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Editorial

The 'Visible Church'.

This issue brings together a multidisciplinary focus on critical issues relating to the visible church. Stephen Fogarty, who spends his days leading a national theological college, is well-equipped to apply leadership theory to one of the key problems of the visible Pentecostal church. Few people who work in organizations long enough manage to remain unaffected by the spectacular fall of charismatic leaders or, worse, by manipulative or self-centred leadership. When this occurs in Churches, the affect on their public witness can be catastrophic. Eric Newberg extends this problem into a critical issue of public policy—evangelical support for the modern State of Israel. Newberg explores the impact of American Pentecostal adoption of fundamentalist dispensationalism on Arabic Christians and displaced Palestinians, and its implications for Pentecostal public theology. The result is a fundamental challenge to the sources of classical Pentecostal theology, a complexus that has always rotated around answering the question 'where are we in time?' Newberg asks the further question, 'How can a movement speak to the world when its public positions are open to charges of hypocrisy.' It is only suitable, then, that consideration of this case study in public proclamation is followed by Newton's analysis of another form of proclamation—Christian prophecy. Newton's specialization is in the study of the Revelation. His study adds point to the growing body of literature which unpacks the problems inherent in the classical cessationist interpretations of the charismatic gifts. He then explores those limits which are more faithful to the biblical record and the implications these have for public witness through prophecy. Tanya Riches, a rising young Pentecostal scholar of worship cultures, extends this by applying ritological approaches to the interpretation of one of the world's leading producers of Christian worship music, Hillsong Australia. Interpreting megachurch 'inner spaces' as a form of 'inner public' connects powerfully to Goh's work on the function of "the mega" in creating spiritual plausibilities.¹

The tensions identifiable here—between Newberg's charismatic approach, Newton's correction from a classical Pentecostal perspective, and Riches' exploration within a functioning spiritual community—imply just the sort of 'crisis' in Pentecostal Studies which Wolfgang Vondey explores in his important new book, *Beyond Pentecostalism*. His use of the

metaphor of ‘play’ builds on and expands rather well on many of the themes raised by Riches, providing an exteriorization and agenda to the interiority described in the spontaneity and serious ‘play’ evidenced by worship music. This issue ends with an international symposium considering the issues raised in the book.

Since World War II, scholarship relating to evangelicalism has developed almost to ‘industry’ status. As Pentecostal scholarship develops, paying attention to the parallels will be instructive. In his *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage*, Donald Dayton makes the observation that the scholarship of evangelicalism was warped by the dominance of the reformed tradition in evangelical scholarly institutions. The result of the observation was to change the thing being observed. A similar pattern can be detected in the growing literature on Pentecostalism, where it has become an object of interest to charismatic scholars and others from outside Pentecostal communities. Vondey’s account—and the surrounding discussion—points to the need for classical Pentecostals to take the study of their own tradition more seriously. The alternative is, as proposed in Vondey’s title, to become a *subject*, first of sociology, then of theology, and finally, perhaps, of history.

The Editors

1. Robbie B. H. Goh, ‘Hillsong and “Megachurch” practice: semiotics, spatial logic, and the embodiment of contemporary evangelical Protestantism,’ *Material Religion*, vol. 4, no. 3, p. 285.

The Dark Side of Charismatic Leadership

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Abstract

Charismatic leaders can transform organizations by motivating members to higher levels of commitment and performance by inspiring them with an appealing vision that is highly discrepant to an unsatisfying status quo. However, there is also a “dark side” to charismatic leaders. They can increase risk levels to organizations and threaten the well-being of members. The personalized need for power, negative life themes, and narcissistic tendencies of personalized charismatic leaders can lead to unethical and destructive behavior. Socialized (rather than personalized) charismatic leaders, on the other hand, are more likely to produce beneficial results. Safeguards to minimize the potential negative consequences of personalized charismatic leaders include effective accountability structures, viable support systems, and leader selection processes. The Christian understanding of human nature and community provides a useful perspective in developing a beneficial working relationship between the leader, the organization, and its members.

Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leaders are different from other leaders in the way that they transform organizations and their members. They are able to articulate a vision for an organization’s future that motivates its members to extraordinary effort and achievement (House & Howell, 1992). They can generate enthusiasm among the members of the organization by describing a better organizational future, by presenting new opportunities and solutions, and by connecting the needs of the members of the organization to the projected vision (Boal & Bryson, 1988).

The notion of charismatic leadership is derived from the Greek word *charisma* which means “divinely inspired gift.” The German sociologist Max Weber instigated the contemporary focus on charismatic leadership when he described a type of leader who exerts remarkable influence by demonstrating “a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue

of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities” (Weber, 1947, 358). The followers of charismatic leaders perceive them to be endowed with qualities not found in ordinary leaders. This perception of the charismatic leader’s qualities motivates followers to higher levels of commitment and task performance than would otherwise be the case.

Charismatic leadership occurs when an organization and its members believe that they have found in some individual a solution to the problems that confront them (Jones, 2001). People generally feel better about themselves and their circumstances when working with a charismatic leader. Charismatic leadership has the potential to help an organization rise above unsatisfactory performance and internal cultural restrictions to develop a positive interface with its operating environment. Charismatic leaders can transform organizations through their ability to see opportunities and their willingness to implement unique strategies. They bring solutions to organizational problems and hope to organizational members.

A charismatic leader typically advocates an inspirational vision for the future of an organization that is highly discrepant from the status quo, but which still seems possible and desirable. The leader is prepared to take on high personal risks, to engage in self-sacrifice, and to act in innovative, unconventional and effective ways to achieve the vision. The leader acts with confidence and demonstrates dedication to his or her convictions with high energy and persistence. As a result, the charismatic leader achieves radical change in the organization and is judged by its members to have achieved unusual success (Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

The members of an organization led by a charismatic leader are likely to agree with, feel affection for, and obey the leader. A charismatic leader has the ability to transform the nature of work and make it more meaningful by de-emphasizing extrinsic rewards and focusing on the intrinsic qualities of the task. Work becomes an opportunity for self- and collective expression. The reward that organizational members derive in the accomplishment of tasks is one of enhanced self-worth. They are likely to make a strong and close connection between organizational tasks and their own self-concepts. A shared identity develops among organizational members that increases the perceived importance of the charismatic leader and his or her vision. The self interests of organizational members are likely to be subjugated to the leader’s vision and goals for the organization (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). The members of organizations led by charismatic leaders can be distinguished by their greater reverence, trust

and satisfaction with the leader, and by a heightened sense of collective identity, perceived group task performance, and feelings of empowerment (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000).

Charismatic leaders *can* provide very effective leadership to organizations. They are able to inspire increased member satisfaction and commitment by connecting their activities to an inspiring vision. Organizational members are likely to feel stronger and more in control of their own destinies. A positive correlation between charismatic leadership and reported follower performance and satisfaction has been demonstrated in empirical studies (Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993; Shamir, Zakey & Popper, 1998). Charismatic leaders can generate organizational meaning and excitement with the worthwhile vision that they articulate. The organization can take on characteristics of a cause, or a movement of reform (Berlew, 1974). Consequently, the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization in attaining its goals can be enhanced because of the influence of a charismatic leader. Considerable evidence points to a positive correlation between charismatic leadership and enhanced organizational performance (O'Connor, et al., 1995; Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000).

Although they can have strong positive effects on organizations, however, charismatic leaders can also produce significant negative outcomes. Conger (1990) has referred to the “dark side” of charismatic leadership which can eclipse the bright side to the detriment of both the leader and the organization. The behavior of charismatic leaders can introduce instability and uncertainty into management and decision-making processes, and can increase the risk levels of the organization (House & Howell, 1992). Organizational members can be subjected to manipulation and deception by charismatic leaders (O'Connor, et al., 1995). Charismatic leaders are unlikely to be able to routinize the positive characteristics of their leadership into the organization to continue beyond their incumbency. It is rare for charismatic leaders to be replaced successfully by leaders with the same capacity for achieving organizational transformation (Bryman, 1993; Conger, 1990).

Personalized versus Socialized Charismatic Leadership

House and Howell (1992) have provided an explanation for the potential liabilities of charismatic leadership by distinguishing ‘personalized’ from ‘socialized’ charismatic leaders. Central to this distinction is the observation that some leaders react to organizational problems in terms of their own needs rather than those of the organization, and may consequently engage in actions which have adverse outcomes for the organization (O'Connor, et al., 1995). Such ‘personalized’ charismatic

leadership can be exploitative, non-egalitarian, and self-aggrandizing. By contrast, 'socialized' charismatic leadership is more likely to be empowering to followers, non-exploitative, and motivated by organizational rather than personal needs.

Personalized charismatic leaders are typically authoritarian and narcissistic. Their goals reflect their own interests, while the needs of the organization and its members are manipulated in order to achieve the leader's interests. The relationship between the leader and organizational members can be exploitative (Choi, 2006). The relationship is focused on followers' personalized identification with the leader. It is likely to generate feelings of empowerment for the leader but, eventually, detrimental consequences for followers (Howell & Shamir, 2005). Personalized charismatic leaders demonstrate little regard for legitimate channels of authority. They are likely to pursue courses of action that enhance their own power within an organization and that attract credit to their achievements (Jacobsen & House, 2001).

Conversely, *socialized* charismatic leaders articulate a vision that serves the interests of the organization and govern in an egalitarian manner. They seek to actively empower followers and to govern through established channels of authority to accomplish their goals (Howell & Shamir, 2005). The leader demonstrates regard for and commitment to legitimate channels of authority to implement their objectives. The relationship between the leader and organizational members is focused less on the personality of the leader and more on the leader's message about the organization and its ideals and goals. In this relationship, followers are able to place constraints on the leader's influence and are less open to manipulation by the leader. Socialized charisma is considered non-exploitive and more focused on follower needs (Choi, 2006).

Characteristics of Personalized Charismatic Leadership

Personalized charismatic leaders are characterized by personalized use of power, negative life themes, and narcissism (Padilla, et al., 2007). Such leaders are likely to engage in behavior that is destructive to the organization and harmful to its members. This behavior can include self-centered decision making, greed, and lack of communality.

An enhanced need for power is characteristic of all charismatic leaders and a component of effective leadership (House & Howell, 1992). However, personalized need for power is not tempered by responsibility or activity inhibition and produces coercive and controlling leadership behaviors. The attainment of power acts as the goal for the leader. Power is used

for self-aggrandizement and possibly to the detriment of the organization and its members. Personalized charismatic leaders are likely to be willing to use people as tools or objects for personal gain (O'Connor, et al., 1995). Their lack of empathy for others can allow them to see actions that result in harm to others as a legitimate path to goal achievement. Uninhibited willingness to use others for personal gain can eventually produce strong negative outcomes for the organization (O'Connor, et al., 1995).

'Life themes' underlie and mirror the visions articulated by leaders (Zalesznik & Kets de Vries, 1984). A 'life theme' is a person's story of their own life including interpretation of the past and projection into the future. Personalized charismatic leaders tend to harbor negative life themes (O'Connor, et al., 1995). They can view the world as a hostile place characterized by threats to the leader's well being. Kets de Vries partially attributes intrapersonal problems in leaders to unresolved issues stemming from childhood. The quality of early human attachments with primary caregivers, especially parents, becomes a powerful determinant of adult behavior (Chandler, 2009). Negative life themes can produce reactive and destructive behavior by leaders as they seek to minimize uncertainty and implement personal control.

Narcissism is a pervasive pattern of grandiosity, self-focus, and self-importance (King, 2007). Narcissistic leaders are principally motivated by their own egocentric needs which, by definition, supersede the needs and interests of the organization and the members that they lead. Egocentric needs (sometimes taken to the point of egomania) include a grandiose sense of self-importance, preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success and power, excessive need for admiration and entitlement, lack of empathy, and envy (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006).

It is likely that all leaders have some degree of narcissism, derived from assurance of their personal worth. This contributes to their leadership effectiveness by generating an impression of dynamism and positive energy amongst followers (Kets de Vries & Miller, 1985). Rosenthal and Pittinsky (2006) point out that "narcissism is a key trait of some of the world's most creative and generative leaders" (p. 628).

However, personalized charismatic leaders exhibit narcissistic tendencies to a degree that is destructive to followers and organizations. These tendencies include a craving for power and consistent attempts to secure more of it regardless of potential peril to themselves and the organization they lead. Narcissistic, personalized charismatic leaders can demonstrate a myopic focus on their personal priorities, including willingness to exploit others and engaging in behaviors of denial and entitlement

(Humphreys, et al., 2010). They can be self-absorbed, attention-seeking, and ignorant of the views and welfare of others (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). They often claim special knowledge or privilege and demand unquestioning obedience (O'Connor, et al., 1995). Their sense of personal entitlement can lead to self-serving abuses of power and autocratic leadership styles (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Their grandiose dreams of power and success can cause them to ignore the external environment and to avoid testing their judgment against external benchmarks. Consequently, their grand visions often defy successful implementation (Kets de Vries & Miller, 1985).

Negative Consequences of Personalized Charismatic Leadership

The personalized need for power, negative life themes, and narcissistic tendencies of personalized charismatic leaders can contribute to a view of the world where personal safety is achieved through the domination and depersonalization of others. In the absence of self-regulatory mechanisms such as guilt, moral standards, and controlled by impulse inhibitors, destructive behaviors can result. Charismatic leaders who choose organizational goals based on personal needs and gain can have a significant detrimental impact on organizational performance and the well-being of the members of the organization. The negative consequences of personalized charismatic power include unethical and destructive leadership behavior.

Ethical leadership behavior is defined as the “organizational process of leaders acting in a manner consistent with agreed-upon standards of character, decency, and integrity, which upholds clear, measurable, and legal standards, fostering the common good over personal self-interest” (Chandler, 2009, 70). Ethical leadership is essential for organizational legitimacy (Mendonca, 2001), earns the confidence and loyalty of organizational members, and enhances organizational moral climate and conduct (Aronson, 2001).

Conversely, unethical leadership behavior is inconsistent with accepted standards of character, decency, and integrity. It fosters distrust among members of the organization and other constituent groups because of perceptions that the leader is acting out of personal self-interest. Unethical charismatic leaders can also produce dependent and compliant followers (Howell & Avolio, 1992). They tend to select (even attract) such followers and then act in ways which further undermine follower independence. The resultant negative outcomes can include the abuse of personal power, the nurture of blind loyalties, and the suppression of criticism (Chandler, 2009). Consequently, when the leader acts in an unethical man-

ner, compliant followers tend not to critique the leader's decisions or behavior.

Destructive leadership behavior violates the legitimate interests of the organization by undermining and sabotaging the organization's goals, task, resources, and effectiveness. It also undermines the motivation, well-being, and job satisfaction of the members of the organization (Einarsen, et al., 2007). 'Destructive' leadership is systematic and repeated. Every leader is likely to occasionally act in a manner that is self-serving and not in the best interests of the organization and its members. Leaders do make poor decisions and act inappropriately. It is when the behavior becomes systematic and repeated that it can be classified as destructive. Einarsen et al. (2007) describe three types of destructive leadership behavior: tyrannical leadership; derailed leadership; and supportive-disloyal leadership.

Tyrannical leadership behavior undermines the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of organizational members, without necessarily being clearly destructive to the organization. Tyrannical leaders may behave in accordance with the goals and strategies of the organization, but they typically obtain their results at the cost of followers. They may humiliate, belittle, and manipulate followers in order to get the job done. Examples of tyrannical behaviors include creating groups of insiders and outsiders, fomenting distrust within the group, using propaganda, and creating scapegoats to be punished as a warning to others.

Derailed leadership behavior has adverse impacts on both organizational members and the organization. Derailed leaders may display behaviors destructive to the well-being of followers, such as bullying, humiliation, manipulation, deception, or harassment, while at the same time undermining the effectiveness of the organization. Examples of derailed behaviors include the inability to adapt to changing circumstances, being insensitive to the needs and concerns of others, failing to build teams, failing to think and plan strategically, and intimidating and bullying followers.

Supportive-disloyal leadership behavior shows concern for the welfare of organizational members while violating the interests of the organization. Supportive-disloyal leaders may encourage the personal loyalty of followers to the leader by granting them benefits and allowing behaviors that are detrimental to the organization. Examples of supportive-disloyal behaviors include allowing loafing and misconduct by followers, granting followers privileges and benefits at the cost to the organization, and not policing and punishing behaviors such as theft or fraud.

Conger (1990) refers to unethical and destructive leadership behavior as the “dark side” of charismatic leadership. He points out that leaders may use their charismatic qualities for personal gain and act in an abusive manner that is contrary to the interests of an organization and its members. Conger highlights three skill areas where a charismatic leader might act in a destructive manner: the leader’s strategic vision; their communication and impression-management skills; and their general management practices. The strategic vision advocated by the leader might reflect the internal needs of the leader rather than those of the organization. It might also reflect the leader’s unrealistic or distorted perception of what is best for the organization. The charismatic leader might use his or her communication and impression-management skills for exaggerated self-descriptions and claims, and may seek to gain commitment to his or her vision by restricting negative information and maximizing positive information. The potential liabilities of a leader’s management practices may be displayed in poor management of followers, unconventional behavior that alienates followers and other constituents, and an autocratic management style.

There can be significant negative consequences arising from the exercise of personalized charismatic leadership. A leader’s lack of genuine concern for the needs and welfare of other people can result in the use of their persuasive skills to manipulate and exploit followers. They can have difficulty maintaining cooperative relationships with followers, peers, and superiors. Therefore, followers can be induced to be open to manipulation and deception as the leader pursues his or her self-interest. Followers’ sense of awe in the leader and desire for acceptance by the leader can inhibit criticism and the offering of good suggestions. Charismatic leaders can also introduce instability and uncertainty into management and decision-making processes, and increase the risk levels of the organization. Denial of problems and failures can reduce organizational learning. Risky, grandiose projects are more likely to fail.

Minimizing the Risk of Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic leadership is ‘risky’ for an organization. It is difficult to predict the result when too much power is placed in the hands of an individual leader. Charismatic leadership brings radical change into the strategy and culture of an organization. This degree of change is appropriate when an organization is in need of significant transformation or is facing a crisis. However, the centralization of power and the implementation of risky strategies are unlikely to continue to be appropriate when the organization achieves a more normal operating mode. While charismatic

leaders are generally good at rescue operations, they are often poor at achieving long-term success and management.

Compounding this is the fact that it is unlikely that a charismatic leader will modify their leadership style or cooperate in the appointment of a successor. Charismatic leaders often have a difficult time developing successors. They enjoy the center stage too much to share it. To find a replacement who is a peer may be too threatening for leaders who tend to be so narcissistic. The appointment of a charismatic leader should be done with awareness of both the positive and negative effects that are likely to accompany such leadership. Safeguards should be implemented within the organization to maximize the unique contributions of the charismatic leader while minimizing the potential negative consequences.

One appropriate safeguard in the appointment of a charismatic leader is the implementation of an effective accountability structure. Lack of effective accountability structures contributes to unethical and moral leadership failures (Chandler, 2009). Charismatic leaders usually strive for personal autonomy and can react negatively to attempts to subject them to accountability (Conger, 1990). This impulse should be addressed at the time of appointment of the leader and standards of accountability and reporting established. Effective accountability measures might include careful oversight from boards of directors, agreement on financial and decision making parameters, and establishment of an effective system of checks and balances (Chandler, 2009). Leaders who are held accountable are more likely (than those who are not) to take into consideration the broader consequences of their behavior and to consider the interest of the organization and its members.

