewpoint seriously, whatever their own conclusions.

### **The questions put**

First, then, we shall attempt in this article to cover briefly the Scriptural and doctrinal background of the subject, remembering the main point at issue, as we have already defined it: *at what part of human experience may we expect that God will most strongly and intimately encounter the individual?* We have already dealt with the necessity for this appeal to the Scriptures: the method by which we make the appeal will be by putting four further questions.

1. Does the pentecostal response to that question rest upon a sound interpretation of the Scriptures, taken in their context and read as a whole?
2. Are the terms which pentecostalism uses, apparently Biblical though they are, in fact used with meanings which correspond to their Biblical meanings?
3. Does the conception of the Holy Spirit conveyed by that response correspond to the picture of His operations shown to us by Scripture as a whole? In short, does it accord with a Biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit?
4. What in fact are the sign gifts, and what is the margin of error in interpreting them as workings of the Holy Spirit? What ground, indeed, is there for believing that His use of them is a normal mode of His working?

### **Traditional arguments against pentecostalism inadequate**

Now it is deplorable that some arguments which have been traditionally advanced against pentecostal teachings have been completely inadequate for their purpose. Before we pass to the four questions which



have been put, we must therefore remark on these arguments, for they have become so inadequate that their continued propagation has become an act of pastoral irresponsibility. These traditional arguments have been as follows:—

1. That the gifts ceased in the apostolic age.
2. That they are of necessarily demonic origin (usually supported by anecdotes which are often explicable psychologically).

Both of these arguments are shown to be inadequate by later articles in this journal, and it is only necessary to add here:—

1. The former argument adopts a question begging attitude to a considerable body of historical evidence to the contrary, and its only Biblical support is found in a highly doubtful interpretation of 1 Cor. 13: 8. It is not necessary to discuss this interpretation, beyond remarking that simple common sense should instruct any responsible leader that to oppose any aggressive teaching by an appeal to an interpretation of Scripture which, at best, is only one of several competing alternatives, and which appears to the opponent to contradict his plain experience, is to invite serious controversy and to aggravate differences. Elders relying on this type of government, have only themselves to blame if division results.

2. The latter argument shares an error of the pentecostal teaching itself, with which we shall deal later in this article: the error of undue supernaturalism. But, taking it at its own level, it is plainly an argument to be avoided by any thoughtful Christian. Mat. 12: 24-31 should suffice for that.

### **The apparent replies**

Yet the inadequacy of traditional opposition adds nothing positive to the pentecostal hypothesis itself, and the rest of this article turns to test that hypothesis by the four questions already set out.

The results of the tests are deeply disturbing. To anticipate the detailed discussion which follows, the answers to the four questions emerge as follows:—

1. The pentecostal response seems to rest upon a distorted and selective exegesis of Scripture.
2. The two basic terms of pentecostalism, although Biblical in wording, are used in ways which do not correspond to their Biblical usage.
3. Behind the pentecostal response lies an implied doctrine of the Holy Spirit which is grossly inadequate in relation to the Biblical doctrine: inadequate, indeed, to the point of potential error.
4. There is reason to believe that the mechanisms of tongues and of many healings (although not all) are natural psychological or psycho-somatic mechanisms: there is thus no necessary guaran-

tee that their mere occurrence is a sign of the Spirit's working, and no reason to believe that His use of those mechanisms is to be preferred to a use of any other capacity of the human make-up.

It would seem, indeed, that the ultimate results of the teachings will be to divert the attention of the people of God from the enjoyment of the full liberty of their inheritance in the Holy Spirit, and to preoccupy them with a highly emotional and subjective by-way of experience.

It will be noticed that these replies relate only to the doctrinal formulation of pentecostalism. Not one of them denies that the Holy Spirit may and does at times of His choosing use the sign gifts, as He may use any other human capacity. They are rather concerned with the explanation which is given for such happenings, and with their relation to the normal life of the churches.

The conclusions are serious and far-reaching, and require fuller justification.

### **A distorted exegesis**

The most prominent and common of the sign gifts is that of tongues (see Mr. Patterson's article). Moreover, tongues present the problem of pentecostalism in its most acute form: healings, the other most prominent gift, are normally open to objective testing. In most pentecostalism, tongues inevitably emerge as the nub of the practical expression of the doctrine.

Now tongues occupy a comparatively insignificant section of the New Testament record. They have no place in the recorded teaching of Jesus, apart from the doubtfully authentic passage Mk. 16: 17, 18—a passage which creates as many problems for the adherent of the sign gifts as it solves. Apart from this, tongues are referred to explicitly in three passages of the Acts, and in one extended passage in the epistles. The three occurrences in Acts are at Pentecost (Ac. 2: 1-21) (where the narrative on the face of it suggests a miracle quite unlike the usual phenomenon), at the 'Gentile Pentecost' of ch. 10: 44-48, and at the 'untimely Pentecost' of ch. 19: 1-7. Beyond these three incidents, each from the initiatory experiences, the 'birth pangs', of the Church, not one of the abounding conversion stories records the occurrence of the phenomenon. Tongues must be read into the narrative. Nor is this argument from silence a weak one, for the author of Acts lays continual and repeated emphasis upon the miraculous elements of his story.

To this paucity of descriptive evidence, must be added an absence of doctrinal teaching on the subject, whether in Acts or elsewhere. Even in the one passage in the epistles in which reference is made to the subject, there is no real doctrinal content to the phenomenon in itself. Paul takes the situation as he finds it, but tongues do not have the doctrinal significance which they have for the modern pentecostal. This feature is the more striking in the light of the intensely important place which the doctrine of the Holy Spirit has in Paul's theology. The epistle to the Galatians is of

especial significance in this respect. In it, if tongues are indeed hinted at in the descriptive verse, 3: 5, then there must have been a virtually deliberate abstention from reference in the important chapter 5, in which Paul deals with the practical expression of the Spirit. In that chapter, the stress is entirely upon the *normal* manifestations of the Spirit's fruit within ordinary life.

The one passage dealing with tongues is of course in 1 Cor. chs. 12 to 14. From that passage we learn that, whatever was the practice in other churches, the practice of tongues (*glossolalia* as they are technically called) had become a regular feature of the activities of the Corinthian church. The practice did not guarantee a high plane of spiritual life, for, despite its high endowment of spiritual gift (1: 7), the Corinthian church is described by the apostle as 'yet carnal' (3: 3). The tone of Paul's comment on tongues throughout chapters 12 to 14 is unmistakable. While, as a wise pastor, he is anxious not to take from the yet carnal church (3: 1-3)\* a gift with which its members were as emotionally involved as any later practitioner, he clearly aims to depreciate the gift, to bring it under rigid self-discipline, and to point the converts to the higher and maturer states of Christian experience—particularly to faith, hope and love. Tongues are but one among many gifts, and one of the least of those.

In the light of the plain tendency of the chapters, it surely smacks of special pleading to encourage the practice of tongues by taking out of their context certain favourable phrases, where Paul meets his charges on their own ground: references such as that to edification in 14: 4, to his desire for the Corinthians in 14: 5, or his personal boast in 14: 18. It is also to the point to observe that a literalist interpretation of 14: 39, divorcing it from its historic setting, involves normal pentecostal practice in hopeless difficulties with verse 34. (That this argument is delightfully double-edged, readers of recent correspondence in this journal will need no reminding.)

If the Biblical background is so thin, how then has pentecostalism built its strong appeal to Scripture, and the authoritarian attitude which it often derives from that appeal? The following suggested analysis of its thinking may indicate how this has happened:—

- (a) Certain experiences are taken as a stereotype of a full experience of the Holy Spirit, on the basis of a highly selective choice of examples.
- (b) To this stereotype there are allocated certain expressions derived from Scripture, such as *the baptism* or *filling of the Holy Spirit*.
- (c) This stereotype forms its own conception of the Holy Spirit and His working, in the minds of those who hold it.
- (d) Scripture (and especially the expressions referred to) are then read and interpreted in the light of this conception.

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\*There is a significant progression in this passage. They were *sarkinoi* ('made of flesh'—immature) (v. 1). They are now *sarkikoi* ('thoroughly flesh-minded') (v. 3)—(J. A. T. Robinson *The Body* p. 24 n.).

This is a common progression, and by no means confined to pentecostalism. Readers of this journal may not be slow in finding examples nearer home.

### Terms misused

Exegesis of the two important expressions of pentecostalism just referred to (*the baptism of the Spirit* and *the filling of the Spirit*) next becomes pertinent to our enquiry. Pentecostal teaching uses both terms in a definitive sense, as denoting a special and marked experience. We should, if this use is correct, find the terms used in Scripture in a similarly definitive manner: that is, as a technical term describing such an experience.

In point of fact, neither is obviously so used, unless that usage is read into the terms. The term *baptise with (or in) the Spirit* is derived from an original usage attributed to John the Baptist and recorded at the beginning of each of the Gospels (Mt. 3: 11, Mk. 1: 8, Lk. 3: 16, Jn. 1: 33). The term is invariably used as part of a vivid figure of speech, contrasting the water baptism of John with the work of Christ. The significance of the term lies in this contrast. The two baptisms symbolise, on the one hand the essentially partial and incomplete work of John, dealing as it did in symbols of the divine, and on the other the complete work of Jesus, dealing with the final divine Reality of the Holy Spirit with men. Now in the occurrences in Acts, which are the basis of the pentecostal use of the term, this whole figure of speech is retained (Ac. 1: 5 and 11: 16). The point of the contrast must therefore also be retained: the reference is not so much to the specific individual experiences of the disciples (still less to the signs which accompanied the experiences on those two occasions), so much as to the whole event of the completion of the work of Jesus, in the coming of the Spirit to be with men as He had never been before.

It is possible that the term is used in one other place in Scripture—in 1 Cor. 12: 13 (although the writer of these notes believes that the reference there is to water baptism, merging that symbol of the new birth into the reality of the Spirit's work). If it is used there, it must be fatal to the pentecostal view, for the term is related conclusively to the new birth, and not to a subsequent special experience. It is interesting to compare this with the R.S.V. of Ac. 11: 17—'when we believed . . . .'

The N.T. usage of the other term, *filled with the Holy Ghost*, is also to be noted. It is used once by Paul (Eph. 5: 18) in no definitive sense, but again as part of a striking figure of speech which itself gives rise to the expression. Apart from this, the N.T. use of the term is descriptive, rather than definitive, and is related either to the equipping of a servant of God for a specific task or to meet a specific emergency, in a manner similar to its O.T. use, or as part of a general testimonial to personal character. It is used once only in the direct context of tongues (Ac. 2: 4), and is also used once in relation to the severely practical duties of serving tables (Ac. 6: 3).

Most significant, however, is the fact that the term is (apart from the

one Pauline use already quoted) confined to the writings of Luke, who, as we have remarked, uses it in a manner reminiscent of its O.T. usage. Now if this were a technical term, recognised as describing an important and definite stage of Christian experience, we should have expected it to appear as such in the N.T., and to be used as such by several of its writers. In fact it appears as the idiosyncratic usage of one writer only, and applied by him not to such a fulfilling experience, so much as to the divine help available in the face of the immediate needs and emergencies of life. Jesus, *full of the Holy Ghost*, was led into the wilderness of temptation (Lk. 4: 1).

