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"THE LORD'S PENTECOSTAL MISSIONARY MOVEMENT" THE RESTORATIONIST IMPULSE OF A MODERN MISSION MOVEMENT[1]

Gary B. McGee

1. Introduction

"In the year 1901 the latter rain began to fall in different parts of the world," trumpeted the *Missionary Manual* of the Assemblies of God published three decades later. More importantly, the evangelistic zeal of "waiting, hungry-hearted people," who had been baptized in the Holy Spirit, signaled the resumption of "the Lord's Pentecostal missionary movement." It had been halted at the end of the first century when the Holy Spirit was "largely rejected and His position as leader usurped by men." Consequently, Spirit-led missions ceased and the Dark Ages commenced.[2] Now, in the remaining days before the imminent return of Christ, Pentecostals would jubilantly carry the apostolic banner down the parade route of modern mission.

The historical prologue of the *Manual*, "History of the Pentecostal Movement," may represent the first such interpretation produced in North America devoted solely to Pentecostal mission.[3] That it expressed the sentiments of a wide swath of Pentecostals becomes evident in its reprinting in Horace McCracken's *History of Church of God Missions*,

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[1] This paper has been written in honor of the late John Morar and his wife Leota, former Assemblies of God missionaries to Asia, devout Pentecostals who served faithfully in the "Lord's missionary movement."

[2] *Missionary Manual of General Council of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Foreign Missions Department, ca. 1931), p. 7. Although the authorship is unknown, it was published under the direction of Noel Perkin, Missionary Secretary of the Assemblies of God (1927-1959), who may also have written it.

[3] See Appendix for the full text of "The History of the Pentecostal Movement."

produced in 1943 in Cleveland, Tennessee.[4] This vision—albeit with modifications—persists today in Pentecostal and charismatic circles around the world. Historian Vinson Synan echoes this when he writes: "Perhaps the ultimate purpose of the Pentecostal-charismatic renewal movement is to bring the signs-and-wonders gifts of the Holy Spirit back to the church in order to lead the way for the most intensive and successful period of evangelization in the history of the Faith."[5] Crediting Pentecostals and charismatics as the most missionary-minded segment in the world Christian community, missiologist Edward K. Pousson borrows the term "great century" from Kenneth Scott Latourette's description of nineteenth-century missions to portray the striking global outcome of "Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal and missions" in the century that followed.[6]

While some observers might dismiss these claims as the applause of insiders, the seismic shift in the spirituality of worldwide Christianity and the unprecedented expansion of the faith brought about by Pentecostalism establishes their credibility. So great has been the influence that historians George Rawlyk and Mark Noll contend, "If the New Birth defined the essence of evangelicalism during the first century of its history, the emphases of Pentecostalism may well be the defining characteristic of evangelicals in the twenty-first century."[7] The effect, however, has been felt far beyond the walls of evangelicalism, as recently noted by another historian, Philip Jenkins: "Worldwide, Christianity is actually moving toward supernaturalism and neo-orthodoxy, and in many ways toward the ancient worldview expressed in the New Testament: a vision of Jesus as the embodiment of divine power, who overcomes evil forces that inflict calamity and sickness upon the human race."[8]

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[4] Horace McCracken, *History of Church of God Missions* (Cleveland, TN: Church of God Mission Board, 1943), pp. 7-9. While no author is listed on the title page, credit to McCracken appears in the Preface.

[5] Vinson Synan, *The Spirit Said "Grow": The Astounding Worldwide Expansion of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1992), p. 61.

[6] Edward Keith Pousson, "A 'Great Century' of Pentecostal/Charismatic Renewal and Missions," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 16 (Spring 1994), pp. 81-100 (86).

[7] George A. Rawlyk and Mark A. Noll, "Introduction," in *Amazing Grace: Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States*, eds. George A. Rawlyk and Mark A. Noll (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), pp. 15-25 (18).

[8] Philip Jenkins, "The Next Christianity," *Atlantic Monthly*, October 2002, pp. 53-68 (54).

Pentecostal and charismatic mission endeavors, whether originating from North Atlantic countries or the southern hemisphere and Asian nations, have significantly contributed to this development.[9]

This paper briefly looks at the prologue from a historical and missiological perspective to discern how the author and other North American Pentecostal missionaries and mission leaders understood their place in the divine drama.[10] It then examines how they refocused their sectarian lens to recognize the achievements of others. Finally, the contemporary relevance of the prologue receives consideration.