Another safeguard is the establishment of a viable support system for the leader. The lack of an effective support system can contribute to the demise of otherwise successful leaders because the very nature of leadership contributes to isolation (Chandler, 2009). Social support bolsters emotional reserves, helps balance perspective, and provides an outlet for self-expression outside of the organizational setting (Winnubst, 1993). It contributes to emotional health and appropriate self-image. A viable support system might include having personal confidantes, developing mentoring relationships, formal and informal training (including ethics education), and the provision of personal and professional development opportunities.

A third safeguard is a leader selection process that differentiates between socialized and personalized charismatic leaders. A desirable quality in a charismatic leader is a socialized power motivation which incorpo-

rates humility as well as egotism. Such a leader engages in the behaviors of envisioning, energizing, enabling, and empowering organizational members (Humphreys, et al., 2010). The leader's focus is on seeking to enhance the capabilities of the organization and its members. A socialized charismatic leader is likely to create an organizational culture which is egalitarian, non-exploitative, and altruistic. Effective procedures can be implemented to identify potentially destructive individuals in the leader selection process by including assessments of need for power, negative life themes, and narcissism. Other useful assessments would relate to selfish versus socialized motives, and moral and ethical standards. The desired outcome of this selection process would be to fill available positions with *socialized* rather than *personalized* charismatic leaders.

A Christian Perspective on Leadership

An organization seeking to implement Christian values in its operation has additional motivation to appoint a socialized charismatic leader whose self-concept has been shaped by Christian understandings of human nature and community. Such an understanding can be developed on the basis of the trinitarian nature of God. Christian theology understands God as three persons existing in eternal relation to one another. God is what he is in virtue of what the Father, Son, and Spirit give to, and receive from, one other. It is in the mutual relations of giving and receiving that each of the divine persons both manifests his own personhood and affirms that of the other persons.

Theologian Jürgen Moltmann (1981) suggests that the doctrine of the Trinity points "towards a community of men and women without supremacy and without subjection" (p. 192). Community is the appropriate way of organizing human organizations. This is so, first, because it reflects the nature of the God in whose image humans are created. It is so, secondly, because it recognizes the fundamental equality of persons and allows for the development and expression of human potential. Power relationships exist within every organization. The dynamics of power can be used to create interdependence and mature relationships or to foster relationships of dependence and control. Contemporary leaders should use their power to release the potential of all the members of their organization.

When we apply trinitarian theology to organizational understanding, the picture that emerges is that an organization is likely to function at its optimum when there is a fundamental equality of persons expressed in mutual giving and receiving. This leads to the conclusion that hierarchical structures and authoritative leadership styles which generate dependency,

helplessness and servitude do not reflect God's nature, and neither do they enhance human or organizational potential. The more an organization is characterized by symmetrical and decentralized distribution of power and freely affirmed interaction, the more will it correspond to the nature of God and the more likely it is to unleash the human potential of its participants.

An organization reflecting the trinitarian community can have both leadership and rich diversity without a heavily autocratic hierarchy. It can be a community with a structure and a chain of command but without superiors and subordinates. As Moltmann says, the community of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit finds its earthly reflection, "not in the autocracy of a single ruler but in the democratic community of free people" (p. 198). Any organization can be conceived of as "a community in which people are defined through their relations with one another and in their significance for one another, not in opposition to one another, in terms of power and possession" (Volf, 1998, p. 198). A socialized charismatic leader with this relational understanding of organizational structure and process is likely to provide constructive and beneficial leadership to an organization.

Conclusion

Charismatic leaders can have both positive and negative effects on organizations and their members. The positive effects can be sufficiently significant to warrant the risks of appointing a charismatic leader. An effective socialized charismatic leader can revolutionize an organization and inspire its members to enhanced performance. On the other hand, a personalized charismatic leader has the capacity to destabilize and damage the organization and its members because of the leader's focus on personal advancement and interest. The positive contribution of a charismatic leader to an organization can be enhanced — and negative effects minimized — by introducing appropriate safeguards into the selection and tenure of the leader. These safeguards would need to address the accountability structure, the support system and the selection process which surround the leader. Finally, the Christian understanding of human nature and community provides a useful perspective in developing a beneficial working relationship between the leader, the organization, and its members.

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Paul's Leadership Ethos in 2 Cor 10–13: A Critique of 21st Century Pentecostal Leadership

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Abstract

This paper endeavours to survey the apostle Paul's perspective on Christian leadership from the vantage point of 2 Corinthians 10–13, an important pericope often neglected in studies of Pauline leadership. After initially reconstructing the social context for leadership in first-century A.D. Corinth, and then tabulating the criticisms formulated against Paul by the Corinthians and/or his opponents, it is deduced that the apostle blatantly failed to meet some of the basic standards of leadership that were highly regarded in Greco-Roman society. Then, upon closer examination of his rhetorical response, key characteristics of Paul's understanding and ethos of Christian leadership are identified, including the role and purpose of apostolic authority, the importance of humility and modesty in Christian service, and most significantly, his foundational 'power-in-weakness' paradigm. This paper concludes with a brief reflection and invitation to christophoric leadership.

Introduction

In a previous edition of *APS*, Dr. Shane Clifton addressed fellow Pentecostal scholars with the challenge of being more than mere academics, and to courageously and wisely engage their society and Christian culture as "agents of change."¹ He called them to be 'prophetic voices' endowed with the opportunity and responsibility "to reflect upon socio-historical practices with a critical eye," by recognising what "common sense assumptions and habits may not, in fact, make sense" anymore in our culture.² He differentiated such a task from plain 'negativity' or 'criticism', describing it rather as "faithful criticism" set on confronting "'cherished convictions and slogans' that we believe have become ideological nonsense, and that are propagating and sustaining corruption and injustice."³ Among the 'hot topics' that he deemed deserving of an open and honest debate within Pentecostalism, he identified one in particular that resonated with me: "centralising trends in ecclesiology and the authority of the pastor."⁴ Indeed, at about the same time as Clifton's editorial went to press, I had just completed and submitted an Honours thesis on the

topic of Paul's leadership ethos and paradigm as implied in the text of 2 Corinthians 10–13, which I intended as a critique of the over-popularisation and adoption of secular, corporate leadership values and methods by Pentecostal and Charismatic leaders.⁵ This present article aims to provide a succinct summary of this research and seeks to draw some relevant applications for our modern setting. It is hoped that it will respond to the editor's call to engage, both with courage and wisdom—and I would add, with Christ-like humility—in a 'faithful critique' of the current cultural *status quo* on leadership.

Methodological Considerations

Tackling the topic of leadership is no easy task: for a number of reasons, the scholarly journey can be both lonely and perilous. First, writing a critique of the possible deviances and excesses of any 'establishment', be it political or ecclesiastical, is never without its risks. Secondly, such a research project faces numerous methodological hurdles. Consider, for instance, that a clear definition of the concept of leadership cannot be easily formulated, as there exists no consensus in the human and social sciences regarding "concepts such as 'power', 'authority' ... 'legitimacy'," ideas which somehow all undergird the notion of leadership.⁶ As J. H. Schütz puts it, *power*, and by extension *leadership*, "seems to slip through our fingers when we attempt an analysis of it"; it "resists our efforts to tease it into the open."⁷ To make matters worse, the usual Hellenistic terms for 'leader' or 'leadership' (*archōn*, *hēgoumenos*) are never employed in the New Testament to describe what we would deem to be leadership roles in the church, a fact which, in itself, is suggestive of the early church's outlook on the question.⁸ From the onset we are forced to recognise that any research into the concept of leadership from a New Testament perspective risks being hopelessly anachronistic, a caveat which should make us all the more aware of our possible hermeneutical biases as well as cause us to follow specific methodological steps. The New Testament authors, Paul in particular, never set out to compose a *précis* of their theology on leadership (i.e., the '10 Essential Laws of Successful Leadership,' as many of our contemporaries would like to have it). Most of the New Testament writings are *ad hoc*, occasional epistolary documents relating to specific circumstances which treat specific issues as they arose in early Christian communities. None of them were written as systematic treatises on the topic of leadership, which implies the need to adopt a hermeneutical stance that will seek to discern implicit, rather than explicit, evidence regarding Paul's leadership ethos, as if somewhat buried underneath the textual surface for the 'exegetical archaeologist' to un-

cover. Against these initial considerations, it seems methodologically sensible and coherent to adopt a socio-historical and exegetical approach, laying aside from the start any modern theoretical model of leadership.⁹ After locating Paul and the concept of leadership within its first-century Greco-Roman context, I shall then examine his leadership ethos and perspective as may be inferred from his response to the accusations and criticisms levelled against him in Corinth. I shall conclude with a brief invitation to critical self-reflection and to the adoption of a more christophoric style of leadership.

Leadership in First-century Corinth: Ethos and Social Distinctives

As we begin our enquiry into the concept of leadership from a first-century A.D. perspective, it is not superfluous to stress initially how extremely different ancient Corinth must have been from any twenty-first century Australian city at both demographic and socio-cultural levels. This is a fact often neglected in contemporary preaching and popular literature. By the time of Paul's visit, Corinth had been a Roman colony for about a hundred years and was thus thoroughly Greco-Roman in its socio-cultural outlook. Much of its architecture, civic institutions, and cultural customs followed after a Roman pattern. Strategically situated on the Achaian isthmus at a cross-road between north-south and east-west trading routes, it boasted a bustling and highly competitive commercial market. "Not for everyone is the voyage to Corinth,"¹⁰ did the proverb indeed advise, which not only referred to the sexual promiscuity of the city but also to "the danger of losing one's shirt in the intense cutthroat competition" of this "boom town."¹¹ As might be expected, Roman society's usual struggle for social prominence was very pronounced in Corinth, perhaps even more so than in any other Roman cities, as the new colony offered unique opportunities for economic advancement and upward social mobility to an ambitious population of veterans, plebs, and freedmen. (Freedwomen would have certainly not benefitted from the same opportunities as their male counterparts). As for its cultural and religious influence, it had reached international dimensions with its renowned biennial Isthmian games and its many temples attracting visitors from all over the Mediterranean world.¹² Important for us to note at this point is the significant sophistic revival that seems to have taken place there from the mid-first century onwards, and which must have had an important impact on the life of the early Christian congregation.¹³ Undeniably, these Greco-Roman cultural forces would not have failed to shape the leadership ethos of the Corinthians. Thus, much like in Rome itself, leadership would have been fiercely competitive. Ever since the early days of the Republic leadership

positions had been a source of honour and a means to social promotion along the *cursus honorum*.¹⁴ The entire Roman society itself revolved around a social “hierarchy of prestige and standing . . . in which official rank was a vital criterion of ranking.”¹⁵ Reflecting society’s obsession with personal glory and self-aggrandisement —what Cicero called ‘*amore gloriae*’— civic leaders were characteristically ‘full of themselves’, hopelessly boastful and arrogant, and always praising their own accomplishments and merits.¹⁶ Humility and modesty, which are intrinsic Judeo-Christian values, were discarded altogether as “boasting itself became an activity worthy of honour,” something which the populace expected and by which it esteemed a man. Rarely would they exalt women.¹⁷ As E. A. Judge notes, in such a context “self-admiration . . . was absolutely *de rigueur*,” and every opportunity to increase one’s glory was to be exploited, be it through financial benefactions, military prowess, sportive achievements, or rhetorical eloquence. The only “assurance of immortality” the Romans could claim was the “undying memory of posterity.”¹⁸ As such, personal ambition unavoidably became “the very stamp of nobility,” as Judge puts it, and “to fail to cultivate one’s own reputation was to lose respect for one’s merits.”¹⁹ To use Tacitus’ words, “*name contemptu famae contemni virtutes*” (‘in the scorn of fame was the scorn of virtue’).²⁰ What is more, due to its inherent connection to wealth and social status leadership was essentially reserved for the élites. It was indeed only accessible to the ‘wise, well-born and powerful’ (cf. 1 Cor 1:26), those of considerable wealth who could provide a down-payment upon appointment to the unremunerated offices of *aedile* or *duoviri*, as well as honour their ‘election promises’ with regular public benefactions by erecting or maintaining public facilities, financing gladiatorial fights or other public entertainments.²¹ Should they be elected to the office of *curator annonae* (in times of extreme famines) or of *agonothetes* (the prestigious position of organizer of the Isthmian games), they would have also been expected to subsidize inflated grain prices at their own expense, or to provide financially for the logistical organisation of the games and upkeep of its many Roman visitors. In either case, it was a sure way for any politician to gain wide-spread popularity. Still more could be said about the religious character of civic leadership or its prerequisite for rhetorical competence, but space restrains us. We must now turn our attention to our passage to try to discern how Paul’s leadership ethos and paradigm might have differed from that of his socio-cultural environment.

Summary of the Criticisms Levelled Against Paul

As even a cursory reading of 2 Corinthians 10–13 would reveal, the passage is highly polemical and rhetorically-charged, which compels us to initially adopt an exegetical methodology along the guidelines recommended by J. M. G. Barclay.²² A ‘mirror-reading’ of the passage, by which the text answering Paul’s adversaries is used “as a mirror in which we can see reflected the people and the arguments under attack,” allows us to discern some of the main arguments behind the polemic.²³ Verses 10:1–2, 7, 10, and 11:5–6 in particular are revelatory of the criticisms or accusations that were expressed against Paul:²⁴ his persona was deemed debased and servile (*‘kata prosōpon tapeinos’*, 10:1); his physical appearance weak (*‘parousia tou sōματος asthenēs’*, 10:10); his performance as an orator amateurish and inconsistent with his letters, which appeared too *barus* (‘burdensome, demanding, severe’) and *ischuros* (‘assertive, authoritative’) (*‘ho logos exouthenēmenos’*, 10:10; *‘idiōtes tō logō’*, 11:6). No matter how exaggerated or distorted these disparaging comments were—and invectives were often inflated or purely invented—it makes no doubt that in the eyes of his opponents, and of some of the Corinthians at least, Paul represented the very “antithesis of the persuasive, forceful and eloquent orator.” He was a ‘befuddled preacher’ who failed to meet the basic sophistic standards of the professional rhetors (cf. 1 Cor 2:1–5), and a ‘crooked apostle’ who was intent on defrauding the Corinthians (*‘hyparchōn panourgōs dolō’*; 12:16–17).²⁵ As verses 11:7–9 and 12:11–17 further disclose, Paul had also come under serious accusations of misappropriation and mishandling of funds, and had seriously offended the Corinthians by rejecting their financial assistance, and hence their *amicitia* (‘friendship’). He did this by engaging in manual labour as a low-wage earner—an activity which some of the status-conscious Corinthians would have most likely deemed too menial and servile to pursue (11:7–9; 12:13–16).²⁶ Interestingly, none of the attacks to which these passages allude appear to have been immediately theologically-related, so that T. B. Savage is quite right to conclude that “the criticisms have cultural overtones,” for “they reflect the social prejudices of the day.”²⁷ Paul, then, seems to have fallen short of some of the socio-cultural standards of leadership that the Corinthians were so desperate to have him display: wealth, status, power, charisma, self-confidence, eloquence, and physical elegance along Hellenistic standards, were all disappointingly missing from his apostolic portfolio.²⁸ Furthermore, as Betz and Winter have suggested, being aware that culturally-conditioned onlookers could have too easily viewed him as an itinerant philosopher or a sophist, Paul may have deliberately avoided placing value on what they deemed most essential.²⁹ Indeed, he does seem

to have intentionally shunned away from their *modus operandi* and “flamboyant and self-assertive behavior,” as well as avoided their ostentatious style of rhetoric which, although pleasing to the fastidious ears of the Corinthians, was too often devoid of any meaningful content, power or virtue.³⁰ If Betz and Winter are right, then Paul’s ministry approach must have constituted a very stern critique of the demeanour, ethos, and abusive commercialism of his sophistic contemporaries. By implication, it might also represent a severe critique of our own Pentecostal culture, in which homiletical eloquence, or charismatic personality, have somehow become pinnacle attributes of ‘successful’ and ‘effective’ leadership. In light of such evidence, one could ask what sort of reception Paul, as the ‘bogan-apostle’ he appears to have been, would get in our churches and conferences if he was to pay a visit? Would he be given the front stage or would he be an embarrassment to *us* as well? The question is worth pondering for a moment, as we progress to examine more closely Paul’s rhetorical response, and so attempt to discern the alternative leadership paradigm he advocated in defense of his own apostleship.

Paul’s Understanding of Apostolic Authority

Paul’s response to the mounting opposition in Corinth begins in 10:1 with notorious abruptness and in a most emphatic of manner (*‘Autos egō Paulos parakalō’*; ‘I myself, Paul, am appealing to you’).³¹ Employing a frightening vocabulary borrowed from the semantic field of warfare, he warns the Corinthians of his determination to lay siege to any mental fortress (*‘ochurōmatōn’*), that is, any reasoning, thought or intellectual process (*‘logismous, noēma’*), that arrogantly and defiantly rises itself against the knowledge of God and refuses to submit to Christ (10:4b–5).³² This is some of the fiercest language to be found in Paul’s letters. So much so that one could be excused for momentarily considering Paul as behaving like a ruthless tyrant—“an irritated chief” as one commentator put it—now vying to re-ascertain his authority over the Corinthians.³³ Yet, this might be overlooking the intensely personal nature of his appeal and the reluctance with which he resorted to his authority to punish and reprimand in the first place (*‘deomai de to mē ktl.’*, 10:2).³⁴ Indeed, as authoritative as it may sound, his address resolved into a conciliatory entreaty that relied on *pathos* (viz., emotions; cf. *‘parakalō, deomai’*) and derived from the meekness (*‘prautēs’*) and gentleness (*‘epikeia’*) of Christ rather than open rebuke. Paradoxically, however, his Christ-centred humility constituted no warrant for him to remain so passive as to let heretical troublemakers disseminate false rumours about him and lead the Corinthians astray (cf. 11:3–4). As he later explains in 13:10, if his epistles sounded

rather *barus* and *ischuros*, it was so he may avoid a more direct, and thus painful, confrontational visit later on (cf. 12:20–21). Furthermore, as he explicitly states twice in 10:8–9 and 13:9–10, his concern ultimately lay not in their destruction but in their edification (*‘eis oikodomēn kai ouk eis kathairesin hymōn’*), that is, in their growing in spiritual maturity in Christ.³⁵ This passage thus perfectly illustrates what Clarke has generally observed: that, for Paul, “the context of humility, vulnerability and service set a context for the exercising of authority,” the ultimate objective of which was to bring the Corinthians to perfect obedience to Christ that they may be firmly established as a community (10:6, 8).³⁶ In a sense, then, Paul advocated a “constructive use of authority,” not seeking to “strengthen his hold over the Corinthians, but only to strengthen their grip on the gospel.”³⁷ Such a noble and selfless pastoral intention forbids the reader from considering him as unnecessarily harsh or authoritarian, for overall he appears free from any self-interest or personal ambition (whatever his detractors might have thought). Herein seems to lie what, according to Paul, constituted the essence of apostolic authority.³⁸ It is an axiomatic principle which, I would contend, is what should also inform our understanding of Paul’s perspective on leadership and authority. Incidentally, what may appear at first as a brief excursus leading up to the main argumentation in chapters 11–12 actually provides us with invaluable insight into what Paul perceived to be the *origin* of apostolic authority (Christ); its basis (the meekness and gentleness of Christ); and its ultimate purpose (the edification of the church).