### **An inadequate doctrine**

Concentration upon the sign gifts as a necessary sign of the Spirit's presence produces (or is produced by) an underlying conception of the Holy Spirit and His working. That conception is largely supernaturalistic. A study of the full Biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit illuminates the inadequacy of this conception, and throws into relief its dangers. It also reinforces our earlier conclusions as to the distorted nature of the exegesis upon which pentecostal teaching is based, by directing our attention (for the basic essentials of such a doctrine) to passages of Scripture which are rarely referred to in the writings of an aggressive pentecostalism. Conversely, the proof texts of such writings are seen to be of minor importance to the doctrine as a whole.

Some understanding of the scope and depth of the Biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit can be gained from the study of a book such as Griffith Thomas's *The Holy Spirit of Promise*. This article can do no more than to indicate the guide-lines of such a study.

Basically, and inadequately, we might describe the Holy Spirit in two phrases: 'God at work in the world' and 'God present with us'. Simply because this world is God's creation, the Holy Spirit is not so much 'supernatural' (though He is clearly that), as potentially the most 'natural' feature of our whole experience. He is not only 'transcendent', but emphatically 'immanent'.

So we find that in the opening sentences of the Bible the Spirit of God 'moved upon the face of the waters' in creation. The first men to be described as *filled with the Spirit of God* are so filled in order that they might do their daily jobs the better, and that their genius of craftsmanship and artistry might be heightened and made more sensitive and fitting for the furnishing of the Tabernacle (Ex. 31: 1-6 and 35: 30-35). (In passing this fact is significant in the light of that familiar attitude which dismisses the aesthetic as 'of the flesh'.) The Spirit is the revealer of God, and the agent of divine power and enabling for special tasks. Joshua is *full of the spirit of wisdom* that he might be the more effective political and military leader of the people (Deut. 34: 9), and Micah is *full of power by the spirit of the Lord* (Mic. 3: 8), to bring correction and rebuke to the people. While the Spirit descends upon men at times in ways mysterious and extraordinary, He is also present in the everyday life of mankind, striving with

men (Gen. 6: 3). He is the divine power and energy for specific and practical tasks among men in their ordinary living, social and political, as well as for the proclamation of the divine will.

These aspects are delightfully and concisely summed up in the words of the Nicene Creed: 'The Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Lifegiver . . .'.

The N.T. shows a new dimension of life in the Spirit inaugurated. The Holy Spirit is now among men and dwelling in men. He is a Companion for the believer's permanent guidance, enlightenment, strengthening and comfort. Yet the nature of His activities is not changed. It is intensified and deepened, and made permanent and more intimate, but He remains at the base of the springs of everyday life. The classic passages, and infinitely the most important for the Biblical doctrine, are John chs. 13-16 and Romans 8. The former gives us that expressive Greek word to denote His presence, the *Paraklētos*. The latter finds Him so closely infused into the life of the redeemed man, so intimately the director and shaper of mental outlook and of personal conduct, that, in the words of Griffith Thomas:—

'Summing up the whole question of the relation of the Divine to the human "spirit", we may remark that they are so intimate as to be indistinguishable, although their union is always regarded as equivalent to communion, never to identity'.

(*The Holy Spirit of Promise*, p. 30.)

Above all, the centre of the Spirit's witness is not His own activity, but the Lord Jesus Christ (Jn. 16: 13-15).

It is an understanding of this basic doctrine which illuminates the dangers which arise when the extraordinary phenomena of tongues and the sign gifts are unduly emphasised. Such an emphasis inevitably diverts the desires and the attention of the Christian to phenomena of transitory excitement, with the result that the full depths of the meaning of the indwelling Spirit and of His constant companionship in the whole of life are distorted and lost. Here is the dilemma of pentecostalism. If tongues are seen as inessential, they will soon be lost sight of: for they are essentially abnormal and unnatural. If they are to be made a part of regular church practice, on the other hand, it can only be at the expense of unduly emphasising their part, and indeed of insisting on their necessity: a step which can only be taken by distorting the doctrine of the Spirit and the Biblical exegesis on which it is based.

Here too is the erroneous potential of the teaching. It concentrates on the supernatural, and opens up again that very divide between the material and the spiritual, against which the whole truth of the Incarnation cries out. In it is the beginning of the error into which both the Docetic and the Manichee fell—those heretic teachers to whom the material became illusory or evil, and the spiritual alone of God and good. The whole of history insists that no teaching which opens that division in the minds of men can ultimately be for the health of the Church.

## The nature of the sign gifts

Finally, we turn to the last of the questions: a question to which modern psychology has yet to give a full answer, and which is taken up later in this issue. Manifestations of a nature similar to tongues are exploited by cults and fanaticisms well outside the bounds of Christian profession—indeed 1 Cor. 12: 2 may suggest that this fact was familiar to Paul and the Corinthians. A pertinent example appeared in a *Radio Times* description of a Jamaican cult (4 Apr. 1965)—

‘Remarkable sights, hypnotic sounds of rites within the secret world of this Jamaican cult: in a fine frenzy of “tromping” and furious drumming spirits take possession and Pocomaniacs begin to “speak in tongues” . . .’

These considerations suggest that we are dealing with a phenomenon which is no less a capacity of the human make-up than any other capacity of which use can be made by the Holy Spirit, or by more sinister forces whether natural or otherwise. As such, they are at best no more to be accepted as automatic signs of the Spirit, than the mere fact that a man may be a good speaker is to be accepted as an automatic sign of the Spirit’s presence in His preaching. But, in contrast to most other capacities, the sign gifts are abnormal in character, and their abnormality calls for a sober reassessment of indiscriminate encouragement to tongues and the like. If they are, as has been suggested, analogous to those utterances experienced ‘under stress of deep emotion or when the “censor” of the psyche is removed by hypnosis, narcotics or drugs’ (C. S. C. Williams in *Peake’s Commentary* 1962, 839a, referring to Cutten’s book reviewed below), then we have every reason to discourage that anxious seeking for these experiences which is the hallmark of aggressive pentecostalism. Such techniques may be beneficially used under proper medical care, but the intricacy of the human psychological structure is such as to cause us to be unconvinced by enthusiastic claims of their general therapeutic value (see Kelsey’s book reviewed below) or by descriptions of the sense of well-being released by them (by no means always a sign of a beneficent agent). The claim to therapeutic value, after all, implies a prior need for therapy, and therefore the existence of abnormality.

Such claims in themselves are a confession of uncertainty. If the Holy Spirit is using such signs, then their therapeutic efficiency is secondary, if not irrelevant. If, on the other hand, the practices are to be taken only on this level, then we may well doubt whether the encouragement of ‘do-it-yourself’ psychiatry is likely to be any more desirable than any of the other types of indiscriminate ‘do-it-yourself’ dosing, to which the advertisements in certain popular journals suggest that the Christian public may be unhappily prone.

## Summary and Conclusion

In conclusion, we return to the central question asked in the opening paragraphs of this article. The answer to that question must surely be that, contrary to the implied answer of pentecostal thought, the divine encounter

may take place at any and every point of human experience. Where it occurs most powerfully will differ for each individual, but the encounter at *some* level of intensity should take place, for us all, at *every* part of normal life. To the man who has learned, consistently and constantly, to find the Holy Spirit with him there, 'tongues' and 'signs' surely become an irrelevancy, tokens of immaturity. Yet such a man, as none other, is surely, in Luke's meaning of the term, *full of faith and of the Holy Ghost*. Any teaching which obscures the immense richness of the knowledge of the Holy Spirit's activity in every aspect of our existence, is obscuring the true wealth of our heritage, however powerful its emotional appeal.

F. ROY COAD.

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Beware of that daughter of pride, *enthusiasm*. Sometimes likewise it is the parent of pride. O, keep at the utmost distance from it! Give no place to an heated imagination. Do not ascribe to God what is not of God. Do not easily suppose dreams, voices, impressions, visions or revelations to be from God, without sufficient evidence. They may be purely natural: they may be diabolical. Therefore remember the caution of the apostle, "Beloved, believe not every spirit but try the spirits whether they be of God" (1 Jn. 4:1.). Try all things by the written Word and let all bow down before it.

John Wesley



# THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT AND ITS TEACHING

J. C. COTTERILL

## Introduction

Recent outbreaks of 'speaking with tongues' in churches of the historic denominations, especially Anglican churches, reported in the religious press have awakened world-wide interest and discussion. The purpose of these notes is to provide some background information on the 'Pentecostal Movement', which has now crystallised into several denominations, their teaching and practices; and to indicate the possible situation which we might have to face if the present 'movement' spreads within the churches.

## HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOVEMENT

**Background.** Adherents of the movement claim (with some justification) that the history of the movement began in Acts 2 and there is a continuous history of 'speaking with tongues' from that time until the present century. But the events at the end of the 19th Century form the immediate background to the present century.

The rise of the 'Holiness' movements in the last century formed the stimulus to a searching for an experience more far reaching than that experienced in these movements. The Holiness movements were of two kinds but often the two strands are inter-related. The Salvation Army sought for an enduement of 'pentecostal fire' as an equipment for service and also as the gateway to scriptural holiness. The Keswick Convention as early as 1875, desired an enduement with Holy Ghost power for more fervent prayer, praise and evangelism. The 'Holiness' movements as such, however, distinctly sought an experience subsequent to and deeper than conversion which they termed 'the Baptism of the Holy Spirit'. The reception of this experience was in their case entirely subjective. 'The Pentecostal League', a Holiness movement, was the one which most avowedly linked the experience they were seeking with Pentecost, though they did shrink from the manifestations of the later 'pentecostal' movements.

The revival movements in America and Wales at the turn of the century also contributed something to the genesis of the movement, not perhaps in doctrine or specific pentecostal experience, but in the enthusiasm and fervour of those events.

**Birth.** Topeka, Kansas, is usually given as the place of origin of the modern pentecostal movement. There in January 1900 a young girl broke

out into speech in an unknown tongue. A lively movement was established in Los Angeles by 1906.

The movement was brought to Europe by a Pastor T. B. Barratt, a Cornishman, serving as a Methodist Minister in Oslo, after a visit to U.S.A. He was the chief agent for the spread of pentecostalism though the ground had been prepared in Scandinavia by successive outbreaks of revivals in the 19th Century. The Rev. Alexander A. Boddy, who had visited the Welsh Revival in 1904-5 invited Barratt to England in 1907 when he came to the Keswick Convention. Boddy was vicar of All Saints, Sunderland, and he arranged for Barratt to conduct meetings there. Under his ministry several people received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and spoke in unknown tongues at all night 'waiting' meetings.

The new movement was to some extent disorderly and fanatical. There was a fear of 'quenching the spirit' lest the manifestations cease; and the usual outlet for emotions and energies in evangelism was not yet contemplated, for those who had 'received' considered it their mission to spread the news to other christians, not to the unsaved. Mr. Boddy remained vicar of his parish and with the approval of his bishop held yearly conventions in Sunderland.