2. Apostolic Missions

The comparison of modern mission methods with those employed by first-century Christians often created embarrassment for nineteenth-century missionaries. The rapid expansion of the early church, the miraculous demonstrations of power that convinced the pagans of God's supremacy, and the seeming success on every hand stood in sharp contrast to their long-suffering toil. Delivering the Students' Lectures on Missions at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1895, Presbyterian missionary and biblical scholar Chalmers Martin asked: "Is the work of modern missions the same work as that carried on by the apostles? In other words, are modern missions truly apostolic?"[11] In the lectures' published form, *Apostolic and Modern Missions*, it becomes evident that Chalmers needed 216 pages to answer in the affirmative.

Far away in southern Asia in 1902, while addressing United Presbyterian missionaries sowing the gospel seed on the "stony ground" of north India, theologian Robert Stewart listed all the advantages of the early Christians. In his estimation, the recovery of the apostolic

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[9] Larry D. Pate, "Pentecostal Missions from the Two-Thirds World," in *Called and Empowered: Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective*, eds. Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), pp. 242-58.

[10] That African-American Pentecostal missionaries shared this vision is evident in the activities of Azusa Street participant Lucy Farrow, "Pentecost in Portsmouth," *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), December 1906, p. 1, col. 3; also Kenneth E. M. Spooner, *A Sketch of Native Life in South Africa* (Rustenburg, South Africa: By the author, c. 1931).

[11] Chalmers Martin, *Apostolic and Modern Missions* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1898), p. 19.

dimension of mission would ultimately depend on a new baptism of the Spirit: "A great revival of religion, or a marked increase of grace, would strengthen and make effectual almost every plan we have named for the advancement of pastoral and ecclesiastical self-support."[12]

Stewart's concern for spiritual renewal did not go far enough for radical evangelicals, believers coming largely from the Wesleyan-holiness and "Higher Life" movements, who prayed that the Holy Spirit would dramatically empower them to bring closure to the Great Commission.[13] Nor would he have approved of their attempt to pole-vault over nineteen centuries to recapture the "signs and wonders" found in the Book of Acts (5:12).[14] Yet, in varying ways, that is exactly what they attempted.

No one expressed this as a missiological strategy better than A. B. Simpson, president of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. He lamented that mainline Protestantism "has lost her faith...in the supernatural signs and workings of the Holy Ghost, she has lost the signs also, and the result is that she is compelled to produce conviction upon the minds of the heathen very largely by purely rational and moral considerations and influences."[15] In what sounds like marching orders to the Alliance faithful, he declared: "We believe that it is the plan of the Lord to pour out His Spirit not only in the ordinary, but also in the extraordinary gifts and operations of His power, in proportion as His people press forward to claim the evangelization of the entire world."[16]

Accordingly, Joel's predicted outpouring of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-29) commenced as the "former rain" on the Day of Pentecost, preceding the

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[12] Robert Stewart, *Apostolic and Indian Missions Compared* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1903), pp. 117-18.

[13] For a discussion of the radical evangelical ethos, see Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 1-6.

[14] A. B. Simpson, *The Gospel of Healing*, rev. ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1915), pp. 54-57; A. J. Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, n.d.; originally published in 1882), p. 116; Gordon Lindsay, *John Alexander Dowie: A Life Story of Trials, Tragedies and Triumphs* (Dallas: Christ for the Nations, 1980), p. 7.

[15] A. B. Simpson, "The New Testament Standpoint of Missions," *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly*, December 16, 1892, p. 389.

[16] A. B. Simpson, "Connection between Supernatural Gifts and the World's Evangelization," *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly*, October 7 & 14, 1892, p. 226.

cloudburst of the "latter rain" that would come before the close of history. Looking at the premillennial calendar, they discovered they were part of the last generation.[17] Hence, the "radical strategy" of these evangelicals describes a virtually apocalyptic scenario of God's direct intervention in signs and wonders to ensure that every tribe and nation would hear the gospel before the coming of Christ. As an approach to mission, it centers largely on the action of the Holy Spirit invading Satan's realm with great demonstrations of power to gather out souls for Christ during the end-time harvest.[18] Through a select band of Spirit-filled missionaries, the miraculous work of the Spirit would then make up for the failure of the pedestrian practices of the Protestant missions movement to carry the gospel to all parts of the world before the Second Coming of Christ and the inauguration of his millennial reign on earth.[19]

Radical evangelicals collapsed history into two periods: the apostolic age and the era of a re-established New Testament Christianity. Other stripes of restorationists did the same: Hutterites with their communalism; Baptists with congregational polity; the Restoration movement in America with its order of salvation; Plymouth Brethren with an egalitarian ministry; Wesleyans with Christian perfection; and the evangelical healing movement with its "prayer of faith."