*Paul and Hellenistic Encomiastic Conventions.*³⁹

Having unequivocally answered the charge that he is inconsistent in his dealings with the Corinthians in 10:11, Paul then moves on to the next issue on his agenda: the self-commendation (*‘tōn heautous sunistanontōn’*) of certain personalities who dare to measure themselves by themselves (*‘autoi en heautous heautous metrountes’*) and compare themselves to themselves (*‘kai synkrinontes heautous heautois’*, 10:12). It seems that Paul’s *retenue* begins to fade here, as he now portrays his detractors in an almost satirical light, as self-important figures totally absorbed in their own praise—nothing, mind you, particularly unusual among the Greco-Roman élite or professional orators.⁴⁰ Notice for instance the exaggerated accumulation of the terms *synkrinō* (‘to commend [oneself]’; twice in 10:12), *sunistēmi* (‘to compare [oneself]’; 10:12, 18 – twice), and *kauchaomai* (‘to boast’; 10:13, 15, 16, 17 – twice), or the extensive use of the reflexive pronoun *heautou* (‘oneself’) which is found six times in verse 12 alone. Whoever these opponents were, what is certain is

that they harboured an unwholesome sense of superiority about themselves, as the ironical designation ‘*hyperlian apostoloi*’ (literally, ‘super-duper apostles’) found in 11:5 and 12:11 further suggests. Yet Paul will have nothing of their pretentious game, as he emphatically asserts in 10:12–13. It is sheer nonsense, he argues, and those indulging in such self-adulation lack understanding (‘*ou suniasin*’; 10:12)—a litotic way to mean that they are utterly foolish—for they are measuring themselves by the wrong standard, *viz.*, their own self (cf. *heautou* in 10:12), rather than God’s *kanōn* (cf. 10:13, 15, 16). Paul shows no restraint in expressing his aversion towards the basic Hellenistic cultural conventions that were *periautologia* (‘self-praise’), *kauchēsis* (‘boasting’), and *synkrisis* (‘comparison’), which were almost always accompanied by invectives and disparaging comments against one’s adversary. In this case, the self-assertive behaviour of Paul’s detractors was almost certainly aimed at demeaning him as an apostle and leader of the Corinthian community.⁴¹ But also, in view of 10:13–15 and the repeated use of the terms *metron* (‘measure’; 10:13 – twice) and *kanōn* (‘canon, standard’; 10:13, 15, 16), which evoke the concept of jurisdiction, geographic or otherwise, or better and more abstractly, the idea of sphere of influence, assignment or service—it is rather obvious that they were intent on taking the credit for Paul’s own accomplishments in Corinth, and literally sought to claim the congregation for themselves (cf. 10:8, 15a).⁴² Paul’s response was not long in coming: he unleashed with ironical fury a veritable rhetorical tour-de-force, the so-called ‘Fool’s Speech’. But first, he needed to redefine appropriate boasting along biblical lines, thereby radically shifting the Corinthians’ cultural perspective. Unlike Plutarch (ca. 1st cent.) who in his famous discourse ‘On praising oneself inoffensively’ tolerates *periautologia* (‘self-praise’) when aimed at the defense of one’s reputation or to spur others to emulate virtue, for Paul (as indeed the Septuagintal tradition reinforced, cf. Jer 9:22–23) proper boasting is that which is done *in kuriō* (‘in the Lord’), that is, in a way that revels in the Lord’s character attributes and achievements, including those accomplished “in and through the lives of his servants” by the grace and power of God (cf. 12:9).⁴³ Such boasting is neither offensive nor blasphemous since its object and content fall within biblical ethical boundaries, and since it ultimately glorifies God. By way of contrast, the Hellenistic custom of boasting at the expense of another “by exalting one’s self, one’s pedigree, abilities, and achievements (cf. 11:13, 18, 21–23)” is altogether anathema.⁴⁴ Similarly, it is authorization and commendation from the Lord that is legitimate (11:8; cf. 10:8), and not that which comes from oneself and is directed unto oneself (10:12). In this way, this passage serves to further enrich our understand-

ing of Paul's leadership ethos and the salient difference he envisaged between Christian leadership and Greco-Roman leadership. A genuine apostle or Christian leader should be characterized by humility and modesty, as opposed to pride, overconfidence, and independence from God. Even more fundamental for us to notice here is that Paul's quote from Jeremiah (9:22–23) serves strategically as the *crux interpretum* through which the so-called 'Narrenrede' ('Fool's Speech') of 11:1–12:11 is to be understood. As we shall see in our next section, what Paul was about to do—to emulate his opponents by boasting beyond what is proper—would indeed be foolish and thus ironically reveal the ludicrousness of his detractors' attitude.

Paul's Foolish Boasting and Apostolic Paradox

In 11:1, an important shift takes place in Paul's rhetorical argumentation as he signals the commencement of his indulging in a little *aphrosunē* ('foolishness'). Initially, it is important for us to note how the term *aphrosunē* itself, and its associated cognate *aphrōn* ('fool'), strikingly echo the popular concept of the *mōros* ('fool'), "the lower class buffoon" of the Hellenistic theatrical tradition whose foolishness "consisted in a weakness or deficiency of intellect, often coupled with a physical grotesqueness."⁴⁵ The dominant use of these two terms, as well as Paul's appropriation of the role of the *aphrōn* throughout the section, provide us with a significant clue as to his rhetorical strategy.⁴⁶ That Paul did not actually consider himself to be a fool, other than a fool for Christ (cf. 1 Cor 1: 18–21; 4:9–13), is self-evident and requires little elaboration. Indeed, in 11:16 he will insist that he is not to be considered an *aphrōn* in any way (cf. also 11:17, 21; 12:11). Rather, it seems more likely that he adopted the role of the *aphrōn* for the opportunity it afforded him to resort to *eirōneia* ('irony') in an unrestricted and devastating way, so as to ridicule his opponents for the very thing in which they prided themselves (to paraphrase Pseudo-Aristotle), and to exacerbate their lack of *sōphrōsunē* (viz., their insufficient moderation, self-control, and reasonableness).⁴⁷ Indeed, "[w]hat made the role of the fool so attractive," L. L. Welborn explains, "was the freedom it permitted for the utterance of a dangerous truth."⁴⁸ Speaking as a 'fool', Paul was thus able to challenge the arrogant sense of superiority of his opponents and of the Corinthians. Such bold, theatrical impersonation of the *mōros* seems to have been motivated by the foolish behavior of the Corinthians themselves, who cheerfully tolerated such heretical impostors (cf. 'kalōs anechesthe'; 11:2–4). For it seems that they thought themselves more *phronimoi* ('wise') than they actually were (11:19; cf. 1 Cor 4:10), and 'gladly' ('hēdeōs') put up with presumptuous

characters (*'tis epairetai'*), 'pompous parasites,' who sought to enslave them (*'hymas katadouloi'*), exploit them (*'katesthie'*), ensnare them (*'lambanei'*), disgrace and insult them (*'eis prosōpon hymas derei'*; cf. 11:19–20).⁴⁹ These intruders, Paul warned, were but *pseudapostoloi* ('false apostles'), deceitful workers (*'egratai dolioi'*), whose pretence as apostles of Christ and servants of righteousness mimicked, quite predictably (*'ou thauma, ou mega oun'*), their evil master, the devil himself, who could so easily disguise himself as an angel of light (11:13–14). In essence, by virtue of their erroneous preaching and abusive ministry, he estimated these men to be nothing less than ministers of Satan whose *modus operandi* was "the antithesis of pastoral service," and whose end was doomed (11:15b).⁵⁰

At 11:16, Paul's rhetorical argumentation reaches an important new stage of development. So "embarrassed by the necessity thus thrust upon him" to compare himself to his opponents, he first pauses to offer a second prodiorthosis and to warn his audience that what is about to unfold is but sheer foolishness (cf. 11:1).⁵¹ Now "Paul does not mean to boast only to a small extent; he will boast as much as he can."⁵² Thus he alerts his audience that he is not speaking *kata kurion* ('according to the Lord') anymore but (*'alla'*) in complete *aphrosunē* ('foolishness') as he undertakes this *kauchēsis* ('boasting'; 11:17), which is but *kata sarka* ('according to the flesh'; 11:18) and to his own *atimia* ('shame'; 11:21). One can almost hear the shiver in Paul's voice at the idea of boasting in a way that will displease his Lord. Having thus forewarned his audience, he then takes this *synkrisis* to a new level of audacity and intensity (11:21). In whatever ways they have boasted, so will he now match their foolishness (11:21). Do they claim to be of pure Jewish stock, to belong to the Israel of God, and to partake of YHWH's covenantal promises as descendants of Abraham? So does he. On all three counts he matches their self-confidence in the flesh, their ethnic and religious pride, that which, ironically, he himself "now considered . . . 'shit'" (cf. Phil 3.8).⁵³ He pursues in his foolishness, now to the point of insanity (*'paraphronōn lalō'*, 11:23). Do they dare proclaim themselves as servants of Christ? He 'loses' it altogether: so is he, to a much greater extent than they (*'hyper egō'*)! In labours, imprisonments, floggings and "mortal dangers," he is exceedingly (*'perissoterōs'*), above and beyond (*'hyperballontōs'*), superior to his adversaries as a servant of Christ (11:23).⁵⁴ Five times chastised by the Jews (possibly for his messianic views; 11:24), thrice beaten with rods (most likely at the hands of Roman authorities), once stoned, thrice shipwrecked (11:25), constantly in danger wherever his missionary ventures took him, and at the mercy of all (11:26).⁵⁵ In arduous toil, sleepless nights, hunger, thirst, fasts, in daily afflictions and privations he surpasses them all

(11:27). And this is without mentioning the day-to-day pressure of his pastoral responsibilities and spiritual concern for all the churches, his compassionate bearing with those who are weak and his righteous indignation at those who sin (11:28–29)—burdens which none of his adversaries were bothered to carry. Of such humiliations and failures will he boast, if it is necessary, for these demonstrate his weaknesses; these represent his “unparalleled suffering in Christ’s service,” he solemnly insists with an oath (11:30–31; cf. 12:5).⁵⁶ What is most striking with this *apologia* is how Paul deliberately lays aside the usual encomiastic conventions of his day with its assortment of claims to honourable achievements and everlasting glory.⁵⁷ Instead, he expands on a *Peristasenkatalog*, a literary device very familiar to the philosophers, which he concludes in a completely anti-climatic fashion with perhaps the most humiliating incident of all, that which would have made any Roman leader jostling up the *cursus honorum* blush with shame.⁵⁸ When in Damascus, he was let down the wall to escape the king Aretas and/or the Jews, an episode which Judge has understood as representing a parody of the *corona muralis*, the highest military reward for a legionary, and which Welborn has astutely read as the fool’s final derisory flight commonly found in the theatrical tradition in which “the runaway is a fool of the basest sort—thievish, clownish, and recreant.”⁵⁹ Whichever interpretation is preferred, these two verses certainly figure as “the climax of the speech from the standpoint of irony.”⁶⁰ His parody of his opponents’ presumptuousness is not over, however. Since it is necessary to boast in order to impress the Corinthians (*‘kauchasthai dei’*), though it is by no means profitable (*‘ou sympheron men’*), he must now come to ecstatic visions and revelations received from the Lord while taken up to the third Heaven, paradise itself (12:1)—a rare and much coveted experience for any apocalyptic Jew.⁶¹ Such boasting has however become so blasphemous to him, so distressing and intolerable, that he now deflects any personal attention away from himself (cf. 12:5).⁶ This is the climax of the paradox, something that represented the most authoritative endorsement for any Jewish charismatic leader (or twenty-first century Pentecostal leader) and earned him the respect, if not admiration, of any pneumatically-inclined and/or apocalyptically-minded audience (cf. 1 Cor 14). Yet here it is a source of embarrassment to him, as something which motivated him to exert great public discretion.⁶³ Unlike the rest of Jewish apocalyptic literature, Paul simply refuses to elaborate on the ineffable words that he has heard and which he is not permitted to divulge (12:2–4).⁶⁴ It almost seems as though he has now reached the limit of his foolishness and cannot transgress biblical propriety any further (cf. 10:17–18). Thereby he teaches a very stern lesson to those who might have thought

that such ‘extraterrestrial’ revelations could have authorized him to feel superior or develop his own personality cult in the way his detractors seem to have done (cf. 12:6). “*Mē genoito!*” (‘perish the thought!’) is his most emphatic reply. Such “esoteric visions ... do not afford a legitimate basis for evaluating apostolic authority,” as M. J. Harris rightly points.⁶⁵ To think otherwise would have been to forget the purpose of his *skolops* (‘thorn in the flesh’) given him by God, that angel of Satan afflicting him day and night despite repeated, earnest prayer.⁶⁶ Remarkably, for Paul that which might have caused his opponents and some of the Corinthians to belittle him in the first place as a weak and insufficient servant of Christ, is precisely that of which he would rather boast (12:5, 9; cf. 10:1, 10), as if “diabolical affliction” was a proof that he was “a worthy servant of God.”⁶⁷ Thus, he insists twice in 12:5 and 12:9, he will only (‘*ei mē*’) boast of that which exhibits his own weakness, that the *charis* and *dynamis* of Christ may rest upon him and be glorified through his life and ministry (12:9; cf. 13:4).⁶⁸ For these are amply sufficient and made perfect through his weakness; they are an ever-present, comforting reality that enables him to accomplish his apostolic commission. It is for this very reason (δὴ, 12:10) that he can endure, indeed delight in, the many afflictions he has suffered on behalf of Christ; that is, the insults (‘*hybreis*’), calamities (‘*anagkai*’), persecutions (‘*diōgmoi*’) and trials (‘*stenochēriai*’) enumerated in 11:23–27. For he has understood a most extraordinary paradigm: ‘when he is weak, then he is strong’ (12:10). “‘[I]n the midst of weakness’ . . . Christ’s power reaches its plenitude,” Harris aptly paraphrases.⁶⁹ With such a remarkable paradox Paul brings his foolish discourse to a dramatic conclusion. “*Gegona aphrōn*” (‘I have become a fool’), he confesses. But he was compelled by the gravity of the situation and the passivity of the Corinthians to commend and defend him (12:11).

Concluding Remarks

As we conclude our succinct exegesis, we note again how Paul has very cannily turned the table on his adversaries, satirizing their “unadulterated self-eulogizing” as utterly foolish and their comparison to one another in the service of Christ as “totally preposterous.”⁷⁰ Likewise, we note how, with relentless and disarming *eirōneia* (‘irony’), Paul has made a mockery of the Hellenistic encomiastic conventions of his day as he deliberately (to quote Chris Forbes) “fills them with material that reverses their effect,” amplifying what he should minimize, and minimizing what he should amplify, so that his boasting becomes a sheer parody of Greco-Roman self-exaltation.⁷¹ Yet, in an astonishingly counter-cultural manner, he finds in his afflictions neither a reason to lose personal glory or

honour, nor an omen of ill-fortune, for he had come to view them as “the badges of honor” of legitimate and effective service in Christ (cf. Gal 6:17), “la preuve de sa fidélité spirituelle au Christ.”⁷² Similarly, he has not found in his extraordinary endurance a reason to raise his own *ethos* or boast of his superior resilience, which for the ancient moralists was the “mark of real character,” but instead consciously emphasizes that “[h]is serenity and endurance are ... the work of God,” so that “his boasting of his hardships in 2 Corinthians is ‘boasting of the Lord.’”⁷³ Paul therefore differs dramatically from the Stoic or Cynic philosopher, the civic leader or military ruler of his day, for, as an apostle of Christ, he finds his sufficiency, his source of power and authority, neither in the wisdom of philosophy nor in the personal glory derived from wealth, social status and rhetorical *finesse*, but in Christ alone, in his sufferings, death and resurrection. Indeed, it is only when Paul is weak, that he is truly strong by virtue of Christ’s power in him (12:9–10; cf. 13:4); it is only as he shares in the sufferings of Christ that he can experience the power of his resurrection (cf. 1:5; 4:7–12; Phil 3:10); it is only as he experiences all the afflictions of his life and receives divine comfort that he can offer pastoral solace to the Corinthians (cf. 1:4–6). Such is the paradigm (of “the suffering apostolic existence”) by which he lived his life and conducted his ministry which, along with the other extraordinary miracles, signs and wonders, constituted the real *sêmeia*, the real evidence, of his genuine apostleship in Christ (cf. 12:12).⁷⁴ And such is the “praiseworthy paradigm for Christian existence” that he has sought to establish and have his audience embrace throughout 2 Corinthians.⁷⁵ This, it is perhaps superfluous to stress, is of tremendous significance for a proper understanding of Paul’s paradoxical personality and leadership style. These few chapters depict to us Paul as a leader who deliberately, almost meticulously, undermined the leadership ethos of both his opponents and of his Greco-Roman environment by upholding Christ’s crucicentric leadership paradigm as supreme over all. They draw for us the intimate portrait of a non-triumphalist apostle who perfectly incarnated a christophoric expression of leadership. While it seems obvious to state that Paul’s circumstances greatly differed from those which affect western ministers in the twenty-first century, it is nonetheless not hermeneutically unsound to reinforce the universal applicability of his christocentric, crucicentric leadership paradigm. In particular, his strategic subversion of the secular, egotistical leadership norms of his day represents a potent challenge to the model of the self-sufficient, self-confident, self-assertive and self-made leader oftentimes enthroned as paradigmatic for Western church leaders. At the same time, it addresses us with a powerful caveat: despite their supposedly guaranteed effective-

ness, modern secular standards of leadership never ought to constitute the primary canon of Christian leadership, lest the contemporary church, much like the Corinthian congregation in the first century, be swayed away from the Gospel and from pure devotion to Christ.