**Development.** The first organised body to be formed was the Pentecostal Missionary Union in 1909. It was an interdenominational agency for collection and distribution of missionary funds though it also did a lot of Pentecostal witness at home. Sion College, London, was a centre for pre-1914 pentecostal witness. The general pattern in those years was for those who received the experience to stay within their churches, though suffering much persecution and opposition. The commencement of independent pentecostal churches came about as a result of leaders of independent missions accepting this teaching.

There is always a strong opposition to the development of denominational organisation within the movement in that this was held to compromise the working of the Holy Spirit. There was also a strong opposition to any form of trained ministry and so the leaders to emerge were those with the charismatic gifts, who had no wish to be held in check by an organisation. In addition there was no one leader or group of leaders who were responsible for the new teaching. In the event the denominations which emerged were of two types—the centrally governed Elim, and the staunchly congregational Assemblies of God.

**Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance** was formed as a result of Revival and Divine Healing campaigns conducted by George Jeffreys and E. J. Phillips before 1914 and continuing almost to the present day. Jeffreys had been trained for missionary service abroad, with the P.M.U., but remained in the U.K. and as a result of campaigns he conducted a number of churches were formed which were later grouped together as Elim. From the start it was centrally governed, concentrated on evangelism, deprecated proselytising from other denominations, curbed the excessive emphasis

on 'tongues' and so modified the general line of teaching and prevented the excesses seen at the beginning of the movement from emerging. During the 20's and 30's campaigns were held in many parts of the country and Elim grew rapidly during these years.

**The Apostolic Church** was formed in 1916 and was centred mainly on Wales. It was formed as a result of a union of independent missions and it tried to evolve a structure of church government based on 1 Corinthians chs. 12, 14—on the use of gifts of the Spirit. It has remained predominantly Welsh.

**Assemblies of God** were formed in the early 1920's by the late T. Myerscough and J. N. Parr of Lancashire. They eschewed a tightly knit denomination and stressed congregationalism but adopted a long statement of fundamental truths to which all assemblies desiring to affiliate had to subscribe. Each assembly had its own structure of government; a full time 'pastor' was usually accepted though the Assemblies do not in fact practice 'ordination'.

Among the reasons given for the formation of Assemblies of God, one states that it was desirable to exercise discipline on 'those who walk disorderly' and speaks of recognising those who have authority in the church and another speaks of 'preventing a number of assemblies from falling into unscriptural organisations'.

A number of successful evangelists have campaigned for A. of G., including Stephen Jeffreys, brother of George (one forming his own movement for a time, F. Squire, Full Gospel Testimony) and the movement grew largely in this way after the establishment of the organisation.

**The Bible Pattern Church** was formed about 1939/40 by George Jeffreys breaking away from the Elim Church which he had founded. The extreme centralisation of the latter movement had hardened into a form which Jeffreys considered unscriptural and he formed the new organisation (which has remained small) with a constitution somewhat between Elim and Assemblies.

The two dominant movements have always been Elim and Assemblies and do in fact represent two opposing trends in the development of a charismatic revival.

**Post 1945.** The ecumenical movement has not been without its effect on this wing of the Protestant church. Its first effect was an attempt to bring the main Pentecostal bodies into one organisation. This failed, but there was formed the British Pentecostal Fellowship, with the Secretary of Elim as its secretary and a leading A. of G. member as its chairman—Donald Gee. This is a Fellowship—the separate organisations are as before. It has led to a lessening of rivalry and an increase in co-operation at church and assembly level.

The second effect has been the holding of triennial World Pentecostal Conferences at various centres, the seventh of which was held in Helsinki

in June 1964. From these Conferences has emerged the quarterly, published by Donald Gee for the W.P.C., *Pentecost*, which summarises Pentecostal news on a world wide basis.

Thirdly, and more astonishing, two pentecostal bodies from South America have been accepted by the World Council of Churches as members. This occurred at New Delhi, where other Pentecostal leaders were also present as observers, including Donald Gee from the U.K.

**Pentecostalism today.** It is said (by others) to be the fastest growing segment of protestantism in the Western World. 1 in 3 of Latin American protestants is pentecostal. There is in fact no directory of Pentecostal churches or organisations on a world wide basis and only estimates can be made of numbers which must run into several millions. It carries on aggressive missionary work, concentrating almost entirely on evangelistic work. This is because there is an emphasis on miraculous healing on the one hand so medical missionaries are not considered, but more important there has been throughout the movement from its inception a tendency to disparage all forms of education (except strictly utilitarian). This has meant that doctors and teachers have just not been there even if there had been a desire to conduct medical and educational missionary work. An indication of a change in this respect will be given in the next section.

But with this growth in numbers there has developed a growth in outlook. A quotation from the editorial of the latest issue of *Pentecost* indicates this. 'The pietistic principle that the only purpose of evangelism is to pluck individual souls as brands from the burning and gather them into separated little congregations out of the world will not satisfy the outlook of a new generation of Pentecostal leadership. There has been strong criticism that our big conferences usually have no pronouncements to make on the burning issues of the day such as war, race, sex, youth, atheism, etc. It is easier to live in a ghetto, but is it the will of God?' The whole article would make good reading, and with the alteration of a word or two might well have been written by any progressive in the main line denominations! It argues for the participation of Pentecostals in social, economic and political affairs and goes on to say . . . 'It is significant that for all their propaganda the so-called miracle and deliverance campaigns of Pentecostal evangelists have not made any great impression upon the more serious and hungry hearted multitudes in the churches or even on the world outside. Miracles have their rightful place . . . but not the place that miracle-enthusiasts would claim . . . It is the preaching of the word that the Spirit uses . . . In the final analysis it will be our prophets and teachers which will provide our measurement'. He goes on to say 'Our hearts yearn over the new generation in our Pentecostal movement who are entering our Universities and who possess a culture that their parents seldom possessed . . . We rejoice at a new movement of the Spirit amongst students . . . but also we greatly desire that it may have sane and balanced leadership'. . . . 'Contrary to popular opinion the highly educated and cultured sometimes make the worst fanatics'.

'They are tempted to throw overboard all common sense in their revolt against intellectualism'.

Here is a reversal indeed! A fear that culture and education will become fanatical! In an early issue of this same periodical about 17 years ago an article by my wife on *Christianity and Culture* was generally greeted with the expressions of fear that this line of thinking would hamper the work of the Spirit, and a personal request to engage in student work in Peking University was turned down because it was felt that the full Pentecostal message could not be accepted by such groups!

One or two points deserve attention from these quotations.

- (a) This plea for a wider and more balanced outlook is coming from the older generation of Pentecostal leaders, not the younger ones.
- (b) This new line does represent an actual change for I have personally heard the writer of the above editorial take a completely opposite line 17 or 18 years ago.
- (c) There is no trace of this changed attitude in the U.K. Pentecostal groups' local periodicals. Donald Gee is not now in any executive position with A. of G. but has had influence until recently as Principal of their Bible School at Kenley.

But one great change in *Redemption Tidings* is the inclusion of comments on S.U. portions. Thirty years ago when I discovered S.U. I was warned by my pastor and other leaders that the reading of a 'set' portion of scripture each day would hamper the work of the Holy Spirit!

Such then is a very sketchy idea of the position of the movement today. It needs to be kept in mind in seeking to assess the 'New Penetration' of Pentecostalism in the historic churches and in trying to look to the future to judge the possible line that it might take. These points may become a little clearer later.

## THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND TO THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT

This is a subject on which to tread warily but one or two things might be said with profit, especially to note the social background of early adherents, the changing social patterns, and the social patterns of those whom the 'new' wave of Pentecostalism is reaching.

**Social background.** Whilst the early leaders of the movement, such as Barratt and Boddy, were men educated for the christian ministry, the large majority of the early converts were in fact from a working class background with little education. Nor should this be a surprise since history suggests that most if not all revivals have been amongst the 'common people'. Indeed this was said of our Lord, that 'the common people heard Him gladly'. It is said too that Peter and John were regarded as 'unlearned and ignorant men'—yet they attracted the attention of the 'educated' Pharisees and Sadducees by the authority of their teaching and the power of miracle—and earlier—by the speaking in tongues.

It is to these Biblical precedents that the Pentecostals turn to find authority for their attitude to 'learning'. For not only has the movement remained largely amongst those of few worldly advantages, but most adherents would glory in these apparent disadvantages since these very deprivations class them with the Corinthians to whom Paul wrote . . . 'not many wise, not many powerful, not many noble . . . God chose what was foolish to confound the wise . . . what is weak to shame the strong . . . God chose what is low . . . to bring to nothing the things that are'. They would claim that uneducated fishermen like Peter and John were the persons God used; so today, education is unnecessary, and indeed a positive disadvantage, for the evangelist and minister.

The sociologist might say that the charismatic gifts enable those who are deprived to achieve a status—certainly amongst their own group and in their minds over against the non-Pentecostals. Be that as it may, it is true that very few children of Pentecostals reached 6th forms in schools and those who attained University were very few indeed. Indeed the very large majority did not go to Grammar Schools. This situation refers to pre-1945: as indicated above the situation is changing and there is now a Students' Pentecostal Fellowship along the lines of other denominational student fellowships. It is too early to say what effect this is going to have on the movement as a whole with largely academically untrained ministers, ministering to an increasingly strong University trained congregation.

**Personal purity.** Pentecostals have inherited an early Methodist type of other-worldly asceticism. Little is said about how a man should earn his living or about labour relations, etc. Honesty, of course, is expected. It is largely in the field of expenditure of leisure time and money that pronouncements are made. Pleasure in particular signified 'worldliness' and sometimes the very word is used in the plural—'pleasures'—to signify a whole host of activities from which a christian should abstain.

The usual question is: 'Does it take the keen edge of my spirituality? Could my spare time, energy and money be used for something higher?' Reading—except of distinctively christian books (and especially Pentecostal books)—is not regarded with favour, and games are not encouraged.

**Church organisation.** Most churches hold meetings of various kinds every evening and the assembly or church becomes the social centre for the group. Whilst this effectively precludes other cultural activities, it is probably true to say that it satisfies the needs of the group to a large extent and provides for fellowship and friendship within a christian group and church. And it is an open question as to what cultural activities would be followed if the church did not occupy so large a place in the peoples' lives.

Perhaps it may be significant that Pentecostalism has spread much more rapidly in Latin America, and in the U.S.A. than in England. In Latin America it is the largest Protestant church and one Pentecostal group has grown from 5 to over 400 churches in seven years! The spread

has been amongst the poor and illiterate almost entirely; the historic denominations are working among the middle classes. It is quite probable that the phlegmatic English temperament has much to do with the only moderate success in England.

## DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES OF THE PENTECOSTAL GROUPS

Though there are some minor differences between various Pentecostal groups on matters of doctrine, use of spiritual gifts and church organisation, yet there is a definite corpus of doctrine which fairly well defines a group which is 'Pentecostal'.