3. A Mission-Centered Church

But while Simpson and other radicals like A. J. Gordon and John Alexander Dowie linked prayer for the sick to missionary evangelism and remained open to the possibility that all the gifts of the Spirit might

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[17] Charles Nienkirchen, "Conflicting Visions of the Past: The Prophetic Use of History in the Early American Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements," in *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture*, ed. Karla Poewe (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), pp. 119-33 (121). For the tenets of premillennialism and dispensationalism, see Millard J. Erickson, *Contemporary Options in Eschatology: A Study of the Millennium* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), pp. 91-106, 109-124.

[18] For a historical examination of the radical strategy in mission and its various adaptations, see Gary B. McGee, "The Radical Strategy in Modern Mission: The Linkage of Paranormal Phenomena with Evangelism," in *The Holy Spirit and Mission Dynamics*, ed. C. Douglas McConnell (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1997), pp. 69-95.

[19] A. B. Simpson, *The Holy Spirit or Power from on High*, vol. 2, *The New Testament* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1896), pp. 84, 277-86.

be experienced again, others pressed for an even more open-ended return to the spirituality of early Christians. From the early nineteenth century—and especially after 1880—some radical evangelicals believed that with sufficient faith, a missionary might receive "new tongues" (Mark 16:17) for preaching.[20] After all, Christians widely believed that on the Day of Pentecost the Spirit had bestowed unlearned languages on the 120 disciples to jumpstart gospel proclamation among the nations. This gift would enable missionaries to bypass language school and preach immediately upon reaching their destinations.[21] Simpson, after several years of deliberation, objected to such a "strained and extravagant attempt to unduly exaggerate the gift of tongues" in a sermon published in 1898. Furthermore, "some have even proposed that we should send our missionaries to the foreign field under a sort of moral obligation to claim this gift, and to despise the ordinary methods of acquiring a language." The result would be "wild fanaticism and...discredit upon the truth itself."[22]

Nonetheless, others took the risk and prayed for an even greater dimension of the supernatural in their lives.[23] The most unusual twist came when Pentecostals, as early as 1901, announced that God intended for every Christian to receive languages in this manner as an indispensable component of Spirit baptism.[24] Through every Spirit-filled believer linguistically equipped for overseas evangelism, the outpouring

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[20] All scripture references are taken from the King James Version unless otherwise indicated.

[21] Gary B. McGee, "Shortcut to Language Preparation? Radical Evangelicals, Missions, and the Gift of Tongues," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 25 (July 2001), pp. 118-23.

[22] A. B. Simpson, "The Worship and Fellowship of the Church," *Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly*, February 9, 1898, p. 126.

[23] For example, see Frank W. Sandford, *Seven Years with God* (Mont Vernon, NH: Kingdom Press, 1957), p. 142. Sandford believed that God had commissioned him to "remove the [evil] covering cast over the face of all the earth." This would be the "beautiful key to the world's evangelization."

[24] Charles F. Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 2nd ed. (Baxter Springs, KS: Apostolic Faith Bible College, 1910), pp. 25-38. For his "gospel of the latter rain," see James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1988), pp. 62-86.

of the Spirit would create a truly mission-centered church.[25] With Pentecostals racing to preach the gospel with an eschatological stopwatch, amid the on-going spiritual and moral deterioration of the world, their empowerment signaled that the "apostolic faith" and the "Lord's Pentecostal missionary movement" had at last been recovered.

Bennett F. Lawrence, author of *The Apostolic Faith Restored* (1916), the first history of the Pentecostal movement, said the movement "leaps the intervening years crying, 'Back to Pentecost.'" "In the minds of these honest-hearted, thinking men and women, this work of God is directly connected with the work of God in New Testament days." In an important acknowledgment of the evangelical underpinning of the movement, he affirms: "We recognize the fundamentals of Christianity, we do not slight them, but in addition, we are laboring to obtain that supernatural character of the religion which was so pre-eminently a mark of it in the old days."[26] For Lawrence, Pentecostalism had only one forebearer: the New Testament church.