Notes:

1. Shane Clifton, "Editorial: The Courage to be Prophets," in *Australasian Pentecostal Studies* 12 (2009): 2–8.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. This unfortunate trend is not only affecting the Pentecostal world, but Catholic and Evangelical critics have also voiced their concerns. See for instance Andrew Purves, *The Crucifixion of Ministry: Surrendering our Ambitions to the Service of Christ* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2007); Donald A. Carson, *From Triumphalism to Maturity: A New Exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1984); Henry J.M. Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York: Crossroad, 1989). My original selection of the pericope of 2 Cor 10-13 also deserves a brief justification. Firstly, the limited size of my thesis restrained me from dealing with the entire Pauline corpus, let alone the whole New Testament. Secondly, as a succinct literature review revealed, too many studies on the question of leadership had focused their attention on the first few chapters of 1 & 2 Corinthians, much to the detriment of 2 Cor 10–13.
6. Bengt Holmberg, *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 125.
7. John H. Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 187.
8. Andrew D. Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 1-2. Cf. also Schütz, *Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, 34. The only times the terms *archōn* and *hēgoumenos* are used in the LXX and the Greek New Testament are to refer to Jewish or Roman leaders in military or civic contexts, as well as demonic powers.
9. Thus I diverge from the methodological stance of Holmberg and Schütz who initially sought to analyse Paul's leadership paradigm along Weberian lines, an approach which I deem anachronistic. And indeed, at the end of my thesis I concluded that Paul's leadership style stood at the antipodes of the Weberian model of charismatic leadership, since Paul categorically refused to be "considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or quali-

- ties”—to borrow Weber’s definition of charismatic authority. See Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), 241.
10. “*ou pantos Andros en Korinthon esth’ ho plous*.” Strabo, *Geo.*, 8.6.20c. Cf. a similar proverb in Horace, *Epistulae* 1.17.36: “non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum.”
 11. Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Corinth,” in D.A. Freedman et al (eds.), *ABD* vol. 1, 1134-1139.
 12. C.K. Williams II, “Roman Corinth” in Timothy E. Gregory (ed.), *The Corinthia in the Roman Period*, Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary Series 8 (Ann Arbor: Michigan University, 1993), 31-46; E.R. Gebhard, “Isthmian Games,” in T.E. Gregory (ed.), *Corinthia*, 78-94; Donald Engels, *Roman Corinth: An Alternative Model for the Classical City* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 92-120.
 13. See mainly Bruce W. Winter, *Philo and Paul among the Sophists: Alexandrian and Corinthian Responses to a Julio-Claudian Movement* (Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002).
 14. The *cursus honorum* (literally, ‘the course of honours’) corresponded to the succession of official positions and public honours bestowed on aspiring politicians in both the Roman Republic and the early Empire. Thus it represented some sort of career pathways to the most powerful and distinguished civic offices.
 15. J. Lendon quoted in Andrew D. Clarke, *Serve the Community of the Church: Christians as Leaders and Ministers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 41.
 16. Cicero, *Pro Archia poeta* 11.28. Cf. Plutarch, *Mor.* 539 A.
 17. Timothy B. Savage, *Power Through Weakness: Paul’s Understanding of the Christian Ministry in 2 Corinthians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 24; Edwin A. Judge, “*Contemptu famae contemni virtutes*: On the Morality of Self-advertisement among the Romans,” in *The First Christians in the Roman World: Augustan and New Testament Essays* (ed. James Harrison; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 59-65.
 18. Edwin A. Judge, “The Conflict of Educational Aims in New Testament Thought,” in *Journal of Christian Education*, vol. 9, n.1 (1966), 32-45.
 19. Ibid.
 20. Tacitus, *Ann.* 4.38.
 21. See Andrew D. Clarke, “Another Corinthian Erastus Inscription,” in *Tyndale Bulletin* 42.1 (1991): 146-151; David W. J. Gill, “Erastus the Aedile,” in *Tyndale Bulletin*, 40, no. 2 (1989): 293-301; and John K. Goodrich, “Erastus, *Quaestor* of Corinth: The Administrative Rank of ὁ οἰκονόμος

- τῆς πόλεως (Rom 16.23) in an Achaean Colony,” in *New Testament Studies*, vol. 56 (2010): 90–115.
22. See for more details John M.G. Barclay, “Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test case,” in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 31(1987): 73–93.
 23. *Ibid.*, 74.
 24. For a brief tabulation see Maurice Carrez, “Réalité Christologique et Référence Apostolique de L’Apôtre Paul en Présence d’une Eglise Divisée (2 Co 10–13),” in *L’Apôtre Paul: Personnalité, Style et Conception du Ministère* (ed. A. Vanhoye; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1986), 163–4.
 25. Winter, *Philo and Paul*, 158; Laurence L. Welborn, *Paul, the Fool of Christ: A Study of 1 Corinthians 1–4 in the Comic-Philosophic Tradition* (T. & T. London: Clark International, 2005), 92–9.
 26. Cf. Acts 18:3, 1 Cor 4:12. Cf. also Ronald F. Hock, *The Social Context of Paul’s Ministry: Tentmaking and Apostleship* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 52–65; Peter Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul’s Relationship with the Corinthians* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1987), 177. On the Greco-Roman aristocracy’s contempt of manual labor see Plutarch, *Per.* 2; and Cicero, *Off.* 1.150.
 27. Savage, *Power Through Weakness*, 12. Cf. Edwin A. Judge, “Paul and Classical Society,” in *Social Distinctives of the Christians in the First Century: Pivotal Essays by E.A. Judge* (ed. David M. Scholer. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2008), 96–7.
 28. Cf. Andrew D. Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1–6* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2006), 24–6 & 38–9; Clarke, *Serve the Community*, 41–9; Judge, “*Contemptu famae*,” in *First Christians* (ed. James Harrison), 59–65.
 29. See Hans D. Betz, *Der Apostel Paulus und die sokratische Tradition* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1972), 117; Winter, *Philo and Paul*, 252–5.
 30. C. K. Barrett, “Paul’s Opponents in II Corinthians,” in *New Testament Studies* 17 (1971): 233–254. Cf. Winter, *Philo and Paul*, 163–6 & 231–9; Duane Litfin, *St. Paul’s Theology of Proclamation: 1 Corinthians 1–4 and Graeco-Roman Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 174–21. On the financial abuses and ethical deviances of the sophists see also the critiques by Philo in *Her.* 304–5; *Agr.* 96; *Mos.* 2. 212, *Congr.* 127, *Post.* 150; Plato, *Prot.* 313 C–E; *Soph.* 231D–E, 233A–C, 235A–B, 241B; and Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 32.11.
 31. This is the second of only two instances in his letters where Paul is this much emphatic (cf. Gal 5:2, ‘*Ide egō Paulos*’).

32. Notice the terms *strateuometha* ('wage war,' 10:3), and *strateias* ('warfare,' 'military campaign,' 10:4), *hopla* ('weapon,' 10:4), *ochurōmatōn* ('fortress,' 'stronghold,' 10:4), *kathairesin* ('destruction,' 'demolition,' 10:4), *kathairountes* ('tear down,' 'destroy,' 10:4), *aichmalōtizontes* ('to take captive, prisoner,' 10:5).
33. Jean Héring, *The Second Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* (London: The Epworth Press, 1967), 69.
34. Paul could have actually employed more authoritative terms such as *epitimaō*, *epitassō*, *diatassō*, *paraggellō*, as he did in 1 Cor 7:10, 17; Philem 1:8.
35. Note how Paul's unnecessary inclusion of the obvious antithesis '*kai ouk eis kathairesin hymōn*' ('and not unto your destruction') is naturally emphatic and perhaps meant to answer a charge that his heavy-handed pastoral ways were destroying the church.
36. Clarke, *Pauline Theology*, 102. Cf. Kathy Ehrensperger, *Paul and the Dynamics of Power: Communication and Interaction in the Early Christ-Movement* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2007), 112–3.
37. Paul V. Furnish, *II Corinthians* (New York: Doubleday, 1984), 477.
38. Cf. Clarke, *Pauline Theology*, 107–8; Scott J. Hafemann, *2 Corinthians* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 401.
39. These refer to the Hellenistic self-eulogising conventions.
40. See for instance Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 12.5; 24.3–A 4; Epictetus 3.23.23–24; Plutarch, *Mor.* 539 A; 543 E–F; Herodes Atticus' inscription dedicated to his wife in which he vaunts his own glory and merit as a generous benefactor and much admired rhetor (John H. Kent [ed.], *Corinth. Vol. VIII, Pt. III, The Inscriptions, 1926–1950* [Princeton, 1966], 59; #128).
41. These three devices (*periautologia*, *kauchēsis*, and *synkrisis*) actually represented clearly defined rhetorical conventions, which were oft-used by professional rhetors. See Christopher Forbes, "Comparison, Self-Praise and Irony: Paul's Boasting and the Conventions of Hellenistic Rhetoric," in *New Testament Studies*, vol. 32 (1986): 1–30; Henri-Irénée Marrou, *Histoire de l'Éducation dans l'Antiquité* (Sixième Edition; Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1965), 302.
42. The lexicographic meaning of this *hapax legomenon* has been notoriously difficult to ascertain. For a discussion of the best evidence on its connotation as adduced from a first-century inscription see Edwin A. Judge, "The regional *kanon* for requisitioned transport," in G.H.R. Horsley, (ed.), *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*, vol. 1 (Macquarie University: The Ancient History Documentary Research Center, 1981), 36–45.
43. Plutarch, *Mor.* 540 C; 541 C, E; 544 D; 545 C; 546 A; Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 710.

44. Ibid., 707.
45. Laurence L. Welborn, "Mōros Genesthō: Paul's Appropriation of the Role of the Fool in 1 Corinthians 1-4," in *Biblical Interpretation* 10, no. 4 (2002): 424. See also "The Provenance of the Concept" in Welborn, *Paul, Fool of Christ*, 25-33.
46. Eight of the ten Pauline instances are found in 11:1-12:11. On Paul's identification with the role of the fool see Welborn's convincing fourth and fifth chapters "Confirmation and Clarification" and "Appropriation of the Role" in Welborn, *Paul, Fool of Christ*, 50-116.
47. See Laurence L. Welborn, "The Runaway Paul," in *Harvard Theological Review* 92, no. 2 (1999): 157. See also Ps. Aristotle, [*Rh. Al.*] 1434a and 1441b 23 quoted in Forbes, "Comparison," in *NTS* 32 (1986): 10.
48. Welborn, "Mōros Genesthō," in *BibInt* 10, no. 4 (2002): 433-4.
49. See again Welborn on Paul's derision of his main opponent as a 'parasite'. Laurence L. Welborn, "Paul's Caricature of his Chief Rival as a Pompous Parasite in 2 Corinthians 11:20," in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32, no.1 (2009): 39-56.
50. Harris, *Second Corinthians*, 787.
51. F.F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* (London: Oliphants, 1971), 234.
52. C.K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (BNTC; London: Adam & Charles Black, 1973), 289.
53. John M.G. Barclay, "Paul among Diaspora Jews: Anomaly or Apostate?" in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 60 (1995): 113. One could reprove Barclay for being so blunt, but, political correctness aside, his translation generates in English the equivalent rhetorical effect that Paul's use of the term *skubalon* might have had on his original audience (cf. BDAG, 6725).
54. Margaret E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 722.
55. Notice, firstly, how no less than eight times is *kindunois* ('dangers') repeated in anaphoric fashion. The first punishment mentioned was typical of synagogue discipline and was specifically reserved for "an erring member of a synagogue"; while the second was typically Roman, as the technical term *rabdizō* suggests, and usually reserved for non-citizens. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 516. The third affliction was a typical Jewish punishment as well, usually "a capital sentence passed on apostates, blasphemers and adulterers." Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* (WBC; Waco: Word Books Publishers, 1986), 377. Cf. Barclay, "Paul among Diaspora," 60 (1995): 117; Barrett, *Second Corinthians*, 297;
56. Harris, *Second Corinthians*, 796.

57. The contrast with Augustus' *Res Gestae* or the *elogia fori Augusti* (the "series of laudatory inscriptions beneath the statues in [Augustus'] new forum") is indeed striking. His long list of afflictions and 'counter-achievements' certainly do not compare with Augustus' "unparalleled scale of his gifts and conquests" and the "galaxy of magistracies and other honours he trailed." Edwin A. Judge, "Augustus in *Res Gestae*," in *First Christians* (ed. J. Harrison), 166. Whether Paul intentionally designed this last *peristasis* as a parody of such enconium is impossible to ascertain, though he could have been familiar with Augustus' *Res Gestae*, as the *Monumentum Ancyranum* found in Ankara suggests. Still, it is missing the point not to notice or exploit the striking disparity between Paul's leadership ethos and that of his opponents and/or gentile contemporaries.
58. Cf. John T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1984); 25; Marshall, *Enmity*, 360–1; S.H. Travis, "Paul's Boasting in 2 Corinthians 10–12," *Studia Evangelica* 6 (1973): 529–30.
59. Judge, "Conflict," in *JCE* 9, no.1 (1966), 45; Welborn, "Runaway Paul," in *HTR* 92, no. 2 (1999): 157. Cf. *Livy* 6.20.8; 10.46.3; 26.48.5.
60. Welborn, "Runaway Paul," in *HTR* 92, no. 2 (1999): 157.
61. C. R. A. Morray-Jones, "Paradise Revisited (2 Cor 12:1–12): The Jewish Mystical Background of Paul's Apostolate. Part 1: The Jewish Sources," in *Harvard Theological Review* 86, no.2 (1993): 183.
62. Notice Paul's use of the third person singular (cf. *hērpagē*, *ēkousen*, 12:4), the anarthrous reference to himself (*anthrōpos*) and the demonstrative pronoun (*ho*) *toioitos* (12:2, 4, 6–7). As far as I am aware, this is the sole instance in Paul's letters where he describes himself as such.
63. It is quite probable, although impossible to ascertain, that this was the first time in fourteen years that Paul actually mentioned this incident. If that is truly the case, then his reference to the actual date ('*pro etōn dekatessarōn*') was meant to emphasize the humility of his silence and his reluctance to share about the episode.
64. He is either absolutely ignorant of the mechanics of his experience or found them totally irrelevant to his rhetorical purpose. Three times does he indeed insist '*ouk oida*' ('I do not know'), two instances of which are immediately contrasted with '*ho theos oiden*' ('God knows').
65. Harris, *Second Corinthians*, 848.
66. It is beyond the scope of this paper to investigate the nature of this affliction, which will never be determined historically. We may nonetheless assume that this *skolops* resulted in a permanent or semi-permanent debilitating state, as is implied by his repeated prayers and by the three present subjunctives in 12:7 ('*hyperairōmai*'—twice, and '*kolaphizē*'). For further discussion on Paul's *skolops* see Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 548–9; or Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 413–6.

67. S. R. Garrett, "Paul's Thorn and Cultural Models of Affliction," in *The Social World of the First Christians* (ed. L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 97. Paul thus literally "turns his opponents' argument on its head," for, ironically, and without them realizing, the more they "call to attention to the severity of Paul's weaknesses as a 'sick charismatic,' the more they themselves point to the exalted nature of his revelations," and thus reinforce his authority and legitimacy. Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 464.
68. The significance of *astheneia* ('weakness') has often been discussed and it remains unclear whether Paul meant physical, psychological, social, or even spiritual weakness. It must be stressed, however, that in context it is directly linked to his *skolops*, which suggests mainly physical, and perhaps at times psychological, or even mental, weakness (even if one takes *skolops* to refer to persecution, one must recognize that ultimately it was Paul's physical condition that was diminished as a result). Cf. Cambier's brief study of *astheneia*. J. Cambier, "Le Critère Paulinien de l'Apostolat en 2 Cor. 12,6," in *Biblica* 43 (1962): 488–98.
69. Harris, *Second Corinthians*, 864.
70. *Ibid.*, 729 & 797.
71. Judge, "Conflict" in *JCE* 9, no.1 (1966), 39; Forbes, "Comparison," in *NTS* 32 (1986): 19.
72. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 387; and Cambier, "Critère Paulinien," in *Biblica* 43 (1962): 514.
73. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel*, 59, 114–6, 206. Cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 8.13–16; Epictetus 3.10.7–12.
74. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel*, 122. See also Jan Lambrecht, "Dangerous Boasting: Paul's Self-Commendation in 2 Corinthians 10–13," in *The Corinthian Correspondence* (ed. R. Bieringer; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996), 342; Ehrensperger's sixth chapter "Power in Weakness," in Ehrensperger, *Paul and Power*, 98–116; P. J. Gräbe, "The All-surpassing Power of God through the Holy Spirit in the Midst of our Broken Earthly Existence: Perspectives on Paul's Use of ΔΥΝΑΜΙΣ in 2 Corinthians," *Neo Testamentica* 28, no. 1 (1992): 150–1; Cambier, "Critère Paulinien," in *Biblica* 43 (1962): 481–518; Jerry L. Sumney, "Paul's 'Weakness': An Integral Part of his Conception of Apostleship," in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 52 (1993): 71–91.
75. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel*, 122.

Pentecostals and Peace in Israel/Palestine

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The Arab-Zionist conflict in Israel/Palestine is a missing issue in the contemporary discourse of renewal studies.¹ While the mass media offer daily reports and commentary, and the academy accumulates a wealth of specialized scholarly monographs on the question of Israel/Palestine, the scholars, academic societies, and peer-reviewed journals engaged in renewal studies have largely neglected this topic.² Pentecostal and charismatic biblical scholars have given close attention to the prodigious pneumatic manifestations marking the birth of the church in Jerusalem two thousand years ago.³ However, Pentecostal and charismatic historians and theologians have not given similar attention to more recent developments in Jerusalem. In fact, scholarly reflection on the historical and theological realities of Israel/Palestine from a renewal perspective is virtually nonexistent.⁴ It is hoped that this paper will break new ground in addressing the question of what the Spirit has to say concerning peace in the Holy Land.

The time is right to address the issue of peace in Israel/Palestine from a renewal perspective because of significant developments in renewal theology. A new paradigm of pneumatology has emerged which is conducive to addressing the issue of peace in Israel/Palestine. The contours of this emergent paradigm were manifested in 1991 at the International Charismatic Consultation on World Evangelization in Brighton, England. During this conference a forum was convened to reflect theologically on aspects of the charismatic movement. The published papers from this forum clearly reflect a common concern that Pentecostal and charismatic theologians should address issues of social justice to a greater extent.⁵ In his paper, "The Spirit Gives Life," Jurgen Moltmann called for a new paradigm of pneumatology which moves beyond a parochial outlook and reflects on the activity of the Holy Spirit throughout the earth. He posed a crucial question: "Where are the gifts of the 'charismatic movement'—where are the gifts of the 'charismatics' in the everyday life of the world, in the Peace Movement, in the liberation movements, in the ecological movement?"⁶ Miroslav Volf, in the same vein, concluded his response to Moltmann by averring, "Only those who are truly concerned for the victims of economic, political, racial or sexual oppression can genu-

inely worship God. Without action in the world, the adoration of God is empty and hypocritical, and degenerates into irresponsible and godless quietism.”⁷ Subsequent addresses and responses by Pentecostal and charismatic presenters harmonized with the chords struck by Moltmann and Volf.⁸

Since Brighton ’91 renewal theologians have been reflecting deeply on the societal and cosmic dimensions of renewal. Frank Macchia is representative of this trend. He deals with the concerns raised at the Brighton Forum in two articles, “The Tongues of Pentecost” and “Justification Through New Creation.” In the former article he describes how the Roman Catholic/Pentecostal ecumenical dialogue is reordering renewal theology’s outlook on the world. He resonates with Karl Rahner’s admonition that we should pay less attention to doctrinal differences and concentrate on the urgent needs facing humanity in the immediate future. He approvingly quotes Avery Dulles:

In desperate circumstances it can seem almost obscene for Christians to seek communion with God in ornate, incense-filled sanctuaries. It is widely felt that catholicity cannot be viable in our time unless it includes the entire redemptive plan of God, extending to the whole of humanity and even to the inanimate material world.⁹

He affirms the conviction of Yves Congar that the fundamental questions for dialogue come from the world and that we must attend equally to the problems of unbelief and the crises involved in social oppression and inhumanity. “Not just the unbeliever but the nonhuman in the midst of social oppression must be the focus.”¹⁰ In the latter article, Macchia adeptly uses a number of New Testament texts to document the work of the Holy Spirit “at the very basis of justification.” Specifically, he shows (from Romans 4. 25, 8.11, 15-16, 22, 1 Timothy 3. 16 and Hebrews 9. 14) that the Holy Spirit was at work in the resurrection of Christ, availing for our justification and inaugurating redemptive justice for us and all of creation. He takes the position that sanctification is integral to God’s fundamental acts of redemptive justice and suggests that “sanctification is the means by which the Spirit achieves justification in the person of Christ and then, through Christ in all of creation.”¹¹ Justification cannot be confined to the life of the believer. Its scope is cosmic and universal. It has far reaching ethical implications that must be worked out in the social order as the church resists racism, sexism and any form of oppression. The mission of the church consists in proclaiming the gospel of God’s redemptive justice

through Jesus Christ and by the Spirit, and in seeking to be agents of new life who incarnate the gospel message as a reconciled community.