**Doctrinal Summary.** The following doctrinal summary is taken largely from the twelve Fundamental Truths of Assemblies of God. These, with very minor differences, are accepted by members of the British Pentecostal Fellowship (though the Apostolic Church would add to them) and also by the eight foreign Pentecostal bodies with whom A. of G. in U.K. are in co-operative fellowship. In some ways this doctrinal statement leaves something to be desired especially in its strictly theological and Christological aspects. This is not to say that the movement is at all deficient in these respects in its faith: it is rather that the statement has emphasised the experiential aspects of Christian belief. This is in line with what has been said above concerning the intellectual outlook of the movement. Anything approaching theological speculation is not considered wise, necessary or profitable.

The statement can be summarised as below.

- (a) **The Basis of faith.** This is stated in a refreshingly simple manner. 'The Bible is the inspired word of God'. This is a much better statement than some more orthodox bodies, but in fact what is always held by the movement is that the Bible is 'verbally' inspired.
- (b) **The Godhead.** One statement only, affirming belief in the Unity of the One, True and Living God who has revealed Himself as One Being in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A statement concerning Christ is included in the statement about Salvation.
- (c) **Evangelical doctrines.** These include statements concerning the Fall of man, Salvation through faith in Christ (which is the New Birth), Holiness of life and conduct, Everlasting punishment of all 'whose names are not written in the Book of Life'. Oddly enough there is no statement parallel to this last concerning the assurance (or existence) of heaven.
- (d) **The Sacraments.** These are two in number. Believers' Baptism by immersion and Breaking of Bread.
- (e) **Eschatology.** The pre-millennial second coming of Jesus Christ is the hope of the Believers and (as stated above) everlasting punishment for unbelievers.

(f) **Distinctive Pentecostal doctrines.** These are three in number.

1. *The Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, the initial evidence of which is the speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.

A few comments on this might help to explain.

- (i) The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is held to be a separate second experience, subsequent to conversion. Matt. 3: 11, Acts 1: 5.
- (ii) The Holy Spirit is given in this sense as an equipment for service, (Acts 1: 8) though they are at all times careful not to speak in terms of an impersonal force but of the coming of a Person.
- (iii) As against the Holiness movements and the Salvation Army, this experience is not connected with sanctification or purifying, Holiness of life is enjoined in one article, but not in connection with this experience. Holiness of life is enjoined in obedience to God's command.
- (iv) The initial evidence. On this point differences arise within the movement itself. A. of G. make the above claim on the basis of four occasions in the Acts where believers are said to have been filled with the Holy Spirit, or Baptised with the Holy Spirit. These are: ch. 2: 4, ch. 8: 14-18 (Simon saw the effects and wanted to buy the gift), ch. 10: 44-47 and ch. 19: 1-7. Elim and some other groups would say that some miraculous sign is evidence of receiving this gift and would not definitely specify tongues.
- (v) Pentecostals quite arbitrarily distinguish between the 'gift of tongues' in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14, and the 'sign of tongues' which is the evidence mentioned above in the three cases in the Acts. The general lines of distinction are as follows:
  - (i) In Acts a large number spoke with tongues at one time. In 1 Cor. only three are allowed to speak.
  - (ii) In Acts they all spoke together; in Cor. the injunction is to speak in turn.
  - (iii) In Acts there is no mention of an interpreter: in Cor. Paul forbids the use of tongues without an interpreter.

It should be noted that this whole doctrine is based not on specific N.T. teaching but on (a selection of?) cases. It would seem that this method of establishing doctrine is open to some doubt.

2. *Deliverance from sickness, by Divine Healing, is provided for in the Atonement.* Is. 53: 4, 5. Matt. 8: 16, 17.

This second distinctive pentecostal doctrine is not perhaps so peculiar to them now as it was when formulated in the 1920's. Healing through prayer with or without anointing oil (Jas. 5: 14) is taken to be the normal method of healing and recourse to medical aid is often regarded as a sign



of lack of faith. (Medicines are sometimes referred to scathingly as 'aids to Divine Healing'). Two kinds of healing are mentioned. One, instantaneous, being the effect of the exercise of the gift of working of miracles (1 Cor. 12) the slower more natural healing being the result of the exercise of the gift of healing. But all are urged to seek healing through their own prayers if they cannot receive the help of the pastor or other christian worker.

Testimonies to healing, some spectacular, were the chief means of advertising evangelistic campaigns in the early days of the movement and interest was certainly aroused in this way and there are many well authenticated cases of healing known.

3. *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit and the Offices have been set by God in the Church as recorded in the New Testament.* 1 Cor. 12: 4-11, 28. Eph. 4: 7-16.

The gifts of the spirit are supernatural endowments given to individuals in the church by the Holy Spirit at His Will. The Offices are the men, so gifted to fulfil the office they occupy.

The gifts are listed as: The Word of Wisdom, the Word of Knowledge, Faith, Gifts of healing, Working of Miracles, Prophecy, Tongues and Interpretation of tongues, and Discerning of spirits.

All these are taken to be supernatural endowments and not human accomplishments. There is no general agreement of what some of these gifts really are and the two textbooks on the subject by Donald Gee and Harold Horton differ considerably on the explanation of the first two gifts.

**The Gifts of the Spirit in practice.** Much more could be said on the subject of the teaching but a few words on the practice in meetings may be helpful.

(a) *Waiting meetings.* Most churches either use the normal weekly prayer meeting as a waiting meeting, or set aside a special evening for this purpose. All those who are seeking the Baptism in the Spirit are invited to the front, and whilst the prayer meeting carries on with extempore prayer the leader of the meeting or the pastor prays for those who are 'seeking' and usually lays hands on them. He not infrequently prays or speaks in tongues (it being assumed that he has this gift) and the seeker is asked to speak out the first words coming into the mind. Most pentecostalists in fact do receive their experience in this type of meeting.

(b) *Spontaneous baptisms.* However, not a few have received this experience without any intermediary and have testified to spontaneously being given the power to speak in tongues and have done so. This was the experience of many of the early leaders.

(c) *Use of tongues in services.* The meetings where tongues are most used are the Sunday morning Breaking of Bread service and the prayer meeting. Most often the Sunday evening service is evangelistic and in most assemblies and churches the use of tongues is frowned on at these

times as being liable to confuse if not definitely put off the strangers in the meeting.

Quite possibly during a lull in the service, at the end of a session of prayer or after a hymn someone, man or woman, will speak in tongues—a series of sounds which may appear to be gibberish or may sound like a language. When the message is finished, someone, usually the leader or pastor, speaks in English what is said to be an interpretation of the tongues. It usually consists of paraphrased scripture with comment or amplification. If it follows the sermon, then it is usually an amplification of thoughts brought out in the talk. Only three persons are allowed to give a message in tongues in any one meeting, and usually the same person interprets during the one meeting.

Occasionally in some meetings and churches almost the whole assembly will speak in tongues, often at the same time, many singing in tongues and some even dancing in the Spirit. These tongues are not interpreted but regarded as ecstatic utterances similar to those used on the Day of Pentecost.

**Gifts of the Spirit and Fruits of the Spirit.** The best of the leaders do appreciate the problem that many who practise the gifts of the Spirit, especially tongues, do not practise to any great extent the fruits of the spirit. But it is a continuing temptation to regard the use of these gifts as a sign of God's favour, even when there is little evidence of a true Spirit filled living. Too often those who do so live are unaware of any incongruity, due to faulty teaching by leaders who have risen to prominence by exercise of these gifts. But it is a problem that is recognised by many of the more experienced leaders.

## **RECENT OUTBREAKS OF 'TONGUES'**

Until about four years ago, the manifestations spoken of above were confined to Pentecostalist denominations. Then quite suddenly in the U.S.A. some people in the historic denominations began to practise these manifestations and remained in their own churches.

**U.S.A.** From all accounts, the manifestations in the States started quite spontaneously among groups who met together for prayer for revival. One beginning was at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Van Nuys, Calif. On Passion Sunday, 1960, the Rector announced that he had received the gift of the Holy Spirit and had spoken with 'tongues'. He was asked to resign and did so. But seventy of his parishioners had received the same experience and about five hundred more were sympathetic. This year it was known that Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans and Plymouth Brethren, both leaders and lay people, were openly practising speaking in tongues in their churches and assemblies. It is further reported that some Roman Catholic priests and nuns have sought and received this experience. It is known that leaders of the Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. have had talks on the subject with officials of Assemblies of God, U.S.A. It is said that at least 2,000 people belonging to the Prot. Epis. Church in

S. California are speaking with tongues and 600 members of the First Presbyterian Church in Hollywood also.

The movement has spread to student bodies and students among the I.V.F. in Yale, Fuller Seminary, Wheaton College, Westmont College. Navigators and Wycliffe Bible Translators have received this experience.

There is one interesting report of Mass being celebrated in an Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. After the reading of the gospel, someone in the congregation spoke in 'tongues'. The officiating 'priest' interpreted—then the service proceeded as usual!

**Great Britain.** It is difficult to discover just when these outbreaks began to be noticed in this country. Most of them appear to be in Anglican churches, some in R.C. churches and fewer in Non-Conformist churches. St. Paul's, Beckenham, is one where the former vicar actively supported the movement.

An indication of the spread of pentecostal teaching is given in a booklet published by the Highway Press at the end of last year. The booklet is called *Pentecostalism and Speaking with Tongues*, by the Rev. Canon Douglas Webster who is Theologian-Missioner to the Church Missionary Society. He says in the Preface:—

'This pamphlet grew out of a lecture, and the lecture was originally given to a large group of prospective missionaries, many of whom had become seriously concerned with this subject.

'Some readers may wonder why a missionary society should be publishing something on such a theme. The reason is that Pentecostalism is rapidly becoming an important issue throughout the world. Missionaries are bound to meet it sooner or later'.

He goes on to tell of his meeting with pentecostal groups in South America and speaks sympathetically of their contribution as a corrective to much in the historic churches. The booklet itself will repay careful study and contains much helpful teaching on the whole subject and on the subject of the place of religious experiences in the christian life. But the point that should be made here is that it was thought desirable that students in training at an Anglican Missionary Training College should require teaching on this subject—an indication of the spread of pentecostal teaching in the Anglican Church.

## TOWARDS A BIBLICAL APPROACH TO THE SUBJECT OF TONGUES

The first reaction of most people to anyone speaking in tongues is first embarrassment, then perhaps fear. Both these emotions make a real appraisal difficult. Because of this, I have tried to give in some detail above the kind of atmosphere and occasion when tongues might be used in such meetings; but it is difficult to convey atmosphere and the uneasy

feeling remains. We need to take account of this with ourselves when we try to understand the teaching of the N.T. on this subject.

A booklet recently published probably contains all that it is necessary to say. It is the Rev. John Stott's *The Baptism and Fullness of the Holy Spirit*. It is an expanded version of his address to the Islington Clerical Conference in January this year. He does not, however, deal with the subject of the Gifts of the Spirit and only mentions tongues insofar as it occurs in the descriptive passages in the Acts.

It would seem to me that the following are areas of thought that we would do well to explore further to come to a fuller understanding of this subject in its Biblical setting.