Not surprisingly, the prologue of the *Missionary Manual* presents a truncated picture of church history intent on summarizing God's plan for the "last days." Early Christians achieved success in mission because they allowed the "Holy Spirit [to assume] the entire control and leadership of the church." Though persecution scattered them from Palestine to Rome and elsewhere, they faithfully preached the good news. Then "local Assemblies of God's people" arose and continued to propagate the message.[27] (McCracken's version reads "local churches of God's people."[28])

Unfortunately, the Spirit's leadership ended at the close of the first century when God's people rejected the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Disaster followed: "The Lord's missionary movement halted. Local Assemblies died. The Dark Ages ensued." At this point, the writer pauses to remember his Protestant heritage. (Radical evangelicals and Pentecostals could not escape paying homage to the Protestant Reformation.) Despite the best efforts of the Reformers, however, they

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[25] For the transition in the meaning of tongues from preaching to prayer, see Gary B. McGee, "The Calcutta Revival of 1907 and the Reformulation of Charles F. Parham's 'Bible Evidence' Doctrine," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 6 (January 2003), pp. 123-43.

[26] B. F. Lawrence, *The Apostolic Faith Restored* (St. Louis: Gospel Publishing House, 1916), pp. 12-13.

[27] *Missionary Manual*, p. 6.

[28] McCracken, *History of Church of God Missions*, p. 7.

had failed to restore the dynamics of the Holy Spirit so characteristic of the early church. The sad result could be seen in the great denominations that had grown up on the "ruins of the early church." Mostly apostate, they resembled the Laodicean church—"neither cold nor hot...ready to be spued out" (Rev 3:16).[29]

With the arrival of the latter rain in 1901, the events seemed to parallel those of the early church. Indeed, "Acts 29" had begun: the "Lord's missionary movement" resumed; believers, showing the same level of dedication as the early Christians, preached the gospel everywhere; and "local Assemblies sprang into existence" around the world. In reviewing the intervening three decades before the publication of the *Manual*, the author reports that hundreds of Pentecostal missionaries could be found and nearly every nation had received a Pentecostal witness. Those baptized in the Spirit—"with the sign of speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance"—now probably numbered in the hundreds of thousands and the local assemblies could not be counted.[30] This ahistoric and triumphalist interpretation of history certified the special spiritual commission of Pentecostals over other Christians whose traditions had departed from the supernaturally authenticated faith of the early church.[31]

Interestingly, however, the *Manual* itself suggests the inevitability of change. Unlike McCracken's use of the prologue to precede a historical survey of Church of God missions, its function in the *Manual* justifies the "nuts and bolts" regulations that follow, policies designed to strengthen the enterprise (e.g., financial support, acquisition of property, furloughs, passports). Its practical and pragmatic nature insured that modifications would come—guidelines are subject to amendment or deletion over time. In fact, the prologue would not be reprinted in later Assemblies of God publications.

4. From Isolation to Cooperation

The importance of the prologue also lies in what it does not say. First, one looks in vain for the mention of mission heroes such as William Carey, J. Hudson Taylor, and William Taylor, as well as

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[29] *Missionary Manual*, p. 7.

[30] *Missionary Manual*, p. 7.

[31] Nienkirchen, "Conflicting Visions of the Past," p. 120.

reference to other mission organizations. It appears that the "Lord's missionary movement" had been resurrected in a vacuum. Yet, in a notable development, the Assemblies of God joined the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (1893) in 1920, an agency that became a constituent member of the International Missionary Council in 1921.[32] General Superintendent John W. Welch grumbled about the creeping liberal theology prevalent among some in the Conference: "They have not only lost the vision of individual salvation, but have gone so far from the vision of the Gospel that they are actually talking boastfully about saving the world through the great brotherhood of man. God help them!"[33] Still, since membership did not require doctrinal uniformity, the denomination kept its membership for many years because of the numerous practical services it afforded and its representation of missionary concerns before the State Department.