In the past Pentecostals have not wrestled with the issue of social justice on a large scale.¹² In part this is due to a longstanding preoccupation with polemical issues. Mark Stibbe has argued that charismatic renewal theology must move beyond what he asserts is the introspective, sectarian orientation of classical Pentecostal theology and broaden its purview to explore the renewal movement's "much broader, societal effect as well."¹³ His thesis is that the purpose of God's seasons of spiritual awakening is not only spiritual renewal but also cultural and cosmic transformation. Drawing upon Moltmann's proposals in *Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, Stibbe laments that most pneumatological studies produced by renewal theologians have prolonged the traditional Pentecostal preoccupation with the ecclesiological significance of baptism of the Holy Spirit, tongues, healing, and prophecy, neglecting the societal and cosmic dimensions of the work of the Holy Spirit. To chart the course forward, Stibbe appeals to Moltmann's vexation over the "flight from politics and ecology of the Spirit in the world today." Moltmann writes, "Faced with the 'end of nature,' the churches will either discover the cosmic significance of Christ and the Spirit, or they will share the guilt for the annihilation of God's earthly creation."¹⁴ Echoing Moltmann, I would submit that in view of the threat of cataclysmic war in the Middle East region and beyond, renewal theology can either offer a pneumatological perspective on peace in Israel/Palestine or share the guilt for not doing what is within its power to contribute to the forces working toward, as opposed to against, peace. To avert the prospect of future disaster, Moltmann lays a foundation for pneumatology to address the issues of ecology and politics. As the premise of his theology of life, he states, "The eternal life of the Spirit of God is not a life different from this life here and now;¹⁵ it is the power which transforms this life here and now." Concerning politics he proposes that God's Spirit pervades all things, not just the Christian church, and especially the suffering of the oppressed. In the context of injustice the sighs and groans of the Spirit can be heard in the laments of the oppressed. That is to say, the cry for liberation is the cry of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶

All of this leads one to wonder what signs and groans of the Spirit are emanating from Israel/Palestine. One of the functions of the Holy Spirit is, according to the Gospel of John, "to convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8). If I may be so bold, might I suggest that the Spirit has something to say to the churches through the academy with regard to the questionable contribution

Pentecostals have made to peace in the land of Palestine? If so, what is the nature of that contribution, and how might its deficiencies be redressed?

From the early days of their movement, Pentecostals—having absorbed fundamentalism’s Biblicism and fascination with the fulfillment of bible prophecy—strongly sympathized with the Zionist Movement. A pro-Zionist perspective is consistently articulated in Pentecostal periodicals from 1908 to 1948. And this showed no signs of abating after 1948. In response to the so called Six Day War of 1967, for instance, the *Pentecostal Evangel* of the American Assemblies of God published three articles that demonstrate the ongoing currency of Pentecostal Zionism. The first of these articles was published on July 30, 1967. “Two Million Signs of the Times” was written by Pentecostal evangelist Harry J. Steil. The theme of this article is drawn from a favorite text of Pentecostal Zionists, Jesus’ brief parable of the fig tree in Luke 21:29-31: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you will know that the kingdom of God is near.” Steil examines four “shoots” of the “fig tree”, speaking metaphorically of Israel. First, the “numerical shoot” of the fig tree is the resilient growth of the worldwide Jewish population in spite of its decimation by the “Hitlerian slaughter.” Before the extermination of six million Jews in the Holocaust the total Jewish population of the world was 16 million; in 1967 it had recovered to over 13 million. “This constitutes a very healthy ‘shoot’ on the fig tree. Second, the “territorial shoot” is the liberation of Palestine from the “blood Turk” and the establishment of a national home for the Jews of the world. Steil states, “There are today in Palestine over two million Jews. Here are two million signs of the times. Quite a healthy shoot!” Third, the “political shoot” is symbolized by Israel’s national flag displaying the Star of David, which is “the ensign of a nation that has come back from the dead to take its place at the council tables of the world. ‘Behold the fig tree and all the trees’—having equal status, equal rights, equal voice among them. A very healthy shoot.” Fourth, the “financial shoot” is the return on billions of dollars invested in the nation of Israel. Even though many statesmen said that Israel could not survive, the “financial shoot” has “sprung up out of the stump of the fig tree” and “is amazingly sturdy!” Steil then asks, “But how does all this talk about Israel concern us? We are not Jews.” He takes his answer out the script of the discourse of Pentecostal Zionism: “No, but our Saviour was a Jew. He was born as a Jew, He died as a Jew, and He will return to earth as the Messiah of the Jews to deliver them from all their troubles. And when He returns, He will reign over all the earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” Steil gets to the bottom line, the nearness of the

second coming of Christ, concluding, "Therefore, when we see this 'shooting forth' from the fig tree, we should be warned that His return is very near (Read Luke 21)."¹⁷

Ralph Riggs, a former General Superintendent of the American Assemblies of God, authored an article entitled, "Who Is the Rightful Owner of Palestine?" To his credit, Riggs mentions that during the War of 1948 "700,000 Arabs fled from Palestine." His reason for doing so is not to empathize with the Arabs but rather to assert that the Jewish people are the rightful owners of Palestine. He bases his argument on the biblical covenant with Abraham, "a sevenfold covenant that God would give Palestine to the Jews forever." Against this backdrop, Riggs offers a pro-Zionist narrative of the War of 1948 and subsequent Arab-Israeli skirmishes. He writes, "Intense hatred smoldered through the following years, and in October 1956 war broke out again. Once more the Jews were victorious. In 100 hours they swept across the Sinai desert to the Suez Canal." Like Carmichael, Riggs strives to justify Israeli military victories on the basis of biblical prophecy. He states, "When God gave the promise to Abraham that the seed of Isaac would inherit Palestine, He also said that He would prosper the seed of Ishmael, his other son, and make of him 12 princes or nations (Genesis 17:20; and 25:16)." Riggs argues that this prophecy was fulfilled on June 5, 1967 when "exactly 12 Ishmaelite nations were at war with Israel! Count them: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq. This time only 84 hours sufficed for Israel to conquer the Arab nations who outnumbered them 20 to 1." From this Riggs concludes, "This surely looks like a confirmation that God has given Palestine to the Jews."¹⁸

The third article was authored by Albert Hoy, who throws down the Christian Zionist gauntlet: "Whether we accept Israel's success as an act of God or not, there can be no contradiction of the Biblical assurance that the Lord's national people are foreordained to defeat any plan to expel them from the land of their fathers." Hoy looks back to biblical prophecy, arguing that Jeremiah and Ezekiel predicted that toward the end of the times of the Gentiles, Israel will dwell securely in her own land. "Since she attained statehood on May 15, 1948, after 25 ominous centuries in the role of a world wanderer, she has been attacked again and again by her Arab neighbors. Always, however, she had not only repelled these attacks, but has strengthened her territorial position." According to Hoy, two facts are painstakingly clear: "Israel is in Palestine to stay, and the truth of the Bible is as applicable today as ever it was." Hoy insists that Israel's pre-

sent position bears testimony to the steady unfolding of the divine revelation and he argues that a survey of the biblical prophecies of the return of Israel to her own land shows that "there is no mention whatever of a dual tenure of Jerusalem by Jews and Arabs." Hoy recognizes that although Jerusalem was occupied by the Israelis at the time of the cease-fire, the territorial claims of the victors were yet to be resolved. "The outcome will be awaited with profound interest by Christians everywhere. If the Israelis retain possession of the city, the veracity of the Bible can be further urged upon those who doubt it." Like Carmichael some twenty years earlier, and hosts of other Christian Zionist authors, Hoy sees further evidences of the confirmation of prophecy in "Israel's amazing ventures" in soil fertilization and agricultural experimentation. He closes with the typical ruminations on the story line of premillennial eschatology. Jesus had stated in the plainest terms that when Israel regained complete jurisdiction over the city of Jerusalem, the times of the Gentiles would come to their conclusion and the time of his second coming would be near. Hoy is certain that the 1967 war was a sign that "these are the days in which believers are to look for the coming of the Lord."¹⁹

Each of the above articles was representative of the historic Pentecostal tendency towards affinity with Zionism. The affinity of Pentecostal and charismatic Christians for Zionism is further confirmed by the results of a study conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Life, entitled "Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals."²⁰ On October 6, 2006, Timothy Shah, Pew senior fellow in religious and world affairs, presented a paper on "Pentecostal Zionism," based the findings of the Pew survey, at the Spirit in the World Conference at the University of Southern California.²¹ While it is well known that white evangelicals in the U.S. are more pro-Israel than any other American religious group other than Jews, the Pew data shows that among evangelicals, "renewalists," i.e., Pentecostals and charismatics, are the most likely to espouse pro-Israel attitudes. Further, the Pew study found that renewalists in Asia, Africa, and Latin America display a greater pro-Israel tendency than other evangelicals.²² The currency of the pro-Israel leanings of Pentecostals and charismatics is also substantiated by the Pew Charitable Trust survey. The survey found that sympathy toward Israel among Pentecostals and charismatics is common even in countries with no direct political stake in the conflict in the Middle East. This would indicate that the motivating factor is more likely to be religious rather than nationalistic. It is noteworthy that the countries which registered a stronger sympathy with Israel among Pentecostals and charismatics—Brazil, Kenya, Nigeria, India, and South Korea—were represented in the parade which is discussed above.²³ This af-

finity can indeed be credited with promoting philosemitism. However, it must also be credited with a glaring disavowal of the Arab point of view. The Pentecostal periodicals only told half of the story with regard to the War of 1948 and subsequent Arab-Israeli skirmishes. While celebrating the triumph of the Jewish state, the Arab side of the story was virtually neglected. It is strange, in view of the fact that Pentecostal missionaries in Palestine attracted most of their converts from Arab Christian population, how little attention was paid to the impact of the war on the Arab Christians, Pentecostal and otherwise. Bits of information seep out, such as Riggs' acknowledgement that 700,000 Arabs, including Palestinian Christians (some of whom were Pentecostals), were made homeless by the war. Nevertheless, this information received no elaboration in articles published in Pentecostal periodicals in 1948 and 1949. Almost nothing is made of the suffering endured by Arab Pentecostal community in Jerusalem. Any expression of sympathy and concern for the Arab Pentecostals in the Palestinian cannot be found in these articles published in the *Pentecostal Evangel*. The only reasonable explanation for this oversight is (at least a passive) bias against Arabs resulting from a self-interested concern with eschatological signs. This is arguably a blind spot among Pentecostals. Like other Christian Zionists, while there is some evidence of Arabophilism among British Pentecostals) American Pentecostal Zionists disregarded the rights of the Arabs of Palestine. But more than that, they effectively rendered their former Arab clients 'non-persons' by neglecting to account for their whereabouts and to inquire into their well-being.

To redress this deficit of compassion, this clear injustice, the Arab side of the story now needs to be told. To Pentecostals, as to Israelis, the War of 1948 marks the birth of the state of Israel, but to Palestinians it is known as "the Catastrophe." As the British Mandate was winding down in 1947, the United Nations produced a partition plan that would divide Palestine into a Jewish state, comprised of eastern Galilee, the upper Jordan Valley, the Negev and the coastal plain, and an Arab state in the rest of the land. Skirmishes flared up immediately after the passage of the U.N. resolution on November 29, 1947. Palestinians were incensed that the partition gave the Zionists 54% of the land, even though they owned only 7%. As Elias Chacour explains, the partition "gave the Zionists almost all of the fertile land, including the huge, main citrus groves that accounted for most of our people's export income... There was three times more cultivated land in this one area than the incoming, European settlers had cultivated in all of Palestine in the previous thirty years."²⁴ Large scale violence started in Jerusalem on December 2, 1947, when, according to Karen Armstrong,

an Arab mob streamed through the Jaffa Gate and looted the Jewish commercial center on Ben Yehuda Street. Irgun, the Zionist militia, retaliated by attacking the Arab suburbs of Katamon and Sheikh Jarrah. By March, 1948, 70 Jews and 230 Arabs had been killed in the fighting around Jerusalem.²⁵

At that moment the combined armies of five Arab League states—Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon—launched a military intervention against Israel in order to prevent the loss of Palestine to the Zionist entity. On May 14, 1948, the day before the expiration of the British Mandate, David Ben-Gurion called a press conference and proclaimed the existence of the state of Israel. Already, the Zionist armed forces, known as the Haganah, were undertaking the massive project of removing Palestinians from the land designated for the Jewish state. The Arab armies were eventually outmaneuvered and soundly defeated. In July of 1948, according to the truce arranged by the United Nations, Palestine was split right through the middle of Jerusalem, with West Jerusalem going to Israel and East Jerusalem to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The stark reality is that in 1948-49 the Israelis evicted 750,000 Palestinians from their homes, reduced them to refugees, and expropriated their villages, businesses and farms. The refugees either fled or were deported to the West Bank, Gaza and neighboring Arab nations, mainly Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. By the end of 1949, there were 1,000,000 Palestinians registered for relief with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA).²⁶

After the War of 1948 the Palestinians were a dispossessed people. Only those in the Gaza enjoyed some semblance of political freedom. The West Bank was annexed by Jordan. The Gaza Strip was under Egyptian control. A significant number of the Palestinian refugees in the West Bank emigrated to the Gulf States and the West, but most remained and lived an impoverished existence in refugee camps. About 120,000 Palestinian Arabs remained in Israel. They eventually gained citizenship but were denied equal protection under the law, as well as the right to return to their homes or fair compensation for their losses. Israel fought two more major wars with neighboring Arabic states, in 1967 and 1973, resulting in the acquisition of more territory in the Golan Heights, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula and in the creation of 300,000 more Palestinian refugees. At present the world population of Palestinians is about 4 million. About 800,000 of them are Arab citizens of Israel, 1 million live on the West Bank and Gaza under Israeli military occupation,

another 1 million or so live in Jordan, approximately 450,000 live in Lebanon, and the rest live in the Gulf States, Europe, and North and South America.²⁷

Naim Ateek points out that Palestinians have gone through a three-stage process in establishing their national consciousness.²⁸ The first stage was SHOCK (1948-55). The Palestinians—who had been assured continuity after the seemingly inevitable victory of the combined Arab armies—were stunned when Arab intervention failed and the international community gave overwhelming support to the provision of a homeland for the survivors of the Holocaust. Martial law was instituted on October 21, 1948, prohibiting Palestinians from traveling without a permit approved by the military governor of the district. The Jewish towns that had been Palestinian were completely off limits. In addition, Israel denied Palestinians legal protection by continuing the Emergency Defense Regulations of the British Mandate, allowing the Israeli military to enter Palestinian houses without a search warrant, to demolish them, and to expel Palestinians from their homes and deport them. In 1950 the Israelis enacted the Absentee Property Law, under which the army could confiscate any land that was abandoned or untended, thus facilitating the expropriation of the land of the 750,000 Palestinians who had been forced from their property. During this period 900,000 Jews immigrated to Israel, and most of them were settled on the land and in the houses of the dispossessed Palestinians.²⁹

The second stage of RESIGNATION (1956-67) was characterized by realistic adjustment to the unresolved conflict. Every Palestinian was issued an identity card which classified him or her as an “Arab.” The term “Palestinian” was assiduously avoided. In 1969 Golda Meir, the Israeli Prime Minister, declared, “It was not as though there was a Palestinian people in Palestine...and we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did not exist.” Any attempt to organize the Palestinian community was immediately repressed. News of the Palestinian catastrophe did not register on the scale of world opinion. Outside of the Arab world, the international community viewed the Palestinian problem as that of the refugees, not fully comprehending the injustices done to the Palestinians.³⁰

The third and current stage of AWAKENING (1967-) emerged in the aftermath of the Six Day War of 1967. The crushing defeat of the Arab armies demonstrated to the Palestinians that they could expect no deliverance from the Arab nations. This accelerated the development of organized Palestinian resistance. The Palestinian Liberation Organization,

founded in 1964 by the Arab League, now came to represent the Palestinian national consciousness. The original purpose of the P.L.O. was the destruction of Israel through armed struggle. Later, the P.L.O. pragmatically accepted the fact that the state of Israel was there to stay and shifted its focus to the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza through international diplomacy. A minority, known as Rejectionists, refused to comply with this shift and stayed the course of terrorism. In 1974 the P.L.O. was recognized by the Arab countries as the sole representative of the Palestinian Arabs. In the same year the P.L.O. was granted observer status at the United Nations and was officially recognized by a majority of countries. It maintained diplomatic missions in all U.N. agencies and in ninety countries.³¹ Naim stresses, "Many people have come to see the P.L.O. as merely a terrorist organization. But for almost all Palestinians the P.L.O. is their national liberation movement."³² The P.L.O. established a network of cultural, educational and social welfare services. Its dominant military wing is called Fateh. The P.L.O. is governed by the Palestinian National Council, and its president was for many years Chairman Yasir Arafat. The P.L.O. has acted (except in those settings where democratically displaced by the rejectionist Hamas) as the official voice of Palestinians wherever they may be, in Israel, the Occupied Territories, the Arab States or the West.³³

Since the early 1970's there has been an awakened activism among the Palestinians, energized by a vigorous protest literature and inflamed by waves of guerilla warfare and two Intifadas, or "uprisings," during which the Palestinian population united in massive civil disobedience and defiance of Israel. Although the uprisings have been generated by egregious incidents of violence, they are the result of a process of conscientization, or as Ateek puts it, "Palestinianization,"³⁴ which was signaled by the appearance of a revisionist history, telling the story of the "Catastrophe" from a Palestinian point of view. This revisionist history started with the publication of Sabri Jiryis's pioneering *The Arabs in Israel*, and was followed with Elia Zurayk's *The Palestinians in Israel: A Study in Internal Colonialism*.³⁵ For Palestinians, these publications represented their interpretation of their own history, narrating how they were driven from their own land and continue to live in apartheid-like conditions in Israel and the Occupied Territories.

Palestinian scholars would surely agree with what Miroslav Volf says in *Exclusion and Embrace* concerning the importance of remembering one's history of suffering. He writes, "What we have come to know we must remember, and what we remember we must tell. 'For as often as you

eat this bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes' (1Corinthinas 11: 26). Just as the memory of Christ's death for our sins must be proclaimed, so also the memory of human suffering, caused and experienced, must be made public."³⁶ Mitri Raheb, speaking from the perspective of the West Bank, elucidates how most Palestinians would encapsulate their history. He writes,

Our recent history as Palestinians is a story of violence, misery, and oppression: thirty-six years of Israeli occupation, four years of uprising from 1987 to 1991, the Gulf War of 1991. During these years, we often were under house arrest because of curfews imposed on our cities. Many young Palestinians were shot, wounded, and killed. Others, including church members, were arrested and imprisoned. In spite of all that we had hope... However, during the last few years, since 2002, this hope has evaporated almost completely. Israeli tanks surrounded Palestinian towns and villages. Over two million of our people were put under house arrest for months. Apache helicopters were used to fire on Palestinian neighborhoods. Many West Bank cities have been filled with the sounds of missiles and tanks bombing neighborhoods, as well as the screams of little children.³⁷

As anyone can see from following the world news, so it goes as of this moment.