(a) We should perhaps admit frankly that the *subject of the Spirit-filled life has been neglected for too long*. Not only have few christians any doctrine on the subject; it is possible that they have seldom heard a sermon on the subject. This has, of course, meant that many groups which have sought to deduce a Biblical doctrine on the subject and to practise its implications, have been pushed to the edges of christian testimony, and the normal correctives to over-emphasis which are found in a broad fellowship have not been available. Hence it is that cults, sects and cranks have been looked upon as those who have propounded theories of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

It is somewhat surprising that this is so since the Epistles are full of references to the Spirit filled life and exhortations to be filled with the Holy Spirit, not to grieve the Holy Spirit and so on. Whilst it is true that the Apostles Creed does state 'I believe . . . in the Holy Ghost' it is certain that the Apostles would be far from satisfied with that very brief reference to the subject. It is possible to take refuge in a 'safe' doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but since we must in some measure plead guilty to letting the subject go by default, it is necessary to make an attempt to recapture some of the vitality with which this teaching was put across by the Apostles.

(b) Perhaps it should be unnecessary to make the point that we shall only arrive at a true doctrine of the Fullness of the Holy Spirit if it is based on *correct exegesis of the Scripture*. But unfortunately sometimes our exegesis of the relevant scriptures is influenced by their possible implications on our thought and action today. For example *IF* (and I emphasize the if) it seems in Scripture that the normal experience of christians was to speak in tongues, then we are left with the question 'why not today'. There is thus a temptation to find some other meaning for scriptural statements.

(c) Following closely from the above and coming more to the heart of the matter, it is important to realise that the *Pentecostalist doctrine of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking with tongues is based almost entirely on descriptive passages* in the Acts. This is a point made in passing in the Rev. John Stott's book and needs to be emphasised.

(d) For the full doctrine of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit we need to

include the teaching of the Epistles in our study. Here again, reference should be made to Mr. Stott's booklet.

The reason why so much pentecostal preaching is so convincing is that it is difficult to believe that all christians have been filled with the Holy Spirit, such is the low standard of christian life. When someone who has had an ecstatic experience comes along and says he has received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and spoken with tongues, his testimony is often convincing, because it is easy—superficially—to accept it as the Apostolic experience and because his testimony appears to be true (usually). The answer surely is that most christians live on a far lower level of experience than we ought and we do not remain 'filled with the Spirit' as Paul urged the Ephesians.

If the above is stated, the answer from the Pentecostalist might well be that we should then seek this fullness in their way, to ensure a fuller experience. This should lead us to consider what are the N.T. marks of the Spirit filled life. The fruits of the Spirit in Gal. 5: 22-23 are surely foremost among these marks and others are seen throughout the Epistles, especially again Ephesians 5: 18-21 which is the only passage in Paul's Epistles where Paul describes the consequences of the Spirit's infilling. In short these marks are all *moral* qualities.

(e) Our study should also lead us to consider what Paul meant by the *Gifts of the Spirit* in 1 Cor. 12.

Although the Fullness of the Holy Spirit is for all christians, it is evident from this chapter that these gifts are 'distributed severally as He wills'. There is a similarity here to the O.T. where the Spirit came upon certain chosen men for specific tasks. Now He indwells all believers but gives some special enduements for specific tasks. These Paul lists in this chapter and we have looked at the list earlier. We shall not find it easy to come to any firm conclusions as to what these gifts really are. The attempt can be made as a study of the N.T., for they were evidently quite distinctive gifts in the mind of Paul. It must be stressed that the gifts are given by the Holy Spirit at *His* initiative and not the right or prerogative of all. But the moral fruits of the Holy Spirit are expected from all. Nevertheless, there is no hint in the N.T. that these gifts are only for a certain historic period. 1 Cor. 13: 8-11 is surely referring to the time when we shall see 'face to face'—heaven.

(f) We shall need to consider further our attitude to these phenomena and this teaching. It would seem to me to be unwise to expose immature Christians to teaching and practices associated with emotional excesses. On the other hand the plain teaching of Scripture should lead us not to deny the validity of these gifts if any have already met them. Instead, there are good grounds for acting as Paul did in 1 Cor. 12: 31 (N.E.B.) 'And now I will show you the best way of all. I may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but if I am without love . . . .'

This paper represents a personal viewpoint. I do not expect agreement but I hope it is a stimulus to constructive thought.

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One general inlet to enthusiasm is the expecting the end without the means—the expecting knowledge, for instance, without searching the Scripture and consulting the children of God; the expecting spiritual strength without constant prayer; the expecting growth in grace without steady watchfulness and deep self-examination; the expecting any blessing without hearing the Word of God at every opportunity.

John Wesley

# PENTECOSTALISM, EAST AND WEST

GEORGE N. PATTERSON

I see this writing assignment on Pentecostalism not so much as an attempt at an exposé of the movement, or as an exegesis of the Scriptural doctrine associated with it, but as an examination of certain of the phenomena that are identified with the movement.

The distinctive ecclesiastical position chosen by the Pentecostal movement, to quote a statement of belief, is:

‘We believe that the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and Fire is the coming upon and within of the Holy Spirit to indwell the believer in His fulness, and is always borne witness to by the fruit of the Spirit and outward manifestation, so that we may receive the same gift as the disciples on the Day of Pentecost’.

The implications of this statement of belief, together with the outward manifestations evidenced in practice, have given to the modern movement its distinctive name and emphasis. The extreme element in the Pentecostalist movement will insist that if there are no ‘outward manifestations’ or ‘signs following’, such as listed in the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, then the professing Christian has not been ‘Baptised with the Holy Spirit’. But others within the broad spectrum of Pentecostalist emphasis—see previous article—may take the more moderate line that it is possible to ‘have the Baptism of the Spirit’ without ‘outward manifestation’ of ‘signs following’, especially the practice of ‘tongues’.

The key verse used by Pentecostalists in support of their emphasis is taken from the controversial later section of Mark 16: 15-18:

‘Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; and he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. And these signs shall accompany them that have believed; in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover’.

But the criterion of the Pentecostal spiritual experience is that the one evidence, among the others listed above, that a person has received the ‘Baptism of the Spirit’ is that he or she speak with tongues. ‘Healing’ follows as a close second; ‘casting out demons’ a distant third; and ‘taking up serpents’ is only practised, to my knowledge, in certain Pentecostalist groups—known as ‘the snake handlers’—in the United States South, (See *Battle for the Mind*, by William Sargant), while ‘drinking any deadly thing’ is not practised at all.

The Pentecostalist movement is recognized by the World Council of Churches as probably the fastest-growing in modern Christian witness in some parts of the world, and Pentecostalist phenomena—not associated with the Pentecostalist movement—are now emerging in Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Lutheran and other circles in the United States, in Roman Catholic circles in South America, and in some of the potentially influential indigenous churches in Asia. It is important, therefore, to examine the significance of this growing force in modern Christian witness to see if there is something which—through complacency, superciliousness or cliché-ridden traditionalism—we may have missed in our desire to be effective Christians.

Pentecostalism as a sectarian practice is fairly recent, but the phenomenology associated with the movement is of ancient origin—even before Christ. Clemens Alexandrinus, one of the early fathers of the Church, wrote:

‘Plato (born 427 B.C.) attributes a peculiar dialect to the gods, inferring this from dreams and oracles, and especially from demoniacs, who do not speak their own language or dialect, but that of the demons, who are entered into them’.  
(*Miscellanies* Book I, p. 443)

Virgil (70-19 B.C.) in the *Aeneid*, gives the description of a pagan prophetess filled with the ‘divine afflatus’—quickly changing colour, panting breast, dishevelled hair, apparent increase of stature as the god or demon draws near, and then finally the voice losing its ‘mortal ring’ as she spoke in strange tongues.

These features are still produced in persons of different nationalities in various parts of the world when they set themselves to ‘speak with the dead’, ‘consult the gods’, ‘call down the gods’, to use some of the expressions given to describe the experience of making contact with the spirit world, some of which I have personally witnessed.

In the first centuries after the founding of the Church speaking with tongues is said to have been used by the Montanists, spreading through Italy, France and North Africa, before the practice was condemned at Iconium in 235 and the Council of Constantine in 381. In succeeding centuries the practice appeared to grow when the Church became formal and dead in its witness and fall away when the Church was healthy and vital.

In Britain, during the first half of the nineteenth century, when there was mounting concern over the state of the Church, there was recorded an outbreak of unknown tongues in the West of Scotland in 1830. A noted minister of the Caledonian Church, Regent Square, London, Edward Irving, heard of these happenings, made enquiries and began teachings and practices which foreshadowed the modern Pentecostalist movement, his followers being known as the *Catholic Apostolic Church*. He was excommunicated at about the same time (on different grounds) by the Presbytery of London, and later deprived of his ministry by the Church



of Scotland, but he influenced many sincere and able Christians of his generation.

For instance, Sir Robert Anderson has described a close associate of Irving, Robert Baxter, as 'a typical English parliamentary lawyer, reserved, slow of speech, and noted for soundness of judgment'. Baxter later became disillusioned with the movement and gave an account of his experience in a book entitled *Narrative of Facts*. In the book he relates how he, with many other men and women of education and culture, were drawn into the movement, how it seemed as if they were, indeed, under the mighty power of God when they spoke in tongues. He also describes how the spirit of praise to the Lord was strong within them, the ecstasy of soul, the mighty uplifting of spirit. There just could not seem to be any possibility of mistake about the spirituality of the movement.

But then came his growing suspicion that all was not well, that statements were not always being made under the influence of God, that when the time came for prophecies to be fulfilled and nothing happened casuistry was used to explain failure. He concluded:

'Indeed the whole work is a mimicry of the gifts of the Spirit—the utterance of tongues, a mimicry of the gift of tongues—and so of the prophesyings, and all the other works of power. It is Satan as an angel of light, imitating, as far as permitted, the Holy Spirit of God. According to the degree of unfaithfulness of the individuals or congregations with which it is present, so, I am persuaded, is the degree of power and consequent deceit which is put forth'. (*Narrative of Facts*, p. 45)

I do not myself wholly agree with Baxter's over-simplified conclusion. While I would not question his judgment or his integrity I think it is based on insufficient experience, and to dismiss 'the whole work' as 'mimicry of the gifts of the Spirit' by 'Satan . . . imitating the Holy Spirit of God' indicates a lack of knowledge of the workings of the Satanic realm in counterfeiting the divine and of the psychical possibilities dormant in men and women for which provision has been made by God.

My qualifications for disagreeing with what after all is the accepted opinion of thousands of intelligent Christians is that I have had unique opportunities to study demonic practices at first hand. I spent several months on the Tibetan border in association with H.R.H. Prince Peter of Greece and Denmark, who was Leader of the Third Danish Anthropological Expedition to Central Asia, and Dr. René Nebesky de Wovkovitz, the noted Austrian authority on demonism, studying the practice and significance of spirit possession. Dr. Nebesky de Wovkovitz has published his evidence and conclusions in *The Oracles and Demons of Tibet* (Oxford University Press), and H.R.H. Prince Peter recorded comprehensive and detailed films and tapes, now with the Copenhagen University. I went on to do a further three-month study in the British Museum Reading Room of ancient writings on demonic practice, so that I could reach some satisfactory scriptural explanation of the phenomena.