Second, the prologue says nothing about holistic mission and the work of charitable institutions. J. Roswell Flower, the first missionary secretary of the Assemblies of God, had squarely placed the emphasis on evangelism in 1920: "The Pentecostal commission is to witness, *witness*, WITNESS." Missionaries "cannot follow the methods laid down by those who have gone before them, neither can they bend their energies in building up charitable institutions, hospitals and schools as do the denominational societies." Such activities would fall short of the "Pentecostal standard."[34]

Notwithstanding, almost from the beginning, Pentecostal missionaries participated in relief efforts (e.g., United International Famine Relief Committee in Mongolia)[35] and established charitable ministries (e.g., the orphanage founded by Lillian Trasher in Assiout,

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[32] Executive Presbytery Minutes, 20 April 1920; see also, Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "The Assemblies of God and Ecumenical Cooperation: 1920-1965," in *Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honor of William W. Menzies*, ed. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies (Sheffield, U.K.: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), pp. 107-50.

[33] John W. Welch, "The Present Great World Crisis," *Pentecostal Evangel*, March 28, 1925, p. 8.

[34] J. Roswell Flower, "The Pentecostal Commission," *Pentecostal Evangel*, June 12, 1920, p. 12.

[35] Thomas Hindle, "Gashatay, Mongolia," *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 30, 1921, p. 12.

Egypt; Home of Onesiphorus founded by Leslie M. Anglin in China).[36] North India missionary Esther B. Harvey spoke for many when she queried: "Could we preach the love of Christ to these and turn them away naked and hungry to die along the roadside?"[37] Her question betrays defensiveness about departing from the "Pentecostal standard." Throughout the history of the Assemblies of God, missionaries have evangelized and worked in various forms of holistic ministry, but with the latter always needing a measure of justification.[38]

Issues of justice did not appear on the agenda; premillennial eschatology left little time for the transformation of cultures. For Pentecostals, prophecy opened the window into the future. Contemporary history and culture only had relevance as they related to coming events. "But mark this," Paul warned Timothy, "there will be terrible times in the last days" (2 Tim 3:1 [NIV]). Therefore, cultures could not be salvaged. With their eyes fixed upward, Pentecostals brushed other matters aside as they waited for the clouds to part when the "Lord himself shall descend from heaven" (1 Thess 4:16).[39]

Despite the exclusiveness of the prologue, praise surfaces in early Pentecostal literature for evangelical missionaries who had not spoken in tongues. "We do not mean to say that others who believe in the new birth have wholly lost [the supernatural character of the Christian religion]," wrote Lawrence, "but we desire a return to New Testament power."[40] In McCracken's *History of Church of God Missions*, written twelve years after the *Missionary Manual*, the borrowed prologue provides the reason for Church of God missions. A later chapter, however, pays tribute to

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[36] See Beverly Graham, ed., *Letters from Lillian* (Springfield, MO: Assemblies of God Division of Foreign Missions, 1983); Harry J. Albus, *Twentieth-Century Onesiphorus: The Story of Leslie M. Anglin and the Home of Onesiphorus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951). Though he had early connections with the Assemblies of God, Anglin later separated from the Pentecostal movement.

[37] Esther B. Harvey, *The Faithfulness of God*, 2nd ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Grounds Gospel Press, n.d.), p. 38.

[38] Interestingly, Scandinavian Pentecostal missionaries have a long history in the practice of holistic mission. See David Hallberg, "Swedish Missionary Outreach," *World Pentecost* 1 (1973), pp. 22-23.

[39] Edith L. Blumhofer, "Restoration as Revival: Early American Pentecostalism," in *Modern Christian Revivals*, eds. Edith L. Blumhofer and Randall Balmer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), pp. 145-60 (154).

[40] Lawrence, *Apostolic Faith Restored*, p. 13.

such well-known mission personalities as John R. Mott, A. J. Gordon, D. W. Stearns, and Edward ("Praying") Hyde of India.[41]

In 1963, the Assemblies of God issued a Sunday school worker's training book entitled, *Our World Witness: A Survey of Assemblies of God Foreign Missions*, written by Noel Perkin and John Garlock. Since Perkin had probably written the *Manual*, the change in historical reflection is noteworthy. By the time of its publication, the denomination had affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals and the World Evangelical Fellowship. The missions department had been a member of the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association (now Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies) for some years and Perkin had been the first Pentecostal to serve as president (1959-1960).