In the process of telling the Arab side of the story, some of the defining moments of recent Palestinian history have been sketched. Before moving on to a final assessment of the Pentecostal contribution to peace in Israel/Palestine, the obvious will be stated. The conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians centers on the possession of and sovereignty over the land of Israel/Palestine. The crux of the conflict is that two peoples are vying for one land. However, there is more to it. There is a cultural impasse. Israelis and Palestinians have a vision of the other that excludes the other and leads to intractable differences in points of view. Both view their right to the land as inviolate and hence non-negotiable. As Miroslav Volf might say, the Israelis and Palestinians have viewed each other in *excluding* terms: their "nonrecognition" and "misrecognition" of each other has inflicted harm, acted as a form of oppression, and imprisoned each side in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being.³⁸ On one side, the Palestinians view the Israelis as imperialistic, racist, Western colonizers and oppressors who have expropriated their ancestral land by force and aim at their expulsion or, if necessary, their extermination. On the other side, the Israelis view the Palestinians as barbaric, shiftless, subversive and

murderous terrorists whose claim to their ancestral land has been superseded by the biblical entitlement of the land to the Jews, and whose claims to Jews appear to form part of a larger oppressive 'Arabization' of minorities in the Middle East.

Given the history of atrocities and recriminations on both sides, each point of view is understandable and may, to a limited extent, bear some ethical merit. However, it is a matter of life and death for the Israelis and Palestinians, and also in the best interest of the collective security of the world, that they make peace and learn to coexist. As the Ruethers aptly point out, "Although neither was there as a national community before the twentieth century, both are there now. And for either party to try to deny that the other exists as a national community is an exercise in futility."³⁹ Herein is the urgent importance of hearing both sides of the story.

In excluding the Palestinian Arab side of the story Pentecostal Zionists were excluding the personhood of the Palestinian other. Telling the truth about history sometimes entails speaking a word of prophetic witness that exposes injustice in the light of critical analysis. The legacy of fundamentalist Zionism has a dark side. By espousing a bias against Palestinian Arabs and Muslims, Pentecostals made a deleterious contribution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Although unintended, the discourse of Pentecostal Zionism has contributed to the forces working against peace between the Arabs and Jews in Israel/Palestine. It would be an overstatement to say that Pentecostal Zionists have inflicted harm, acted as accessories of oppression, and reduced the Jews and Arabs of Palestine to a false and distorted mode of being. Surely, though, it is fair to say that Pentecostals did not contribute to the peaceful coexistence of the peoples of Palestine.

To explore the theological roots of the injustice discussed above, we will offer a brief critique of the place of dispensationalism in the eschatology of early Pentecostalism. A number of early Pentecostals uncritically accepted the dispensational system formulated by John Nelson Darby and popularized by Cyrus I. Scofield.⁴⁰ The editors of several Pentecostal periodicals promoted the Scofield Reference Bible, even after it became apparent that the interpretive stance of its study notes was opposed to the distinctive Pentecostal emphasis on Spirit baptism with the accompaniment of speaking in tongues. To be fair, it should be granted that dispensationalism provided early Pentecostals with a philosophy of history with which to support the claim that their movement signified the final chapter in human history prior to the second coming of Christ.⁴¹ Faced with denunciation and ridicule, early Pentecostals may have viewed dispensationalism as providing a tactical advantage, whereby they could turn the weap-

ons of their evangelical critics against them. Moreover, premillennial dispensationalism was combined in the charismatic theology of Edward Irving as early as the 1820s: Catholic Apostolics would remain influential in pro-Israel circles long after their charismatic practice and public visibility had faded. Nonetheless, there are two reasons why the author views this theological development as a wrong turn.

The first reason is that dispensationalism is theologically inconsistent with the central features of Pentecostal theology. The inconsistency centers on the claim of Pentecostals that their movement constitutes the fulfillment of the prophecy of the “latter rain” in Joel 2: 23, 28, from which the Pentecost of Acts 2 is seen as the early rain and the Pentecostal Revival as the latter rain. In opposition to this claim, classical dispensationalism was anchored to the assumption that the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit did not continue after the apostolic age. According to Darby, a great parenthesis occurred in church history in the early second century, marking the termination of the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on the Day of Pentecost. Since dispensationalists believed that God himself had abolished those supernatural gifts, most of them regarded their purported reappearance in the twentieth century as a matter of human delusion at best, and Satanic counterfeit at worst. Hence, there was an inherent inconsistency between the basic tenets of dispensational and Pentecostal theology.⁴²

There is a second reason, more germane to this article, for the author’s belief that the Pentecostal appropriation of dispensationalism was ill-informed. To reiterate the argument of this article, Pentecostal eschatology was embedded with an ideological slant that privileged Zionism and discriminated against the Arab Christians of Palestine. According to Ray Gannon, “Pentecostals viewed the restoration of Zion as the fulfillment of prophecy.”⁴³ They almost universally included the return of the Jews to Palestine in their lists of the signs of the Second Coming of Christ.⁴⁴ As was the case with dispensationalists in general, early Pentecostals viewed the return of the Jews to Palestine as the hinge that would open the door for the final redemption of the “kingdom age”. It was commonplace for Pentecostals to speak of the Jew as “God’s timepiece” and to watch current events closely for happenings with the Jewish people that might be construed as signs that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent. They interpreted the increasing immigration of Jews to Palestine and the establishment of agricultural colonies as proof that the remnant was coming back, just as promised by the Old Testament prophets. This popular

theme in Pentecostal preaching received prominent coverage in Pentecostal publications.⁴⁵

The Pentecostal appropriation of dispensationalism (or, more accurately, the Pentecostal emergence from dispensational circles) carried with it an image of Israel/Palestine that was slanted towards a pro-Zionist ideological agenda. For instance, Jerusalem figured largely in the eschatological discourse of early Pentecostalism. Pentecostals understood certain select biblical passages to predict a fixed sequence of historical events that would culminate during the last days in the city of Jerusalem with the Jewish people converting to Jesus as their Messiah. This eschatological scenario colored Pentecostals' interpretations of current events transpiring in Palestine in the first part of the twentieth century. By and large, Pentecostals believed that the immigration of Jewish people to Palestine was a sign of the imminence of the second coming of Christ and a signal that very soon a chain reaction would be activated leading to the War of Armageddon and the establishment of Christ's Millennial Kingdom in Palestine.

In retrospect, it is evident that image and reality parted company in Pentecostal eschatology. Assuredly, what the early Pentecostals predicted did not happen. Furthermore, Pentecostals have left a legacy that is an obstacle to peace in Israel/Palestine. By elevating the role of the Jews in their eschatological scenario, Pentecostals blocked from their field of vision the rights of other peoples, Arab Muslims and Christians, who made up the overwhelming majority of the population of Palestine.⁴⁶ As a result, the Pentecostal image of Jerusalem amounted to a representation of Jerusalem as seen through the eyes of dispensational Christian Zionism rather than an accurate picture of Jerusalem as it was, the homeland of indigenous Eastern Christians who since the Day of Pentecost have maintained a continuous presence in the Holy Land.

To conclude, in favoring the Zionist project and asserting the legitimacy of the state of Israel on the basis of biblical prophecy, Pentecostals disregarded the Arab right of self determination and nationhood. In telling the story of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Pentecostals flatly ignored the Arab side of the story. In so doing they have turned their backs on the very Arab Christians, including Pentecostals in Israel/Palestine, with whom they could partner in the peacemaking process. In so doing, they have contributed to the forces working against peace in Israel/Palestine.

Notes:

1. The idea of “renewal studies” is an elusive concept, just as the term “renewal” is imprecise. The term “renewal studies” could pertain to any number of movements concerned with the renewal of this or that. For the sake of this paper, the term “renewal” will be delimited to the Pentecostal-charismatic-neo-charismatic movements. When we refer to the renewal movement, we are not referring to other Christian renewal movements, such as the Pietist, Evangelical, and Holiness movements. The distinguishing characteristic of the Pentecostal-charismatic-neo-charismatic renewal movement is a special emphasis on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal-charismatic-neo-charismatic renewal movement places a high premium on the practice of the spiritual gifts of speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, healing and exorcism.
2. Only two scholars of the renewal movement have dealt with the question of Israel/Palestine. One is Peter Hocken in *The Glory and the Shame: Reflections on the 20th Century Outpouring of the Holy Spirit* (Surrey, UK: Eagle, 1994), 133-166 and in *The Spirit of Unity: How the Renewal is Breaking Down Barriers between Evangelicals and Roman Catholics* (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2001), 14-20. The other is Raymond Gannon, “The Shifting Romance with Israel: American Pentecostal Ideology of Zionism and the Jewish State,” (Ph.D. dissertation, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2003).
3. See the bibliography on “New Testament Pneumatology, 1983-1993” in Mark W. G. Stibbe, “The Theology of Renewal and the Renewal of Theology,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3 (1993): 83-90.
4. Pentecostals and charismatics are prominently represented in the pro-Israel movement. For popular publications by authors affiliated with the renewal movement, see Don Finto, *Your People Shall Be My People: How Israel, the Jews and the Christian Church Will Come Together in the Last Days* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal, 2001); Malcolm Hedding, *Understanding Israel* (Oklahoma City: Zion’s Gate International, 1990); David Allen Lewis, *Can Israel Survive in a Hostile Environment?* (Green Forest, Ariz.: New Leaf Press, 1994); and Don Schwarz, *Identity Crisis: Israel and the Church* (Enumclaw, Wash.: Wine Press Publishing, 2004).
5. Harold D. Hunter and Peter D. Hocken, eds., *All Together in One Place: Theological Papers from the Brighton Conference on World Evangelization* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 11-12.
6. Jurgen Moltmann, “The Spirit Gives Life: Spirituality and Vitality,” in *Ibid*, 28.
7. Miroslav Volf, “A Rhythm of Adoration and Action,” in *Ibid*, 45.
8. See Juan Sepulveda, “Pentecostalism and Liberation Theology: Two Manifestations of the Work of the Holy Spirit for the Renewal of the Church,”

- Karla Poewe-Hesham and Irving Hexham, "Charismatic Churches and Apartheid in Africa," and Cheryl Bridges-Johns, "Pentecostal Spirituality and the Conscientization of Women," in *Ibid*, 51-64, 73-83, 153-165.
9. Frank D. Macchia, "The Tongues of Pentecost: A Pentecostal Perspective on the Promise and Challenge of Pentecostal/Roman Catholic Dialogue," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 35:1 (Winter 1998): 17.
 10. Macchia, "Tongues of Pentecost," 17.
 11. Frank D. Macchia, "Justification Through New Creation: The Holy Spirit and the Doctrine by Which the Church Stands or Falls," *Theology Today* 58:2 (July 2001): 214.
 12. Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology: Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspectives on Ecclesiology, Soteriology, and Theology of Mission* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2002), 184-186.
 13. Mark W. G. Stibbe "The Theology of Renewal and the Renewal of Theology," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3 (1993): 81.
 14. Jurgen Moltmann, *Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (London: SCM Press, 1992), 10.
 15. Jurgen Moltmann, "Pentecost and the Theology of Life," in *Pentecostal Movements as an Ecumenical Challenge* (eds. Jurgen Moltmann and Karl-Josef Kuschel; London: SCM Press, 1996), 130.
 16. Stibbe, "The Theology of Renewal and the Renewal of Theology," 82.
 17. Harry J. Steil, "Two Million Signs of the Time," *Pentecostal Evangel* (July 30, 1967): 2-4.
 18. Ralph M. Riggs, "Who Is the Rightful Owner of Palestine?," *Pentecostal Evangel* (July 30, 1967): 7.
 19. Albert L. Hoy, "Israel's Answer to the Critics," *Pentecostal Evangel* (July 30, 1967): 8-9.
 20. "Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals," (Washington, D.C.: The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2006). The ten countries surveyed are Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, and the United States.
 21. See the conference website at <http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/crcc/pentecostalism>, accessed December 10, 2007.
 22. "Spirit and Power," 56, 67.
 23. "Spirit and Power," 67.
 24. Elias Chacour, *Blood Brothers: The Unforgettable Story of a Palestinian Christian Working for Peace in Israel* (Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 1984), 46.
 25. Karen Armstrong, *Jerusalem*, 386.

26. Rosemary Radford Ruether and Herman J. Ruether, *The Wrath of Jonah: The Crisis of Religious Nationalism in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 103.
27. Edward W. Said, *The Question of Palestine* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 115.
28. Naim Stifan Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1989), 33.
29. Ibid, 33-36.
30. Ibid, 36-38.
31. Edward W. Said and Christopher Hitchens, *Blaming the Victims: Spurious Scholarship and the Palestinian Question* (London: Verso, 1988), 33.
32. Ateek, *Justice and Only Justice*, 39.
33. Ibid, 38-44.
34. Ibid, 43.
35. Said and Hitchens, *Blaming the Victims*, 3.
36. Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 235.
37. Mitri Raheb, *Bethlehem Besieged: Stories of Hope in Times of Trouble* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 150.
38. Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 19.
39. Ruether and Ruether, *Wrath of Jonah*, xxi.
40. Dispensationalism is so named because it generally divides history into a series of seven ages or dispensations. In each dispensation God offers prosperity to his people in return for obedience, or judgment in return for disobedience. Darby postulated that there were two divine plans revealed in Scripture. One plan was for the Jews, God's earthly people. The other plan was for Christian Church, God's heavenly people. God's plan for the Jews was revealed through a series of covenants with the nation of Israel, fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Jewish Messiah. But when the Jews rejected Jesus, interrupting the divine plan, God postponed the kingdom and temporarily removed His hand of blessing from the Jews. From that time on God's redemptive plan for the Jews was put on hold and would not be resumed until the Second Coming of Christ. Darby believed that the Jews were being punished by being persecuted throughout the world and that the biblical prophecies relating to the Jews would not be completely fulfilled until an indeterminate future time during the Millennium. In the meantime, God implemented the second plan by creating a new chosen people, formed mainly of Gentiles, who made up the Church. According to Darby, the return of Christ would be delayed until the gospel is preached to every

- tribe, every people, and every nation in the world. Clarence B Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism: Its Historical Genesis and Ecclesiastical Implications* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 55; Peter E. Prosser, *Dispensationalist Eschatology and Its Influence on American and Religious Movements* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999), 255-258.
41. Peter Althouse, *Spirit of the Last Days: Pentecostal Eschatology in Conversation with Jurgen Moltmann* (London: T & T Clark International, 2003), 17-19, 41-44; Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic for the Twenty-First Century: Spirit, Scripture and Community* (London: T & T Clark International, 2004), 52-57; Gerald T. Sheppard, "Pentecostals and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism: The Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship," *Pneuma* 6, 2 (Fall 1984): 9. Grant Wacker, "Playing for Keeps: The Primitivist Impulse in Early Pentecostalism," in *The American Quest for the Primitive Church*, (ed. Richard T. Hughes; Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 197, 205-206.
 42. Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), 145; Frank D. Macchia, "Pentecostal Theology" in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal Charismatic Movements* (ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1138; Samuel Solivan, *The Spirit, Pathos and Liberation: Toward an Hispanic Pentecostal Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 43), 33.
 43. Raymond L. Gannon, "The Shifting Romance with Israel: American Pentecostal Ideology of Zionism and the Jewish State," Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel, 2003, 164. See J. S. Jones, "Further Facts About Palestine," *The Elim Evangel and Foursquare Revivalist* 10, 22 (September 29, 1929): 339-341.
 44. Alexander Boddy, "Seven Signs of His Coming," *Confidence* (December 1910): 291-3; S. A. Jamieson, "The Second Coming of Christ," *Weekly Evangel* (February 26, 1916): 6-7; William Pocock, "Present-Day Signs of the End," *Trust* (January-February 1926): 16, 20; A. E. Stuernagel, "Signs of the Approaching End of the Age," *Latter Rain Evangel* (May 1927): 4-8; H. Pierson King, "Signs of the Coming of Our Lord," *Trust* (October 1915): 12-20; Arthur S. Booth-Clibborn, "The Goal of Prophetic Scripture," *Trust* (December 1918): 11-14; Arthur W. Frodsham, "The Return of the Lord: The Signs of the Times," *Pentecostal Evangel* (February 18, 1922): 6-7; Percy G. Parker, "Christ is Coming Soon! An Outstanding Sign," *The Elim Evangel and Foursquare Revivalist* 9, 19 (December 1, 1928): 313-315.
 45. See Eric N. Newberg, "The Pentecostal Mission in Palestine, 1908-1948: A Post-Colonial Assessment," Ph.D. dissertation, Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 2008. UMI ProQuest Dissertations and Theses: <http://gradworks.umi.com/33/05/3305402.html>

The Scope of Christian Prophecy

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Abstract

This article investigates the paradigm under which contemporary Christian prophets should operate by comparing prophetic activity in the Old and New Testament contexts. In particular, it argues that Christian prophets in the New Testament can operate with a greater authority, speak about a wider subject matter and address a wider audience, similar to their Old Testament counterparts, than is often believed among modern Pentecostals. It argues that the Book of Revelation provides a model for New Testament prophecy that narrows the gap between Old and New Testament prophetic activity and concludes that contemporary Christian prophets should—with appropriate safeguards—be released more freely than is often considered.

Introduction

Discussion of contemporary Christian prophecy and prophets continually stirs up debate. Among those who actually believe that there can be valid Christian prophecy today, there has been a tendency to lurch between the extremes of an uncritical awe of powerful prophets and an attitude bordering on self-satisfaction when the same people come unstuck, either morally or in terms of unfulfilled predictions.

One of the key issues that arises from controversies of recent years is the paradigm under which contemporary prophets should operate. What should a modern Christian prophet look like? In particular, should they be like the prophets of the Old Testament? Frequently prophets who speak of judgement on the church or nation (like David Wilkerson) are criticized for having an Old Testament approach or theology which undercuts the gospel view of grace. On the other hand, prophets who always speak positive words are open to the same sort of attack that Jeremiah made in roundly denouncing the positive prophets of his day (Jer 28:8-9).¹

Another related issue relates to the scope of Christian prophetic ministry. How much freedom and authority does a true prophet have? What boundaries exist in the New Testament for prophetic activity? Can Christian prophets, operating under the new covenant, operate with similar

scope to their Old Testament counterparts in terms of authority, accuracy, subject matter and potential audience?

In this paper, therefore, I want to explore the relationship, similarities and differences between Old and New Testament prophets. In this journey, I also want to challenge some common assumptions about Old and New Testament prophecy found in charismatic and Pentecostal circles today, particularly (though not exclusively) in Australia and Asia.²

It hardly needs saying that prophets are central figures in the Old Testament. They are the authors of most of the Scriptures, which are best seen as prophecy; that is, God's word on whatever subject is being addressed, whether history, law or prediction of future events, given through His spokespersons. Prophets are also key players in the narrative/s of Israel's history and even convey significant messages to Israel's Gentile neighbours. Fundamentally they bring God's perspective and decisions into every situation.

This changes to some extent in the New Testament. The key role—as spokespersons for the Messiah—is now given to his apostles and it is their writings that are eventually canonised.³ The New Testament church recognized, however, that “prophets are to be ranked in importance only second to apostles,”⁴ that prophecy is a very significant role of the apostles⁵ and that the distinction between apostles and prophets is not always clearly maintained.⁶ Moreover, the church itself is viewed as a prophetic community; according to Stronstad, in Acts, “they are the eschatological community of Spirit-baptized, Spirit-empowered and Spirit-filled prophets.”⁷ In other words, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, all of God's people receive the Spirit of prophecy (Acts 2:16-18; 1 Cor.14:1-5,24,31,39), though there is still a special group of prophets distinct from other believers (Acts 11:27; 1 Cor.12:28; Eph.4:11).⁸

In order to establish how much New Testament prophets resemble their Old Testament counterparts, and to clarify the scope of New Testament prophetic activity, I want to address several questions.