Briefly, the Tibetan oracle who was the subject of our studies was young, 32 years old, a layman, who could be possessed by nine different demons (or, as the modern psychical research people prefer to call them, 'control personalities'). I use the term 'could be' advisedly, for he selected the particular 'deity' to suit the particular occasion and applicant for his services, set himself by certain chants, rhythms on cymbals and hand-drums and different items of dress to call down the 'deity' to indwell him. The presence of the 'deity' was apparent in his changed appearance and voice, and, of course, in the type of message communicated in 'tongues' or in demonstrations of the 'super-normal'—to use a more cautious term than 'super-natural'. The oracular message required an 'interpreter', and was couched in the same variegated glossolalia and ambiguities associated with the Delphic Oracle and modern Pentecostalist practice. Some of the 'super-normal' demonstrations consisted of being struck by a razor-edged sword yet not being marked, or in his taking the sword, normally scarcely bendable, and twisting it into a figure-of-eight. This particular oracle was only a small-time operator, the really powerful practitioners being able to 'reactivate' the dead in a ceremony known as 'ro-lang', or 'resurrection of the corpse', for a period of several hours. (See *With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet*, by Madame Alexandra David-Neel; *Battle for the Mind* by William Sargant; *Where the Mountains are Gods* by Renè Nebesky de Wovkovitz).

In my subsequent investigations into the psychical and spiritual realm I met and had long conversations with Eileen Garratt, probably the world's greatest living medium. Strictly speaking, I suppose that description is not correct, for she only spent some ten years as a medium and thereafter provided herself as a guinea-pig for psychical and para-psychological investigation with J. B. Rhind (*Frontiers of the Mind*), at Duke University, and others. She herself, or some of those working with her (non-spiritualists), classified two 'control personalities' who were identifiable, and who responded to names given and the questions asked through her.

I mention these two people as examples of what is described in scores of books on the subject of 'demonism', 'spiritism' or the more modern 'psychic phenomena' because I wish to draw a significant parallel between their experiences and the experience of Pentecostalists, and also a significant difference between their experience and the 'Holy Spirit possession' of the Christian.

The parallel is fairly obvious (and has been made cogently in psychological terms by William Sargant in his *Battle for the Mind*, although he misses completely the spiritual significance) in that tongues, healings, exorcisms, ecstasies and demonstrations of super-normal powers are not the sole prerogatives of Christians. 'He that is in us' is only greater than 'he that is in them' in the measure in which the Holy Spirit has freedom in us to demonstrate His power. The 'outward manifestations' of the spirit-possessed non-Christians are not only similar, they are usually greater in kind and degree than anything normally produced by phenomena-practising Christians.

The difference between the two experiences is of major importance. When a Tibetan oracle, or Indian shaman, or tribal animist, or Western medium, calls a demon, or control personality, into himself or herself *they immediately lose all powers of ratiocination*. That is, from the time when the 'other' occupant takes over, the person 'possessed' does not know, is not able to influence or analyse, and cannot recall what was said or done through him or her at the time of the 'possession', conscious only of a 'feeling of ecstasy'. He or she is simply a mindless vehicle of communication. Whereas the Scriptural Christian, when 'filled with the Spirit' not only retains his or her powers of discernment and judgment but is actively commanded to 'prove all things; hold fast that which is good', 'test the spirits whether they be of God' and 'above all, get understanding'. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is intelligence.

Therefore, I suggest that while the modern Pentecostalist may often be an unwitting 'Christianized' dupe of Satan, 'Pentecostalism', in the sense of Spirit-filled Christians outwardly manifesting power and profit to others by super-normal but scripturally acceptable and explicable means, is something that twentieth-century Christians have lost, in the main, need desperately and must have and demonstrate if they are going to make any impact on this generation at all. This is not only a pious hope on my part, but a firm conclusion from the evidence gathered in direct experience of God's working in Asia in the past twenty years.

The greatest evidence of God's presence and power is not being manifested by the traditional churches, or even by Brethren meetings, but by a growing number of thousands of large and small independent groups of Christians, who spurn names but don't feel they must make an issue of it, and who are in overall greater conformity to the Scriptural 'church' concept. In various parts of Asia these thousands of companies (including Communist China; see my article *Christianity Behind the Bamboo Curtain*, in *Christianity Today*, out soon) are emerging from a period of internal disquiet and difference of opinion over whether to be more 'exclusive' in their fellowship or more 'open', and seeking to find their way back to the earlier power of God which they have known.

In Taiwan, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand the renewed interest in and commitment to a revitalized Christian witness is leading many of these groups into accepting Pentecostalist practices, without directly associating themselves with the Pentecostalist movement. The emphasis in their preaching is on Baptism of the Spirit with signs following, tongues, healing, holy laughter, dancing, holy rolling, healing; although this is not true of the majority.

The most noted figure in the recent Asian Pentecostalist upsurge is a converted Chinese film actress, Mui Yee, who has been influencing groups in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand. A gifted and attractive woman, after a few years of orthodox gospel activity of big campaign testimony meetings she 'had the Baptism' and has since become virulently anti-denominational and divisive.

I investigated some of her claims and churches and in two long interviews with her challenged her with their unscriptural and unspiritual practices making them no different and even worse than those they had left. She pleaded immaturity and lack of workers as causes, and lamely excused the inability of 'the Baptism of the Spirit' to bring about better conditions in individuals and churches by claiming that they were still 'babes in the experience'. This group, in my opinion, and its activities will continue to grow for another year or so then will follow the usual Pentecostalist pattern of internal disruption, growing disillusion, defections and diminishing impact.

However, this movement apart, there are other more definite indications of a mounting, powerful Church witness in Asia, including Communist China (see my *Christianity Behind the Bamboo Curtain*). Some of these, such as the Bakht Singh movement in India, are very definitely anti-Pentecostalist in every way, even declaring the tongues and teaching as 'Satanic'. The majority of the exclusive wing of the Little Flock groups in Asia are also opposed, but many of the new break-away 'open' groups of the Little Flock, and other spontaneous independent groups in Taiwan, Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia are either interested in, or concerned with, or attracted by, or indulging in, the physical power-gifts of Pentecostalism—depending on the depth of teaching and spirituality of the particular group. Among these groups there is talk of a charismatic revival (of a manifestation of the gifts of I Cor. chs. 12-14), and of what emphasis this new and growing movement of the Spirit in Asia is taking.

In investigating the Pentecostalist phenomena manifested by the extreme groups I am convinced that they are psychical rather than spiritual, and that the teaching with which their manifestations are connected make the Holy Spirit pre-eminent rather than Christ. It lays an undue emphasis on signs and gifts, and chiefly those—tongues and healings—which affect the physical senses. Finally, these signs and gifts are disturbingly acquired, or accompanied, for the most part by the sacrifice of the person's will-power and the surrender of the power of ratiocination. The whole of the teaching rests upon a misapprehension of the New Testament doctrine of the Holy Spirit. But having reached this conclusion about the Pentecostalist emphasis I also want to state that the growing awareness and concern with some aspects and manifestations of the experiences of early 'Pentecostalism' are of considerable significance and value to modern Christian witness.

Bishop Moule has written: 'There is no *separable* "Gospel of the Spirit"'. Not for a moment are we to advance, as it were, from the Lord Jesus Christ to a higher and deeper region, ruled by the Holy Ghost'. But it is equally true that there is no Gospel apart from the Holy Spirit, and it is this latter error into which most present-day Christians—including Brethren—have fallen. They hold meetings decided upon by rational discussion, the same as the non-believers. They conduct meetings in the same way as a group of Quakers or even of Communists do, according to

a 'sense of the company', or 'consensus of the majority', or in formal conformity to a sterile traditional pattern. The Holy Spirit might as well not exist in either the gatherings or lives of the participants. They choose their wives and husbands, take their business decisions, build their houses, fill their diaries and even prepare their sermons without conscious acknowledgement or even awareness of the presence, work or responsibility of the Holy Spirit. To them, the Holy Spirit is just a subjectively-experienced agent rubber-stamping decisions reached by the same rational methods as the non-Christian. In short, they get along all right with God, Christ and their own common-sense. Like Samson, the loss of power brings with it no realization that an essential member of the Trinity has departed from them.

In other words, might it be said that a large number of the people now meeting in evangelical churches and Brethren assemblies are not Christians at all—in the scriptural sense of the term? The Roman believers made the profession and had the reputation of being true Christians, and their faith was even spoken of throughout the world, but Paul assesses their real character as determined not by their profession and reputation but by the decisive test of the life of the Spirit within them. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God in the believer as a constantly ruling power which is all important. Paul made it very clear: 'If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His'; that is, he has no part in Him Who is 'the life'. Unless the Holy Spirit is in a man or woman in a more significant way than simply by an intellectual acknowledgement of Romans 10 verse 9 that man is not a Christian.

Let us not forget, there will be many who can quote Romans 10 verse 9, there will be many who will have lived in the spirit of Romans 10 verse 9, there will be many who have done many wonderful works in the name of the Lord, and have even cast out demons, and the Lord will acknowledge none of them—'I never knew you'. 'You never asked me for anything. You used your common sense. You were never baptised by the Holy Spirit into the Church in the first place, and so you never came to know me and I never knew you'.

The 'sons of God' are those who are 'led by the Spirit of God'. This is the true Pentecostal significance. Pentecost to the apostles and others made the Holy Spirit a real person instead of just a theological proposition. They were now different from all others around them because the departed Christ had indeed sent the promised Paraclete for witness, power and profit, to guide them into all truth and teach them things to come, so that the illimitable wisdom, knowledge and understanding of God might be sifted through them that all might know by the Christ-like change being wrought in them that there was a God in heaven Who had indeed revealed Himself to men in the person of Jesus Christ. This change was wrought in their being 'transformed by a renewing of their minds'. Henceforth, it was to be God working 'in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure', and this was to be done by the Holy Spirit taking control of their minds, in

a voluntary submission and recognition that His direction was best, and thereby having the 'things of God' revealed to them in their daily experience. This transforming of the renewed, Spirit-directed mind resulted in a combination of super-normal tongues (*glōssa*) and linguistic ability (*dialektos*). The new communication meant a new perception of the mind of God and so 'healing' took on a new dimension and significance. The other charismatic gifts likewise.

Previously they had been those who in the vanity of their minds 'walked after the flesh' in a blind obedience to the 'mind of the flesh'. Now the governing principle of their lives must be not conformity to the world but a 'walk after the Spirit' by minds guided and controlled by 'the mind of the Spirit'. In this way they—and we—can say 'Not I-prompted, but my will persuaded, instructed and obedient through Holy Spirit direction to Christ after a Spirit-communicated dialogue with God, resulting in Christ working God's will and His pleasure through me'. No mindless vehicle here, but an assured and intelligent co-worker with an omnipotent and risen Christ. The outcome must be, and is, a power-display of super-normal phenomena which God, providing the *energēmata* of the diversity of operations in I Corinthians 12 verse 6, in His sovereignty and according to the pleasure of His own will distributes to the individual or group of individuals at any place or time.