Several factors contributed to this alignment, including the post-war "dream of a Christian America," a new agenda that would require cooperation with evangelicals and move Pentecostals beyond their sectarian isolation. The new coalition had a moderating influence on Pentecostal restorationism and reshaped their identity.[42] In the process, more contact between Pentecostals and evangelicals clearly brought greater appreciation for the other and recognition of the benefits of joint action.

In another significant development in the post-war period, Pentecostals began to follow the lead of evangelicals in exploring the implications of the advancing kingdom of God for mission. Evangelical missiologist Arthur Glasser writes, "If God's tomorrow means the end of exploitation, injustice, inequality, war, racism, nationalism, suffering, death, and the ignorance of God, Christians must be 'signs' today of God's conquest of all these 'burdens and evils' through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ." Hence, "Christians today dare [not] indulge the luxury of indifference to the moral and social issues of today."[43] Moving away from the dispensational focus on the kingdom of God as chiefly the restoration of David's kingdom in the millennial reign of Christ, Pentecostals too discovered that the present aspects of the kingdom had great relevance for the mission of the church.

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[41] McCracken, *History of Church of God Missions*, pp. 157-68.

[42] Edith L. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), p. 197.

[43] Arthur F. Glasser, "The Evolution of Evangelical Mission Theology since World War II," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 9 (January 1985), pp. 9-13 (12).

Consequently, the apocalyptic flavor of the prologue that marked Pentecostal missions gradually diminished, while leaving an "urgent" eschatological motivation intact.[44]

The willingness of Esther Harvey to sidestep the "Pentecost standard" illustrates the willingness of Pentecostal missionaries to think and act "outside the box" when necessity required it. Their preference to be led by the Spirit virtually guaranteed that they would occasionally dance beyond the narrow circle of the prologue. In true Pentecostal fashion, the Lord allowed Harvey to pull back from the brink of eschatology and expand her horizon in mission: "The Lord gave us Isa. 58:4-14. 'Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?'"[45]

Our World Witness, though seemingly unaware of the up-and-coming revamping of Pentecostal mission theology,[46] shows evidence of a turnabout in historical outlook. It contains thirteen pages on the history of missions, assisted by references to books by historians Edward Gibbon and Kenneth Scott Latourette. "Like flashes of light in darkest of days of Church history gleam the records of individuals who were obviously dedicated to God and filled with His Spirit," writes Perkin and Garlock. Those placed in this "Spirit-filled" hall of fame surprisingly include

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[44] L. Grant McClung, Jr., "'Try To Get People Saved': Revisiting the Paradigm of an Urgent Pentecostal Missiology," in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*, eds. Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen (Irvine, CA: Regnum, 1999), pp. 30-51.

[45] Harvey, *Faithfulness of God*, p. 38.

[46] Speaking at the Congress on the Church's Worldwide Mission at Wheaton College in April 1966, three years after the publication of *Our World Witness*, Melvin L. Hodges declared the church to be "the present manifestation of the kingdom of God in the earth, or at least, the agency that prepares the way for the future manifestation of the kingdom. Its mission therefore is the extension of the Church throughout the world.... It is the Holy Spirit that gives life to the Church and imparts gifts and ministries as well as power for their performance"; Melvin L. Hodges, "Mission—And Church Growth," in *The Church's Worldwide Mission*, ed. Harold Lindsell (Waco: Word, 1966), pp. 140-50 (141, 145). More extensive treatments of the kingdom of God from a Pentecostal perspective came with Paul A. Pomerville, *The Third Force in Missions* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985); and Murray Dempster, "A Theology of the Kingdom—A Pentecostal Contribution," in *Mission as Transformation*, eds. Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden (Irvine, CA: Regnum, 1999), pp. 45-75.