1. The Scope of Authority: How much authority do New Testament prophets have, compared to the Old Testament situation?

Wayne Grudem, in his practical and careful study of New Testament prophecy, draws a very strong contrast between Old and New Testament prophecy. Old Testament prophets' words have “absolute divine authority” so that “to disbelieve or disobey a [true] prophet's words is to disbelieve or disobey God.”⁹ However, New Testament prophets and

prophecy are at a different level: they are “speaking merely human words to report something God brings to mind.”¹⁰ The evidence he presents for the second part of this conclusion appears persuasive: factual inaccuracies by the prophet Agabus (Acts 21:10-11),¹¹ Paul’s failure to “obey” prophetic direction (Acts 21:4,11-14), the need for prophecy in the church to be “weighed” (1 Cor 14:29), the encouragement from Paul for all believers to prophesy (1 Cor 14:1,5,24,31) and his insistence on the submission of prophets to his teaching (1 Cor 14:37).¹²

Grudem rightly insists that prophecy in the New Testament required some measure of revelation from God, even though reported in the prophet’s own (fallible) words.¹³ However, adoption of his view would reduce the scope and potential power of prophecy in the modern church by driving a wedge between the supposedly infallible Old Testament prophets and more fallible Christian expressions of prophecy. Because prophecy is so central to the Old Testament, and the words of the prophets best known to us have been preserved for us in Scripture, it is easy for Christians to draw one of either of two mistaken conclusions: either all prophecy (in both eras) was on the same level as Scripture (that is, divinely inspired and without error, which is the presupposition basic to evangelical cessationist arguments),¹⁴ or New Testament prophecy was inferior to Old Testament prophecy because it does not appear to be always on this level.¹⁵

A similar line of thinking to Grudem’s appears in the writing of some Pentecostal authors. For example, Gerald T. Sheppard claims that “‘prophecy’ among Christians is different from that of the Old Testament prophets, since it occurs *without a capacity to write Scripture*,”¹⁶ and William Kay asserts that “New Testament prophecy does not reach the same level of authority as Old Testament prophecy.”¹⁷

In my opinion, this stance is open to challenge from a critical review of the evidence. To begin with, such arguments make questionable assumptions about Old Testament prophets. A thorough study of Old Testament prophecy is beyond the scope of this paper, but the following evidence needs consideration.

First, in the Old Testament, true prophecies are sometimes given by “false” prophets. The famous case is Balaam, whose heart was far from God although he spoke under inspiration in Numbers 23-24. A more ambiguous case is the old prophet in 1 Kings 13:11-24, who deliberately lied about an angelic word to another “man of God”, thereby inducing him to disobey an instruction from God, and then (correctly) prophesied the younger man’s doom for his disobedience.¹⁸

Secondly, the scope of the term “prophet” is sometimes broadened to include people who represent God even when not specific acts of prophesying; for example, “do my prophets no harm” (Ps 105:15) is applied to the patriarchs of Israel, possibly on the basis of Gen 20:7, where Abraham is described as a prophet. While it is true that the patriarchs did occasionally prophesy, this does not appear to be a prominent part of their lives.

Thirdly, valid prophetic speech is attributed to people who are anonymous or inferior to the “main” prophets in authority, let alone being able to write Scripture; for example, the seventy elders in Num 11:25; the prophets temporarily joined by King Saul in 1 Sam 10:5-6,10-13; the prophetic singers of 1 Chr 25:1-5; and the “schools” or “companies” of prophets associated with Elijah and Elisha (2 Kgs 2:3,5,7,15; 6:1; 1 Kgs 20:35). During Elijah’s time, there were more than a hundred other prophets in Israel, some of whom were killed and others forced to hide during the persecution instigated by Jezebel (1 Kings 18:4,13).

Fourthly, valid prophetic prediction is sometimes not fulfilled, as in the case of Jonah at Nineveh (Jonah 3), and the original pronouncement by Isaiah of Hezekiah’s impending death (changed as a result of the king’s earnest prayer; 2 Kgs 20:1-6), or is fulfilled in a different way to what may have been originally envisaged (as in the case of the prophetic words to David about his dynasty, 2 Sam 7:12-16).¹⁹ This is partly due to the fact that prophecy is generally and fundamentally conditional, a point emphasized in Jer 18:7-10.²⁰

Fifthly, other passages appear to distinguish between different levels of valid prophetic activity. For example, in Num 12, God differentiates between Moses’ level (“with him I speak face to face- clearly, not in riddles; and he beholds the form of the LORD”, v8) and the more normal (“when there are prophets among you, I the LORD make myself known to them in visions; I speak to them in dreams”, v6).²¹

A sixth observation may be made, that even true prophets were not inherently infallible and sometimes had to be corrected. For example, Nathan initially encouraged David in his desire to build a temple, only to be corrected by God (2 Sam 7:2-5). Randall Otto argues that true prophets simply got it wrong on occasion and would not be discredited by “occasional failures” if they “had earned a reputation for reliability due to the consistent fulfilment of... past predictions.”

Finally, other Jewish prophecy—such as the apocalyptic literature—was not included in the Old Testament canon even though it was not

all necessarily “false”. Many Jews perhaps regarded these as false prophecy, but one such book (1 Enoch) is quoted in Jude 14-15, which suggests that the authors of the New Testament saw some value in them. As late as the Jewish-Roman war of AD 66-70, prophetic oracles are found among the (non-Christian) Jews,²² implying that the phenomenon of prophecy had not entirely disappeared even though the “canon” was apparently “closed”.²³ In fact, the process of canonisation involves just such a process of sifting as is recommended for Christian prophecy by Paul in 1 Cor 14:29. Certain material is rejected because it is false; other material is rejected (as far as inclusion in Scripture is concerned) because it may be useful, or even inspired in a measure, but is not considered to be at the level of authority expected of canonical books.

It is clear, therefore, that there were valid prophetic utterances in the Old Testament era that were not preserved in Scripture. Ernest Gentile calls this material “secondary prophecy” which was “appropriate for the time and setting but not infallible or inerrant.”²⁴ Its existence undercuts Grudem’s argument based on Paul’s apparent unconcern at the “loss” of potential prophecies in 1 Cor 14:30²⁵ and Sheppard’s assumption that all Old Testament prophets could write Scripture.

Grudem himself concedes that “both the Hebrew and the Greek words for ‘prophet’ had a wide range of meanings in Jewish literature;”²⁶ although he is speaking here of rabbinic and other “non-canonical” material, the examples given above imply that such a “wide range of meanings” is not absent from the Old Testament itself. In fact, rather than a “black and white” assessment—the infallible true prophet versus the false self-appointed prophet—it is probably more accurate to think in terms of a continuum, with Moses at the ‘pinnacle’ (Deut 34:10; Num 12:6-8), “false prophets” at the other end and a range of prophetic quality in between, including some that are perhaps “borderline”, such as the “prophetic frenzy” (NRSV) described in 1 Sam 10:6,10; 19:20-24.²⁷

The New Testament evidence is also not consistent with the claim that Christian prophecy was of inferior quality. While normal congregational prophecy seems to have been less authoritative than Scripture, some (apostolic) prophecy was eventually included in our Bibles. There is evidence of prophecy in Paul’s letters: most clearly 1 Thess 4:15 and 1 Tim 4:1, and we could spread the net still wider if all predictive passages in Paul are included (such as sections of 1 Cor 15; 1 Thess 4-5; 2 Thess 2; and 2 Tim 3; half of these are in “undisputed” Pauline letters). Moreover, the writer of 2 Peter regards Paul’s writings as scripture (2 Pet.3:15-16) and this attitude is expressed during a discussion of eschatology, implying

that Paul's prophetic words are especially in view. This evidence suggests that authoritative voices in the first century church already regarded some New Testament prophecy as Scripture, and that the church as a whole came to the same view during the succeeding centuries.

Then there is the Book of Revelation, which makes claims to a Scripture-like authority, especially in the promise of blessing for the observant reader or hearer (Rev.1:3; 22:7),²⁸ which (according to David Aune, implies that John's document was God's word),²⁹ and the warnings about tampering with the text (Rev.22:18-19).

Aune argues that the warning in Rev.22:18-19 cannot be called a "canonization formula," nor can it be said that "John intended his book to be placed on an equal footing with the OT." He goes on to say, however, that what he calls the "integrity formula" suggests that John "regarded his book as the record of a divine revelation that was both complete (and so unalterable) and sacred."³⁰ Aune's distinction is rather fine: as he himself acknowledges, similar phrases are used in the Old Testament (Deut 4:2; 12:32; 29:20-21).³¹ Meanwhile G.K. Beale points out that one of the Old Testament passages parallel to Rev 22:18-19 (Deut.12:32) is placed in the context of a warning about false prophecy (Deut.13:1-5),³² highlighting the similarity between Revelation and Old Testament prophecy.

Even when less authoritative than Scripture (as non-apostolic prophecy clearly was) it was often quite powerful, moreso than implied by Grudem's phrase "merely human words". In an older article, David Hill claimed that prophetic utterances in the churches were "short statements, sometimes fairly pedestrian in character" and quite inferior to Revelation.³³ However, quite apart from Revelation, we read that two prophets "said *much* to encourage and strengthen the believers" (Acts 15:31), that the quite specific predictive word of Agabus motivated a church to undertake a large financial sacrifice (Acts 11:28-30), that Agabus' second recorded prophecy included a prophetic act and an introduction resembling some Old Testament prophets (Acts 21:11),³⁴ that a Christian named Ananias spoke prophetically into Paul's life shortly after his conversion in a way that brought power and direction with history-making consequences (Acts 9:15-18; 22:14-15),³⁵ that Paul placed a very high value on prophecy (1 Cor 14:1,5; Rom 12:6) and that prophetic activity in a local church had the potential to move unbelievers or outsiders to bow down and worship, "declaring, 'God is really among you.'" (1 Cor 14:25).³⁶ Such instances imply a good measure of power and authority in many cases of NT prophesying. If the prophetic activity of the apostles and other early leaders described in Acts, apart from named "prophets", is added to the pic-

ture, it is clear that NT prophecy is in no way inferior to the activity of Old Testament prophets.³⁷

Revelation also portrays two Christian prophets who act with authority resembling the greatest Old Testament prophets, such as Moses and Elijah, pronouncing judgements with authority on their opponents (Rev 11:5-6).³⁸ Whether or not John intends us to view them as actual historical (contemporary or future) individuals, or more as symbolic of the witness of the church,³⁹ they seem to be pictured as Christian prophets: they prophesy (v3,6), they follow Jesus as Lord (v8) and they are explicitly labeled “prophets” (v10).

It seems then, that there is a similar gradation of prophecy in terms of quality in the New Testament as may be observed in the Old Testament,⁴⁰ with apostolic prophecy and Revelation at the pinnacle, false prophecy at the other end⁴¹ and some fairly ordinary material in between, including prophetic activity by brand new believers (Acts 19:6)⁴² and one case of a non-Christian (the antagonistic high priest Caiaphas) speaking an inspired prophecy (John 11:51). Further, although prediction is not the heart of prophecy in either Testament, it is often present in the New Testament, as in the cases described in Acts 11 and 21, in Revelation⁴³ and in other cases of eschatological predictions, such as 1 Thess 4:15-18, which is told “by the word of the Lord.” We are not therefore justified on scriptural grounds in limiting the authority of Christian prophets to the very basic levels of beginners in prophecy or refusing to admit the possibility of, say, a new Elijah being raised up by God.

2. The Scope of Subject Matter: Is New Testament prophecy always positive?

On the basis of 1 Cor 14:3 (“those who prophesy speak to other people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation”), it is sometimes taught that New Testament prophecy is always positive, and never contains rebuke, warning or threats as is often the case with Old Testament prophecies.⁴⁴

Now it is almost certainly true that the majority of ordinary congregational prophecy will be of this nature,⁴⁵ and Christian prophecy will overwhelmingly express the grace that has come to us in Jesus Christ (as opposed to the threats of judgement that were needed continually in the Old Testament).⁴⁶ For example, Paul claims that the distinctive revelation about the equality of Jews and Gentiles in the body of Christ was revealed to God’s “holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit” (Eph 3:5) and this is

likely to have been a key theme in the extended prophetic discourse of Judas and Silas to the church in Antioch, coming straight after the Jerusalem council decision on this point, which encouraged and strengthened the believers there (Acts 15:32). Indeed, any prophecy that *contradicted* the gospel of God's grace would be false prophecy! However, this does not mean that Christian prophecy will always seem positive and encouraging, if the following points are considered.

First, the language of 1 Corinthians does not support such a conclusion. For example, the terms used in 1 Cor 14:3 do not exclude "negative" prophecy provided that the ultimate goal of the word is "upbuilding and encouragement and consolation." As Matthias Wenk puts it, "prophetic speech is not intended to inform but rather to transform,"⁴⁷ this might require firm rebuke on occasion. The Greek word translated "encouragement" (*paraklēsin*) is broader than the English "encouragement", and may be translated "exhortation," which might well include warning and reproof. For example, the same word is used of John the Baptist's messages, which certainly included reproof, in Luke 3:18.⁴⁸ In fact, Paul's terms here are very broad and seem to have been chosen mainly to contrast prophecy with tongues.⁴⁹

Later in the same chapter, Paul gives an example of prophecy that reads like a case of reproof in which even "the secrets of the unbeliever's heart are disclosed" (1 Cor.14:24-25). Fee comments here that the verbs used "imply the deep probing work of the Holy Spirit in people's lives, whereby they have their sins exposed and they are called to account before the living God."⁵⁰

Secondly, the two detailed examples of prophecy in Acts (those by the prophet Agabus) contain what we might call "negative" predictions: in one case a widespread famine (Acts 11:28) and in the other the arrest and binding of Paul (Acts 21:11). But if (as Stronstad suggests and I argue below) we add the Spirit-inspired speeches in Acts, then this would include, for example, Stephen's "prophetic denunciation of the leaders of the nation of Israel."⁵¹

Thirdly, the ultimate New Testament prophetic book (Revelation) contains slabs of very threatening and warning prophecies, including parts of the messages to the seven churches in Rev 2-3, and describes two Christian prophets warning of, and modelling, judgement (Rev 11:3-6,10).

Fourthly, Jesus himself gave some very "negative" prophecies, especially his extended warning of the coming destruction of Jerusalem and its temple (Mark 13 and parallels).⁵²

Fifthly, Paul also made “negative” predictions both in letters (as in 1 Tim 4:1) and other speeches (such as Acts 20:29-30), as did other apostles (Jude 17-18).

Finally, both Peter (Acts 5:9-10) and Paul (Acts 13:10-12) made prophetic judgements over people that were immediately fulfilled.

The possibility of a Christian prophet giving a word of correction, warning or even judgement cannot therefore be definitively dismissed.

3. The Scope of Audience: Is New Testament prophecy always directed at Christians?

It is often claimed that New Testament prophecy, unlike its Old Testament counterpart, is never directed at nations, but only towards the church or individual Christians. For example, Chris Forbes argues that prophecy, as described by Paul and in Acts, “is overwhelmingly described as being an ‘in house’ phenomenon”⁵³ and, “there is virtually no evidence to suggest that Christian prophecy was practiced outside the gathering together of Christian groups... it is also addressed *to* the community, not *to* the wider world.”⁵⁴ Agabus’ two predictions, for example, while they conveyed information about events that would take place “outside” the church (a world-wide famine and an act of violence towards Paul), were given within the community which it would affect (Acts 11:28; 21:11).

This is partly correct (1 Cor 14:3-4,26-31), but the point should not be pressed too strongly. In *both* Testaments, most prophecy is directed at or to God’s people, those who are in covenant with Him, and is grounded in the nature of that covenant.⁵⁵ However, an element of Old Testament prophecy is directed to the (Gentile) nations, sufficient to establish the principle that God holds all nations accountable to Him. He may bring His judgements even those not bound to Him by covenant, as much as on Israel.⁵⁶ Moreover, we have evidence that such prophecies were not just spoken *to* Israel *about* the Gentiles but were often delivered *to* other nations, either directly by the prophet (as in the case of Jonah and Nineveh or Daniel’s words to Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar) or through another messenger (as in Jer 51:59-64) or even via foreign envoys to Jerusalem (as in Jer 27:3-11).

There is no evidence in the New Testament that this principle of accountability has been abrogated. Not counting the Book of Revelation, which seems to contain extended denunciations and threats of judgement

on the ancient world, other cases of prophetic words and predictions in the New Testament about the Gentile nations include: Paul's critique of the ancient Gentile world in Rom 1:18-32; his prediction of the rise of a "man of lawlessness" among the Gentiles in 2 Thess 2:3-12;⁵⁷ and the warning about the shaking of all nations in Heb 12:26-28. The New Testament affirms that "the time has come for judgement to begin with the household of God" (1 Pet 4:17), but it does not end there. The main warnings in the New Testament obviously have to do with the eschatological judgement of all human beings, but this does not rule out temporal judgements on individual nations such as we find in detail in the Old Testament.

There is also evidence of prophecy in the New Testament being addressed directly to non-Christians, and even having an evangelistic application. For instance, non-Christians who walked into a Christian meeting where prophecy was operating might well find themselves the object of prophetic reproof in which "the secrets of the unbeliever's heart are disclosed" (1 Cor 14:24-25),⁵⁸ leading to their conversion.⁵⁹ Jesus himself spoke prophetically in some of his interactions with people outside the Jewish fold, mostly notably the Samaritan woman (John 4:16-19). And his prophecy about the future work of the Holy Spirit suggests that it is partly directed at the world (John 16:8), which implies that all gifts of the Spirit (including prophecy) are not only "for the common good" of Christians (1 Cor 12:7) but have a further potential operation as part of, and in support of, the church's witness to the world (Heb 2:4).⁶⁰ A case in point is Paul's prophetic denunciation of the magician/false prophet Bar-Jesus (or Elymas), vindicated by his temporary blindness, which led to the conversion of the proconsul Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:6-12).

Revelation, while sent specifically to seven churches, is not restricted to their affairs. John is told to prophesy "about many peoples and nations and languages and kings" (Rev 10:11). His prophecy not only warns of final judgement but of penultimate, "this age" judgements on many nations. In it, he tells of two Christian prophets who "prophesy for one thousand two hundred sixty days" (Rev 11:3)⁶¹ in the public arena and in the teeth of great opposition and eventual martyrdom (Rev 11:3-10). Kay argues that Christian prophets are in a different position to their Old Testament predecessors because they are not operating in a theocracy.⁶² This is a valid point, but Old Testament prophets also spoke to rulers in "non-theocratic" contexts at times, as in the case of Daniel (and probably Jonah) and in situations of trial—to which I now turn.