In my opinion, it could well be that, because we have entered into another long period of deadness in Church witness, we have the current concern with and manifestation of Pentecostalist phenomena. But we must not overlook the possibility that God, in this generation of stiff-necked traditionalism, is really trying to break through to His own in calling their attention to the neglected Third Person of the Godhead in their lives and Church witness.

A renewed consecration does not require a Second Baptism, but it does require a second, third, or fourth filling of the Spirit. Least of all does it require an empty, dessicated exposition of the supposed withdrawal of the Pentecost signs and Gifts in a supercilious prose. Far too often the Scripture is forgotten among Brethren which says 'The gifts and calling of God are without repentance' or, as Darby puts it, are irrevocable. The most that can be argued by the western conservative-claimed non-existence of certain gifts is that Christians have been too lazy, too unconcerned, too proud or too complacent to appropriate what has never been withdrawn. It might equally be argued that they are for the 'beginning stage' of any new church founding or expansion in any generation in any part of the world, and not just limited to the beginning stage of the apostolic period.

Certainly, what cannot be argued is that these phenomena still exist, but that Satan has almost the whole uncontested use of that part of the constitution of man, and that in many places at many times there has been an understanding and use of them to the benefit of the Church which we could well be doing with today.

# TWO SIGNIFICANT BOOKS

G. J. POLKINGHORNE

## SPEAKING WITH TONGUES *by* G. B. CUTTEN

Most authorities mention Cutten's historical and psychological study of speaking with tongues, published at Yale, U.S.A., in 1927 and now out-of-print, but still containing useful information and insights. Cutten is frank in stating his own view of the matter: tongue-speaking is a useless gift; it is inimical to true religion, by substituting an abnormal psychological experience for a changed life; and its Gospel foundation is textually suspect—Mk. 16.

However, he presents his evidence admirably. Whereas at Pentecost, recognisable languages were spoken, in Corinthians, the prototype of modern glossolalia, the speech was gibberish and the interpretation purely charismatic. Accordingly, Paul insists that tongues are primarily for use in private worship, to address God, not man. If used in public, decency, order and interpretation are imperative. His faint praise amounts to damnation! The Church Fathers are significant for the paucity of their mention of tongues and for Chrysostom's statement that tongues had ceased in his times. The Middle Ages have plenty of legendary material, but Cutten shows in the case of St. Francis Xavier how little fire there is beneath most of the smoke. Several later instances are reported at length—the Cevennes Prophets, Edward Irving, and the Mormons, together with two non-religious examples, those of Helene Smith and Albert Baron. Some twentieth century instances are given, and Cutten tried hard without success to verify claims that a known language had been spoken by a person ignorant of it.

When considering psychological explanations, Cutten states that in the development of man, speech came first and rational thought much later, so that tongue speaking, being speech without rational thought, is a reversion to the primitive. He cites in support of this theory that tongue speaking occurs under the pressure of excitement, which over-powers rationality; and is largely confined to lower intelligences and to the illiterate—statements not unlikely to be challenged!

Hypnosis is not an acceptable explanation, in the absence of rapport with another person. More probable diagnoses are ecstasy, catalepsy and hysteria, and he notes that the latter is most common in women, who are the most numerous tongue-speakers. Whichever is preferred, he sees glossolalia as a personal disintegration, with the verbo-motive centres subject to subconscious impulses, and as a childish reaction (cf. I Cor. 14: 20) particularly when pride in the gift creeps in. If conversion is to be valid, the phase of disorganisation (sorrow for sin etc.) should be succeeded

by a superior reorganisation (newness of life), but the automatic actions of glossolalia militate against this. Psychic contagion in Pentecostal meetings may account for the spread of the practices therein.

In contrast then to the frequently-heard claim that tongue-speaking advances true spirituality, we see here solid reason to expect that it will prove a stumbling-block to progress.

. . . . .

SPEAKING WITH TONGUES: An Experiment in Spiritual Experience, by MORTON T. KELSEY, (Epworth, 1964. 17/6d.)

The Americans occasionally launch a space rocket into orbit with great gusto, only to let it fall unceremoniously into the frigid Atlantic. Similarly, this book gets off the ground with pulsating enthusiasm for tongues; orbits through a New Testament, a Church History and an American scene resplendent with the practice, but ends with an apparently unintended ducking in cold water. The author is an Episcopalian clergyman in the U.S.A. Plainly, he is not an evangelical, as he believes that 'quiet regular attendance at Church services' is sufficient for godliness and dislikes the idea that 'unless there is conscious contact with God . . . the sacraments and services of the Church have no validity'. To him, 'revival techniques which emphasise guilt and sin and conscious conversion' seem liable to produce mental breakdown. Moreover, his views on Biblical inspiration are somewhat suspect (cf. p. 228). In more than one passage, it is difficult to see how Jung's 'collective unconscious' is distinguished from God—cf. p. 213 'God (or some archetypal element of the collective unconscious)'. The impression conveyed is of a man more concerned with psychology than theology, excited by religious behaviour which breaks away from the hum-drum routine of liturgy.

The launching consists in a personal testimony of a friend who spoke in tongues, followed by a sketch of the Biblical evidence, unsatisfactory for its failure to classify the texts and for its citation of many dubious passages, where tongues must be read into the text—e.g. Gal. 4: 6. A potted Church History follows, wherein the paucity of data is amplified by identifying prophecy with glossolalia, an unhappy contrast with Cutten's more objective treatment of the sources. A strange preference for the Eastern Orthodox Church is expressed, based on wholly inadequate proof of tongue-speaking amongst its members. More useful is the account of the development of American Pentecostalism and of its influence on members of other denominations, devoted to the thesis that two million American Pentecostals cannot be wrong.

The orbit continues with assessments of various explanations of tongue speaking. Rejected suggestions include emotionalism and any association with unbalanced mental states and demonism. Despite his later psychological statements, he refuses to recognise any similarity between Christian glossolalia and cognate phenomena in other faiths,



Hebrew or Greek. No more palatable is the idea that it is an initiatory sign, comparable to the scaffolding on a building.

A digression into philosophy discusses the contrasted world-views of Plato and Aristotle, with a strong preference for the element of irrationality in the former. Thus, he can accept that tongue-speaking is an irrational practice and yet need not be refused. A flaw in the rocket mechanism appears momentarily when it is stated on p. 208 that 'tongue speaking is dangerous for the weak ego and should never be forced on anyone', though earlier some space was devoted to descriptions of techniques for inducing tongue speaking and later its psycho-therapeutic value is asserted.

Of psychological explanations rejected are those of hysteria, exalted memory, and suggestion, hypnotic or otherwise. A similarity to dreams and visions is recognised. Here, the claim is made that many persons have been changed for the better by the experience of tongues, by virtue of a 'new integration of the total psyche' which is identified with sanctification without any attempt at Scriptural justification. It is noteworthy that the value of tongues is seen practically exclusively in the psychological benefit to the individual, not to the Church, much less to the Lord.

Now comes the plunge! Frankly facing the negative aspects of glossolalia, Mr. Kelsey becomes devastatingly revealing. 'Glossolalia', he says, seems to the onlooker 'an unattractive, irrational, automatic, non-conscious phenomenon, even in its most devotional atmosphere'. It is 'a deliberate attempt to abandon one's self to the irrational'. In Churches, it has caused conflict and division. Its exponents look down on other people as religiously inferior and act as though they have a monopoly of the knowledge of God. They press the experience on others, at risk of producing psychological illness, especially in children. Such over-emphasis of the gift can lead into a spiritual cul-de-sac and issue in repression, emotional instability and moral rigidity. In short, 'Christian wholeness gets lost' in a search for experience and 'kicks'. At best, glossolalia is one of the lesser gifts which needs restraint in its exercise. At worst, it appears as a menace to individual mental health and Church unity.

A balanced reading of this rather inconsistent and hastily compiled book thus leaves a very unfavourable impression of speaking with tongues.

## A FURTHER REVIEW

HUGH THOMPSON

Morton T. Kelsey's *Speaking in Tongues* (Epworth; 17/6) should appeal to members of a RESEARCH fellowship. While more thorough Biblical *expositions* of the theme are available, the value of this work lies in its well-documented evidence that tongues (i) have persisted since Pentecost till now, and (ii) are spiritually beneficial. This weighs heavily against two main objections to the current charismatic renewal.

Reviewing the references to glossolalia throughout church-history Kelsey notes one factor which, among other reasons, caused the long absence of the gift during the Dark Ages. According to its *Rituale Romanum* (circa 1000 A.D.), officially Romanism considered tongues to be a sign of demon-possession.

Keen 'Brethren' readers will be quick to note an answer to Sir Robert Anderson's opening 'poser' in his *The Silence of God*. The springboard for his thesis was his rueful comment on the Turkish atrocities against the Armenian believers, that 'In vain do we strain our ears to hear some voice from the throne of the Divine Majesty. The far off heaven where, in perfect peace and unutterable glory, God dwells and reigns, is silent'. From there Sir Robert proceeded to prove (?) that because God was silent, He was therefore no longer wonder-working since the writing of the final verse of John's Revelation. A little story recounted by Kelsey reveals that, while God is silent in large measure, He is ALSO still miracle-working; as He was, of course, in the book of Acts. (Stephen's stoning and James's beheading during that most miraculous age of Bible times, indicates that God's sovereign silence is not limited to such non-miraculous seasons as Job 1 and Psalm 73). In 1855 God gave detailed visions to an 11-year-old Russian lad in the Armenian village of Kara Kala, foretelling the Turkish pogrom against Christians. That same year saw a 'pentecostal' awakening among the Russians in the Black Sea region. In 1880 there was a corresponding revival in Kara Kala, so these Russians started to join the Armenians in 'pentecostal' worship. From time to time God gave a needed 'word of knowledge' (1 Co. 12: 8) to uncover a local sin (as to Peter in Acts 5); and in 1900 He gave a definite prophecy that the time of fulfilment of the original visions was near. By 1912, (2 years before the terrible slaughter) the last Christian family had evacuated the area. Among the refugees to America were the Shakarian family, one member of which (Demos) founded the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship in U.S.A. in 1951. Thus, God was not utterly silent; nor is He completely mute right now in Inland China, where the real church (in contrast to official, hamstrung christendom, an unwilling handmaid of Communism) is a persecuted movement that experiences all the New Testament spiritual gifts. Surely such gifts will also be required by us as persecution tightens against the Church. And, why not in times of quietude, too?