Columba, Raymond Lull, William Carey, Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plütschau, David Brainerd, David Livingstone, J. Hudson Taylor, and Roland Allen, among others.[47]

Furthermore, a "great surge forward in world evangelism" happened at the turn of the twentieth century parallel to the beginning of the Pentecostal movement. While Pentecostal missions accounted for part of this advance, "even in those churches which did not accept the Pentecostal experience there was a spiritual stirring which resulted in greater missionary activity." The authors then praise the many nondenominational mission societies formed after World War I by Christians who felt that the mainline denominational mission agencies were not doing enough to evangelize the world.[48] Thus, in the thirty-two year period between the publication of the *Missionary Manual* and *Our World Witness*, a significant shift in perspective had occurred, but without the loss of Pentecostal self-perception. The Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.), International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, International Pentecostal Holiness Church, Open Bible Standard Churches, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada all made similar pilgrimages.[49]

5. Mission in the Last Great Conflict

It would be unfair to condemn the 776-word prologue for failing to address all the issues that missiologists take for granted today. If the document appears to be triumphalist in nature, it is due in part to the intertwining of mission and eschatology in the New Testament. Jesus told his disciples, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt 24:14). Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40) and other favorite scripture passages among radical evangelicals and

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[47] Noel Perkin and John Garlock, *Our World Witness: A Survey of Assemblies of God Foreign Missions* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1963), p. 17.

[48] Perkin & Garlock, *Our World Witness*, p. 22.

[49] Mickey Crews, *The Church of God: A Social History* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990), pp. 146-47; Robert Bryant Mitchell, *Heritage and Horizons: The History of Open Bible Standard Churches* (Des Moines, IA: Open Bible Publishers, 1982), pp. 229, 261; Vinson Synan, *The Old Time Power: A Centennial History of the International Pentecostal Holiness Church* (Franklin Springs, GA: LifeSprings Resources, 1998), pp. 222-24, 291-92.

Pentecostals clearly directed them to the final triumph of God (e.g., 1 Thess 4:16-17; 2 Peter 3:9-13).

Like other restorationists, Pentecostals caught a glimpse of their place in history, used the early church as their model, but more radically sought for the return of the same apostolic dynamics—Spirit baptism, charismatic gifts, and signs and wonders.[50] Along the way, they discovered other faithful servants involved in mission (Luke 9:49-50) and even more responsibilities in mission: feeding the hungry, sheltering the stranger, clothing the naked, caring for the sick, and visiting the prisoners (Matt 25:34-36, 40). By the end of the twentieth century, they had broadened their understanding of the church, adopted the kingdom of God as an interpretive framework for salvation history, engaged in holistic mission without apology, and had even begun to consider the importance of social doctrine as it relates to mission.[51]

In *The Last Great Conflict* published in 1913, Church of God pioneer Ambrose J. Tomlinson laments that millions still have not heard the gospel. The task of evangelism "has been shifted from one generation to another long enough. It is up to us now. Our commander says 'Go!'" He then declares that Spirit-filled believers must forsake "ease, pleasures, friends we love, homes and all their comforts" to accomplish the Great Commission.[52] Sharing the same sentiment, the *Manual* adds, "God is looking for men and women to use. He has no other body, nor hands, nor feet for the earthly ministry. He gives gifts to men and gives men as gifts."[53]

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[50] For independent charismatic missions, see Edward K. Pousson, *Spreading the Flame: Charismatic Churches and Missions Today* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992); cf., Nienkirchen, "Conflicting Visions of the Past," pp. 125-30. With a shorter history, independent charismatic missionaries and mission leaders since the 1960s have perceived themselves as raised up by God in the last days to evangelize the world. Writing about charismatic missions and noting the relationship between renewal movements in history and evangelism, Pousson explains, "When the Gospel as we package it loses its edge in a changing society, God sends revival to chisel away outdated patterns of ministry and evangelism. New patterns of ministry then break out, impacting new segments of society, and exposing worn-out Christians to the real power of the Gospel" (p. 27).

[51] Douglas Petersen, *Not by Might Nor by Power: A Pentecostal Theology of Social Concern for Latin America* (Irvine, CA: Regnum, 1996), pp. 186-233.

[52] A. J. Tomlinson, *The Last Great Conflict* (Cleveland, TN: Walter E. Rodgers, 1913), p. 29.

[53] *Missionary Manual*, p. 7.

Contemporary Pentecostals should be inspired by the calls for sacrifice and evangelism made by early leaders like Tomlinson and the author of the *Manual*, without needing to profess superiority over other Christians. Still, for Pentecostals, "specific instances of the gifts of the Spirit operating in the worship setting or in the market place of witness," writes Church of God theologian Steven Land, "are seen as part of a larger cosmic drama in which one is a participant and not a victim. The sovereign Spirit of God is moving and working in all things for the good of those who love God." [54] Of course, this ultimately involves all believers since the final victory belongs to Christ.