Since Kelsey does not speak with tongues himself, his summing up of the psychological features of glossolalia is objective and unbiased. He indicates that Christian tongue-speaking is not due to demon-possession, schizophrenia, hysteria, repressed memory, hypnosis or autosuggestion. His own investigations led him to the same conclusion as other researchers whom he quotes, that the gift's exercise is generally of marked *therapeutic* value. Paul's statement about 'edifying oneself' is here verified. Paul also said that tongue-speaking is 'praying with the spirit', 'speaking mysteries unto God' with 'unfruitful understanding',—which is to say, the source of the language is the human spirit instead of the rational mind. Kelsey elaborates on this in terms of Jungian psychology. In dreams and visions

the 'Unconscious' produces images and motor responses (e.g. talking and somnambulism) in the conscious 'Ego'; the ego of a *normal*, integrated person is in no way impaired by such mystical, non-rational experiences. *Neurosis* occurs when the ego refuses to accept the impulses from the unconscious; tension is set up as the ego attempts to resist the pressure of the unconscious. *Psychosis* sets in when the ego disintegrates, and the person lives in the dream-world most of his time. Tongues speaking usually has a cathartic effect on the ego and aids integration. (Kelsey quotes two lengthy testimonies to this). It is a mystical experience which off-sets the too-rational bent of our Western minds. The writer is very insistent on the fact that tongues-speaking is generally *not* a highly emotional experience; and it is certainly not involuntary, for 'the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets'. Just as music, a smile, a sweet smell, a beautiful picture can be meaningful, so can a string of unknown words.

On the debit side, Kelsey suggests (although he quotes no case to prove his point) that a person of weak ego may not be able to cope too well with an excessive flood from the realm of the unconscious. Another danger he notes is the abuse that the emotional 'showman' would make of the sacred ability—as in Corinth, of course. Again, the person who is just longing to be recognized as a 'Somebody' might hanker for 'messages' for other people. But, he avows that 'a dead church is more dangerous than a dangerous one'. He quotes that wise veteran of the Assemblies of God in Britain, Donald Gee, warning newcomers to the realm of spiritual gifts against making more of 'utterances' than of the written Word, and of despising consecrated scholarship.

One glaring error appears on the dust-cover, stating that 2 million Pentecostals in America reckon tongues to be the only valid sign of *conversion*. Since this first appeared in the American publishers' blurb, presumably they are culpable and not the author.

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# Viewpoint

GEOFFREY SIMMONS

How would you react, as a member of an Anglican Congregation, if your respected and respectable Vicar stood at the chancel steps one Sunday morning and announced that the Lord had given him a special message to pass on that morning and that he himself did not know what the message would be because it would be 'in a tongue'? Your reaction? Horrified—that this should happen today; annoyed that it could happen here; stunned that God needed to give His message like that; or cynically dubious that there was a 'catch in it somewhere'?

Nevertheless the message was given—and interpreted. And those who knew their vicar knew that this was real; he was not play-acting nor 'putting on a show'; his whole life showed an amazing contact with God and such things were common amongst them. In their private meetings many of the members of this 'suburbia' church spoke in tongues, for they had entered into an 'experience', had, they said, been 'baptised with the Holy Ghost' and were enjoying the present outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps we might ask ourselves the questions, 'How far does this present outpouring compare with previous revivals?' 'What is the pattern?' and perhaps, for us the most important question, 'Is it Scriptural?' for surely to this of all phenomena we must beware of applying the pragmatic rather than the spiritual test i.e. not 'does it work?' but rather, 'Is it true to Divine Revelation?'

During times of revival when 'God, the Holy Spirit, moves amongst men' in a remarkable way, many strange things happen. 'I had not spoken for long before I perceived numbers melting. As I proceeded, the influence increased, till, at last (both in the morning and the evening) thousands cried out, so that they almost drowned my voice. Never did I see a more glorious sight. Oh what tears were shed and poured forth after the Lord Jesus. Some fainted, and when they had got a little strength, they would hear and faint again. Others cried out in a manner as if they were in the sharpest agonies of death': an extract from *Whitefield's Journal*, Wednesday, May 14th, 1740. Similar illustrations could be quoted from the New Testament times to the present day—from Jerusalem to the uttermost parts of the earth. Are such things happening *here* today? I think not. In other parts of the world there are signs of 'Revival' but here apparently God is singling out individuals—often when they are completely alone (that is NOT in large emotional meetings) and sometimes not consciously seeking the (or an) 'experience' and is blessing them in a particular way.

The following is one illustration of this and is not to be taken as an example so limiting God's power and work but rather is chosen as an illustration solely because it could be, and in fact is, a common experience of some of the writer's personal friends.

'I found that the references to "speaking in tongues" and Pentecostalism, and questions like "Have you had *the* blessing?" most "off-putting" until I saw the difference in a friend of mine who had had "an experience" (call it what you will). He was from a sound conservative Evangelical home and background yet appeared to be lifted out of the traditional pattern and seemed somehow to radiate the presence of Christ. This interested me to read more carefully the book of Acts and to read also literature about this phenomenon. Gradually there grew a desire on my part to "climb higher", to seek a greater, more perfect holiness, to become more like Christ. One evening, whilst praying and contemplating I suddenly found myself repeating a word (or phrase) of some (to me) unknown language—and with the use of this expression I knew a wonderful nearness to the Risen Lord—I could have put out my hand and touched Him. This experience left me "walking on air". Since then I have often (but not always) "arrived" at the same place in prayer and have found that as I have spoken I have almost been learning a new language—yet not knowing the meaning of what I was saying. I have not used this "gift" in public—only in private prayer when I experience an uplift—a drawing closer to Christ—a revealing of His presence and yet I know that I have not arrived at the end—it's almost like climbing a mountain and finding at the top that the horizon is farther off than ever. This experience has given me, not a satisfaction but a longing—a longing not for a greater nor better experience but for holiness—a holiness not of human standards—but to be more like my Lord. I know that I can pray in "this tongue" almost when I please but this does not bring about that closeness but rather it is only when I draw really close to Him that this happens and then I find I am closer still'.

It would appear that some of the things which are foretold (Isa. 28: 11) and recorded (Acts 10: 44-46, 15: 8, 19: 6)\* *are* happening today and that Paul himself had a similar experience (1 Cor. 12 and 14 particularly v. 18) and yet we must note that the Lord when 'filled with the Spirit' did not apparently speak with tongues.† It seems to me foolish to deny the reality of this spiritual experience and if we do perhaps we are falling into the dangerous error of only wanting the Giver and not the Gift(s); which is just as silly as only wanting the Gift(s) and not the Giver. Should not our prayer rather be: 'Lord I so desire to be filled with Thy Holy Spirit that I am prepared to exercise any Gift which He gives'.

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\*Further references include Mark 1: 7-8. Acts 1: 4-8, Acts 2: 2-4.

†The majority of those who have recently received this gift do not claim it as essential evidence of the initial filling; the consensus of opinion seems to be that many more could enter into this experience if the 'filling of the Holy Spirit' were taught at the time of conversion as it appears to have been in the early church.

# The Bookshelf

## SOME BOOKS ON PENTECOSTALISM

All too often arguments for and against Pentecostalism are founded on experience, one's own or other people's, rather than on Scripture. It should come as a useful corrective to those who are involved in the question to read the books (or booklets, as most of them are) where these things gain by having to be reduced to cold print.

Before looking at books specifically on the subject, it might help to refer first to books on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as a whole. Unfortunately there is no one good modern one, and it will probably be found best to consult one of the standard systematic theologies: e.g. A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Pickering and Inglis, 50s.) or L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Banner of Truth Trust, 25s.), or, in much smaller and more introductory form, *In Understanding Be Men* (ed. T. C. Hammond, IVF, 8s. 6d.). Of books specifically on the doctrine, O. Winslow's *The Work of the Holy Spirit* (Banner of Truth Trust, 3s.) is a reprint of a work first published in 1891 and Banner of Truth have also reissued a larger work, Smeaton's *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, 1882 (13s. 6d.). More readable is Leon Morris's *Spirit of the Living God* (IVF, 4s.). Rene Pache's *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit* (Marshall, Morgan and Scott,) is useful so far as it goes in that it collects texts together under subject headings.

On the issue of the baptism of the Spirit and tongues, CBRF members, being by definition those who are prepared to sort out the wheat from the chaff, will want to go direct to the books advocating it to see what they really do say. A few are as follows: a typical book from within traditional Pentecostalism is *Fulness of Power: Talks on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit* by C. J. E. Kingston (Elim Publishing Co., 7s. 6d.). Possibly more useful is to go by those converts in other denominations, e.g. M. C. Harper's *The Third Force in the Body of Christ* or, better, *Power for the Body of Christ* (both Fountain Trust, the latter 2s.). Also from the Fountain Trust is *Speaking in Tongues* by L. Christenson (1s.).

On the other side, M. T. Kelsey's *Speaking with Tongues* (Epworth, 17s. 6d.) is reviewed elsewhere in this Journal. *Pentecostalism and Speaking with Tongues* by Douglas Webster (Highway Press, 3s. 6d.) assesses the movement critically. A more basically scriptural analysis comes in John R. W. Stott's *The Baptism and Fulness of the Holy Spirit* (IVF, 2s.), a study of what the various terms and experiences really were in the New Testament.

Another older book may perhaps be mentioned, though it does not strictly belong here: J. Stafford Wright's *What is Man?* (Paternoster, now out of print) brings together a number of psychic and other phenomena, including speaking in tongues, in a stimulating way. Such books, and incidental references to tongues in books about other circumstances, even other religions, certainly help to keep the whole subject in perspective.

Oddly enough, a book which was of help to me over the Pentecostal issue out of all proportion to its value otherwise was one I acquired some years ago almost by accident. It had a splendid gold cover, was published by the Church of God for its 1953 Jubilee, and was called *Diary of A. J. Tomlinson: Founder, Church of God, Pentecostal, Holiness Movement*. Certainly this sort of thing is not the whole story of how Pentecostalism works out in practice. Even so, it's enough to put one off for life.

DAVID ALEXANDER

### Bibliographical Notes and Queries

This column is prompted by the conviction that a good deal of literary information needs to be collected and made generally available, which now exists in remote places and may be lost if not garnered soon. Readers may ask questions too, and we shall try to find the answers. Address all queries and answers to Notes and Queries, Christian Brethren Research Fellowship Journal, 229 Village Way, Beckenham, Kent, England, or to Arnold D. Ehlert, address below. All items are numbered for easy reference.

1. Probably the most extensive checklist of books and pamphlets written by authors affiliated with the assemblies is maintained by Arnold D. Ehlert, Head Librarian of Biola College and Talbot Theological Seminary, 13800 Biola Ave., La Mirada, Calif. 90638. U.S.A. This list also contains publishers, periodicals, series and initials (some of which are identified, some not). This is a world-wide list and will be maintained at The Biola Library permanently, with duplicates being furnished to the Library of Emmaus Bible School, 156 N. Oak Park Ave., Oak Park, Ill., U.S.A. The Biola Library which also collects these works, will be happy to service any inquiries. Plans are to publish the author list, without titles, and the other lists, together with an introductory essay, within a couple of years.

2. *G. F. Vallance*. Does anyone know his full name and dates? He was among Brethren and lived at Goodmayes, Essex, England, around the 1920's. He wrote and published under his own imprint. Twenty titles have been recorded from his pen. Around 1934 his list was issued from Dereham. A letter to that address was never answered or returned. The list of his writings can be obtained from the address in the previous item.

3. *Ernest Feasey*. He appears to have been among Brethren as some of his writings appear in the series 'Helps for Young Christians', published by Brethren publishers. He wrote the pamphlets: *Jephtha: or, The Man Who Did not go Back: Moses: His God: and Sampson*. Does anyone know anything about him?

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