Mission in the "last great conflict" certainly requires the full-orbed power of the Holy Spirit, the compassion of Christ, and the creativity and courage of missionaries who love God and humanity. Pentecostals, stirred to mission by a divine sense of destiny, can also celebrate that all Christians who bear witness to the good news serve together in the "Lord's missionary movement." Indeed, the preaching of the "gospel of the kingdom in all the world for a witness unto all nations" cannot be accomplished without them.

APPENDIX

HISTORY OF THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT[55]

The Lord's Pentecostal Missionary Fellowship and Movement began on the day of Pentecost nearly two thousand years ago. On that glorious and memorable day; the Father in heaven, in answer to the prayer of the Son, Jesus Christ, gave the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, and He descended upon the waiting disciples in the city of Jerusalem, baptizing them into one body and enduing them with power for the task of world-wide evangelization committed to them by the Master. All became witnesses and spoke in other languages as the Spirit gave them utterance. Peter preached to the multitude and before the day was over three thousand souls were added to their number.

The Holy Spirit assumed the entire control and leadership of the church, the body of Christ, and the Lord continued His mighty works though its members.

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[54] Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), p. 137.

[55] *Missionary Manual of General Council of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Foreign Missions Department, 1931), pp. 6-8, now available at the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, Mo. 65802.

Persecutions arose and believers were scattered abroad, preaching the Gospel everywhere they went. Thus the Good News was carried throughout Judea, to Samaria, the sea coast towns and farther afield. Believers returned to their homes in distant countries to preach the Gospel, and it was not long before the news was carried to Rome, the capital city of the Roman Empire. Local Assemblies of God's people sprang up everywhere, and in turn continued to propagate the Gospel. The complete story is contained in the book of Acts.

The Holy Spirit continued in control until the close of the first century, then He was largely rejected and His position as leader usurped by men. The results are written in history. The Lord's missionary movement halted. Local Assemblies died. The Dark Ages ensued.

The Reformation followed, but the Holy Spirit was not fully restored, and upon the ruins of the early church have grown up the great denominations. Today the professing church is largely in apostasy, neither cold nor hot, and is nearly ready to be spued out.

But God looks down in mercy. The Lord's missionary movement, begun on the day of Pentecost, must be completed. He must have a people, a remnant, a bride.

In these latter days, the last days of the age, God is again pouring out His Spirit in accordance with His promise. In the year 1901 the latter rain began to fall in different parts of the world. Again, waiting, hungry-hearted people were baptized in the Holy Spirit. The Lord's Pentecostal missionary movement was resumed. Believers went everywhere preaching the Gospel. Numerous local Assemblies sprang into existence in America, Europe, and other parts of the world.

In the years 1906, 1907, and 1908 the Pentecostal missionaries began pressing on to the regions beyond. Whole families volunteered for the work, sold their possessions, and started for the field. They were possessed with a passion to go to the ends of the earth for their Lord, and no sacrifice seemed too great to them that the Gospel might be proclaimed and the coming of the Lord might be hastened.

At the present time there are hundreds of missionaries on the fields—nearly every nation in the world has received a Pentecostal witness—and those who have received the Holy Spirit with the sign of speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance are probably numbered by the hundreds of thousands. The local Assemblies are uncounted.

It is the Lord Himself who is continuing His works though those who are willing to yield their all to the Holy Spirit and receive this wonderful Baptism. God is looking for men and women to use. He has no other body, nor hands, nor feet for the earthly ministry. He gives gifts to men and gives men as gifts.

In the beginning of the Pentecostal missionary movement, during the first century and later, God administered though the apostles—Paul was especially used in this capacity—and through councils of apostles and brethren, and so on.

At present, the Lord is graciously using the Council of brethren, known as the General Council of the Assemblies of God in administering the affairs of a large part of this Pentecostal missionary movement at home and abroad.

The missionary Department of the General Council is the servant of the Assemblies of God and is concerned in carrying out the policy of the General Council as outlined in its Foreign Missions Policy.

Acting for the Assemblies, the Missions Department, assisted by its staff, disseminates missionary information, arranges for missionary meetings and conferences, examines and endorses candidates, aids the missionaries—duly appointed—in reaching their fields of labor, receives and disburses mission funds, acquires and holds property at home and abroad, and so on.