There are many cases of speech by Christians which, though not called "prophecy", are directed towards "secular" or "religious" authorities

or non-Christians and attributed to the Holy Spirit. Jesus promises this to his followers in Matt 10:18-20 (emphasis added):

you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for *what you are to say* will be given to you at that time; for it is *not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you*.⁶³

This speech is formally “testimony” (Gr. *marturion*) but it could just as easily be called “prophecy” in that it is spontaneous inspired speech. Cases of this are multiplied in Acts 4:8-12 (Spirit-filled testimony to Jewish rulers); 4:31 (Spirit-filled bold speaking of the word of God); 7:55-56 (Spirit-filled vision testimony: revelation plus speech);⁶⁴ 8:29-35 (Spirit-led witness); 13:9-11 (Spirit-filled declaration of judgement immediately fulfilled); and other cases not specifically attributed to the Spirit (such as Stephen’s extended defence before the Sanhedrin, Paul’s speeches to Roman officials and King Agrippa in Acts 22-26).⁶⁵ These instances all seem to illustrate the saying in Rev 19:10: “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Similarly, witness and prophecy are described as equivalent activities in Rev 11: the two “witnesses” (v3) are engaged in prophesying (v3,6) and called prophets (v10).⁶⁶

The evidence in the New Testament, therefore, does not warrant a sharp restraint on the potential of Christian prophets to speak into the lives of individuals or nations outside the church.

4. The Scope of Revelation: Is Revelation a paradigmatic case of New Testament prophecy or a unique text?

Some readers may be worried by my use of examples from Revelation in the argument so far. The Book of Revelation is the most outstanding case in the New Testament of prophecy comparable to the classical Old Testament canonical prophets in its scope. As I have argued above, Revelation claims a Scripture-like level of prophetic authority, speaks words of judgement as well as hope, contains messages for or about the nations (not just the church) and portrays Christian prophets acting with “Old Testament-like” authority and power towards an international audience (Revelation 11). Accordingly, it seems to be a strong exception to the arguments put forward that New Testament prophecy was always more limited in scope and authority than that in the Old Testament, that it was nearly always positive and that it was addressed only to believers.

In order to sustain their arguments, then, writers like Grudem must urge that Revelation is a special case: not just an outstanding example of New Testament prophecy at its best but in a different category altogether, with few (or no) implications for the role of prophets today. As Grudem writes, “we have in this book an example of a New Testament apostle functioning as a prophet and writing for the church an extended prophecy,” “the authority which John claims is an absolute divine authority, like that claimed by the other apostles,” and therefore it “would not be appropriate” to look at Revelation for “evidence of what the gift of prophecy was like in ordinary New Testament churches.”⁶⁷ Similarly, Hill asserts that, “so far as the authority he claims and commands is concerned, he [John] stands closer to Jewish prophecy than to what we know of New Testament prophecy.”⁶⁸

Now it must be agreed that Revelation is unique in the New Testament prophetic material and has many features similar to classical and apocalyptic Old Testament prophecy.⁶⁹ Apart from the features discussed above (the blessing in Rev 1:3 and the “integrity formula” in Rev 22:18-19), Revelation resembles Old Testament prophetic books in several significant points.

First, it includes such standard prophetic fare as prophetic commissioning experiences (Rev 1:9-20; 10:1-11; compare Isa 6:1-13; Ezek 1-3),⁷⁰ visionary material (as in repeated use of the phrase “I saw”; compare Isa 6:1; Ezek 1:1,4; 8:2; Zech 1:8,18; 4:2; Jer 1:11; Dan 7:2),⁷¹ experiences of angelic revelatory beings (Rev 1:1; 4:6; 5:2; 7:1-3; 8:2-3; 10:1,58-10; 22:6; etc; compare Isa 6:2,6-7; Ezek 1:5; Zech 1:9; 4:1; Dan 7:16; 9:21), and prophetic actions such as eating a scroll (Rev 10:9-10; compare Ezek 3:1-3) and measuring the temple (Rev 11:1-2; compare Ezek 40-42).

Secondly, it has literary features parallel to Old Testament prophecy. For instance, it introduces the seven messages to the individual churches with a formula (“These are the words of...”) which is parallel to Old Testament introductory formulae (such as “thus says the LORD”;⁷² compare Ezek 3:11; 11:5; Hos 1:2; Amos 1:3; Obad 1; Hag 1:2). According to Murphy, “this Greek phrase is used more than 250 times in the Septuagint to translate the first two words of the Hebrew *kh'mr yhwh*, often translated 'Thus says the Lord'.” Similar oracular language occurs in several places, such as where John includes prophecies in the first person (Rev 1:8; 16:15; 21:5; 22:7,12-13,16,20).⁷³ Revelation is also structured somewhat like the longer Old Testament prophetic books (Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel) in the sense that it begins with judgements and concludes with words of hope for the future of God's people.

Third, its context is similar to that of Old Testament prophecy. Though it also speaks about the nations, as argued above, Revelation is addressed first of all to God's people, the "seven churches", in a situation where false prophecies were giving God's people false guidance and hope (Rev 2:20-23; compare Jer 23:9-40).⁷⁴

Finally, its message resembles that of Old Testament prophets. For example, it is based on God's covenant; in this case, the new covenant in Jesus Christ. This is clearest in the prophetic messages to the seven individual churches in Revelation 2-3, which open with references to the exalted Christ seen in chapter 1, contain exhortation based on values attributed to Jesus followed by positive and negative sanctions, and conclude with a general exhortation to listen to the voice of the Spirit.⁷⁵ Witherington concludes from these oracles that, "Christian prophets and seers like John saw themselves having a similar role to OT prophets as 'guardians and preservers of Christian behavior, beliefs, and customs.'"⁷⁶

Revelation includes both commentary on the current situation of the people of God⁷⁷ and prediction of future events, mostly near at hand, and usually conditional on their behaviour relative to the covenant.⁷⁸ Once again, this is clearest in the oracles of Revelation 2-3 but is a feature of the whole book. For example, in Rev 17-18 the prophet refers to the present (17:8,9-10,18) and the immediate future (17:8,10-14,16-17) and follows this with a prophetic lament, including an exhortation for God's people with a conditional element: "Come out of her, my people, so that you do not take part in her sins, and so that you do not share in her plagues" (18:4). This may be compared to many passages in the Old Testament prophets, such as Isaiah 1-10 with its analysis and predictions concerning the state of Israel-Judah and the forthcoming Assyrian invasion.

It is clear, then, that "John saw himself, not only as one of the Christian prophets, but also as standing in the tradition of Old Testament prophecy."⁷⁹ Revelation also contains at least one element more associated with apocalyptic in particular: it is a written document largely recording a continuous story of a single revelatory experience, as opposed to a collection of oracles given orally in a range of different contexts. It is thus, as Bauckham points out, "a far more elaborate and studied composition than any extemporary prophecy could have been."⁸⁰ Furthermore, it is a prophetic book full of Old Testament allusions—more so than any other book of the New Testament.⁸¹

But this does not imply that it has nothing in common with other prophetic activity in the New Testament and thus of no relevance to a general understanding of New Testament prophecy and prophets. In fact,

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza claims that “Rev. does not distinguish between John and the prophets or between the OT and early Christian prophets”⁸² and David Aune agrees that “the uniqueness of John as an early Christian prophet has been exaggerated.”⁸³

Revelation has a number of features in common with other prophecy described in the New Testament church.⁸⁴ First, it is focused on Jesus as the Messiah who has come and fulfilled Old Testament prophetic expectations (Rev 1:1,5-7; 5:5-10; etc; compare John 15:26; 16:13-14; 1 Cor 12:3; 1 John 4:1-3). As Schüssler Fiorenza points out, “the Christology of Rev. is structurally very similar to that of the Pauline and post-Pauline tradition.”⁸⁵

Secondly, it is addressed to believers and local churches (Rev 1:1,4,11,etc),⁸⁶ and is partly at least designed to encourage and comfort the Christian readers/hearers in the light of present and coming troubles. Thus John is speaking “to other people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation” (1 Cor 14:3). It is about the immediate situation of the hearers and also (at least partly) about future events soon to occur (Rev 1:1,3; 22:10; compare Agabus in Acts 11:28; 21:11). Among other things, this allows the prophecy to be “weighed” by its readers (1 Cor 14:29). Its prophecies are placed in the context of a pastoral letter (Rev 1:4-8)⁸⁷ as are most of the prophecies of Paul.

Moreover, although Revelation is a written text, it was born in a quasi-liturgical setting (“I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day”, Rev 1:10) and is strongly liturgical in flavour. It also contains oracles that might normally have been uttered orally in the Spirit (such as Rev 2-3) and the whole text is meant to be read aloud in the gatherings of the seven churches (Rev 1:3-4,11; compare 1 Cor 14:24-31).⁸⁸ As Jean-Pierre Ruiz argues, “the evidence of Rev 1:3 and 1:10 makes it clear almost beyond dispute that John’s Apocalypse was destined for oral recitation in a ritual setting.” Fekkes claims that “the vision(s) could hardly have been given in a cultic setting. There is little reported precedent for such a lengthy apocalyptic prophecy being related directly in the assembly...”⁸⁹ However, as he goes on to show, vision reports (such as the Christian apocalypse *Shepherd of Hermas*) could be received and recorded privately and then read aloud in church settings.⁹⁰

Thirdly, Revelation frequently attributes its prophetic words to the Holy Spirit (Rev 2:7; etc; 14:13; compare Acts 11:28; 13:2; 21:4,11; 1 Cor 12:10-11).

Finally, some of the features Revelation shares with Old Testament prophecy are also found in other places in the New Testament: for example, prophetic commissioning narratives (Acts 22:6-15; Gal.1:15), prophetic actions (Acts 21:11), visions (Acts 10:10-16; 2 Cor 12:1-4), angelic messengers (Acts 10:3-6; 27:23-24) and prophetic conflict (1 John 4:1-6).

It is also important to note that John nowhere calls himself an apostle and never claims any kind of apostolic authority over the seven churches to which he is writing.⁹¹ His authority is purely prophetic: it is based on the assumption that he is speaking at Christ's direction (even dictation) and under the Spirit's inspiration.⁹² Revelation calls itself "prophecy" (Rev 1:3; 22:7,10,18,19), a term used in the New Testament of Old Testament material (Matt 13:14; 2 Pet 1:20-21) but also of prophetic activity within the church (Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:10; 1 Tim 1:18; 4:14).

And though he claims to be in a sense above criticism (in contrast to 1 Cor 14:29), and asserts that his prophetic words are "trustworthy and true" (Rev 21:5; 22:6) and must not be tampered with (Rev 22:18-19), *in fact* he is submitting his prophecy for "weighing up" by the seven churches, whom he hopes will "listen to what the Spirit is saying" (Rev 2:7 and parallels). This is contrary to the frequent assertion that "John has no interest in having his prophecy tested or evaluated by others and leaves no room to do so."⁹³ Fekkes allows that John approves of testing of claims to authority (Rev 2:2) and that "we do not know what kind of response John's book received in the churches."⁹⁴ However, both these concessions undermine the claim he and others make that John's strong claims to authority prevent his prophecies being tested by the churches.

We can agree that John is confident of his credibility among his audience and that he makes Scripture-like claims (as argued above) without attributing to him a resistance to all evaluation. The phrasing here ("he who has an ear") and the repetition of the exhortation may even be taken to imply that not all the hearers would accept it.⁹⁵ But what in fact happened over the next few decades and centuries was that the church did "weigh" this prophecy and found it valuable and trustworthy, so much so that it was included in what became the New Testament. But this does not mean Revelation is in a different category to New Testament prophecy in general; rather it should be seen, "as a genuine expression of early Christian prophecy whose basic experience and understanding is apocalyptic,"⁹⁶ indeed as an outstanding paradigmatic case of New Testament prophesying. It thus helps to narrow the gap between Old and New Testament prophetic activity and to broaden the scope of Christian prophesying.

This does not mean that current Christian prophets can expect to function with the same level of authority as John or that their words could in special cases be canonised.⁹⁷ Extending the canon would indeed be opening a “can of worms.” But it does imply that New Testament prophets can sometimes speak about areas beyond local (even individual) concerns, as Agabus did with his prediction of world-wide famine (Acts 11:28; compare Rev 11:6), can bring words of correction, warning and rebuke as well as positive encouragement (Rev 2-3), may at times prophesy powerful plagues on an unbelieving world (Rev 11:6; compare Acts 13:9-11) and can command a hearing beyond their own local congregation, though not on the basis of a claim to apostolic authority.

Concluding Thoughts: Releasing the Prophets.

If my argument so far is sustained, there are some clear implications for how prophets should operate in the contemporary church. It would suggest that the church needs to make room for proven prophets to operate with a minimum of restrictions as to how, and to whom, and about what, they speak. This has the potential to release a powerful prophetic ministry into the church and from the church into the wider world. As John Goldingay puts it, “If prophetic ministry is exercised today, then, we should expect this to reduce the domestication of God that characterizes us as evangelicals and charismatics.”⁹⁸ Such a change would certainly make our experience of God more vital and life-transforming.

Such a release of prophecy could, of course, produce huge problems. The first and most obvious one is false or spurious prophecy. Most readers of this article would know of recent cases of both local and trans-local false prophecies and self-appointed prophets who frequently appeal (mistakenly, in my view) to Jeremiah as a precedent for their activities. They have often brought contemporary prophecy into disrepute and provided ammunition for cessationists and non-Christians. But this is nothing new. Both Old and New Testament prophets had to contend with competition from false prophets. The answer to this problem is not to suppress or reject all prophecy, as perhaps the Thessalonians were tempted to do (1 Thess 5:19-20), but to “test” it (1 Thess 5:21; 1 Cor 14:29; 1 John 4:1).⁹⁹

The second problem, which we do not always acknowledge, is that prophecy and prophets can cause trouble, *especially when they are speaking from the Lord*. Their words often challenge the status quo, put church leaders into difficult positions and even provoke persecution and criticism from non-Christians. We would rather not have such people around disturbing the peace, but we need them just as the seven churches of Asia needed the Spirit's messages through John (Rev 2-3).

Both problems point to the need for accountability on the part of prophets. All prophets, even the most credible and powerful, need to operate within recognised structures of accountability, not either demanding obedience from churches nor refusing to listen to correction or disagreement from other church leaders. After all, as Christians they are part of, not above, the body of Christ and as such must “be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph 5:21).¹⁰⁰

Finally, the repute and effectiveness of prophets would be enhanced if church leaders and experienced prophets took a hand in mentoring, encouraging and training emerging prophets, and correcting them, so that their words become more accurate and their lives don’t fall apart.¹⁰¹

How all this might look in specific situations will obviously vary, but there is the possibility that great blessing and power may flow if the prophets are released.¹⁰²

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Endnotes

1. See, for example, John Bevere, *Thus Saith the Lord?* (Lake Mary: Creation House, 1999). Shane Clifton points to a similar dilemma facing Pentecostal academics embracing a "prophetic responsibility" in his editorial in *Australasian Pentecostal Studies* 12 (2009).
2. I am not suggesting that all, or any, of the ideas I criticize in this article represent the majority or dominant view among Pentecostals and charismatics anywhere. However, they are views I have encountered in thirty years of Pentecostal ministry and reading.
3. Cf. Ernest B. Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy* (Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 1999), 150ff.
4. Jan Fekkes III, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 29.
5. For an account of the prophetic ministry of the most prominent apostles and leaders in the primitive church, see Roger Stronstad, *The Prophethood*

of *All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), Chapters 5-6. On Paul as prophet, see Kevin Giles, *Patterns of Ministry Among the First Christians* (Blackburn North: Collins Dove, 1989), 138.

6. The relationship between apostles and prophets in the New Testament church (and the concept of apostles in itself) is complex and beyond the scope of this article to explore in depth. Certainly the clear-cut subordination of prophets to apostles argued for by writers such as Grudem is oversimplified. "Apostles and prophets" are sometimes associated as equals, if not as equivalent terms (e.g. Eph.2:20; 3:5). In other places, they are clearly differentiated (e.g. Eph.4:11) and prophets are ranked "second" (e.g. 1 Cor.12:28). Certainly not all prophets are apostles: this seems clear from Paul's discussion in 1 Cor.14 and the examples of prophets named in Acts (e.g. Agabus, Judas and Silas and perhaps Philip's daughters). Paul appears to claim an apostolic authority over local prophets in Corinth in 1 Cor.14:37. For discussion of the relationship between prophets and other leaders in the early church, cf Jon K. Newton, "Holding Prophets Accountable", *JEPTA* 30.1 (2010): 73-76.
7. Stronstad, *Prophethood of All Believers*, 15. See also *Ibid.*, 65-70; Robert P. Menzies, *Empowered for Witness* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 202.
8. See Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 188f, on the balance here.
9. Wayne Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1988), 20, 78. This view may be supported from Deut 18:18-19 and the common introductory phrase, "thus says the LORD". See also Graham Houston, *Prophecy Now* (Leicester: IVP, 1989), 30.
10. Grudem, *Prophecy*, 67.
11. See comments in Gentile, *Sons and Daughters*, 207.
12. Grudem, *Prophecy*, 67-114. Comp Gentile, *Sons and Daughters*, 172-176.
13. Grudem, *Prophecy*, 115-121.
14. Cf Grudem, *Prophecy*, 13. Much of Grudem's argument is shaped by the need to counter such cessationism in the light of his acceptance of the cessationist premise in the case of Old Testament prophecy and New Testament apostleship. Comp. Jon Ruthven, "The 'Foundational Gifts' of Ephesians 2.20", *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 10 (2002):28-43 and see comments in Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 892.
15. Cf. David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 5.
16. Gerald T. Sheppard, "Prophecy: From Ancient Israel to Pentecostals at the End of the Modern Age", *The Spirit and Church* 3.1 (2001): 55.

17. William K. Kay, *Prophecy!* (Nottingham: Lifestream Publications, 1991), 36.
18. Incidentally, the prophecies given by the disobedient prophet were valid and fulfilled (1 Kgs 13:1-6; 2 Kgs 23:15-17).
19. Another case is Huldah's prophecy that King Josiah would die in peace without seeing the disaster of the captivity (2 Chr 34:28). While Josiah didn't live to see the captivity, he was killed in battle, hardly a peaceful death (2 Chr 35:23-24). The author of Chronicles does not explain this but it appears that his premature death was the result of his own foolish decision to engage the king of Egypt in battle (2 Chr 35: 20-22). See also Ellison, *Men Spake*, 17ff, and Randall E. Otto, "The Prophets and Their Perspective", *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 63 (2001):223ff, for two contrasting perspectives on unfulfilled prophecy in the Old Testament.
20. Space precludes a full argument for this point here. Cf. Newton, "Holding Prophets Accountable," 70-72.
21. Otto, "Prophets and Perspective," 225. Jack Deere also argues that Deut 18 does not require prophets to be completely error free (*Surprised by the Voice of God*; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996: 362ff).
22. Aune, *Prophecy*, 135-143; Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 26.
23. Commentators nowadays are divided over whether or not all prophecy was believed to have ceased after Malachi. Fekkes claims such an idea has been "dismissed by modern scholars" (*Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 26). Aune argues that prophecy did not disappear but rather underwent radical changes (*Prophecy*, 81, 103-147). Stronstad, on the other hand, argues that "with a few exceptions... prophecy had ceased in Israel" (*Prophethood of All Believers*, 39) and Menzies supports a similar conclusion with his assessment of evidence from Josephus, Philo and rabbinic literature (Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 55f,61,84-87). Certainly the passages often appealed to in 1 Maccabees (4:41-46; 9:27; 14:41), 2 Baruch 85:3 and Psalm 74:9 do not seem to support such a generalised conclusion, but rather seem to refer to a particular period in Israel's history. In fact, using Psalm 74:9 to support the conclusion that prophecy had disappeared seems self-refuting if Psalm 74 is validly part of the Old Testament canon. On these passages, and especially *Tosefta Sotah* 13:2-4, see the careful discussion in Max Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: Then and Now* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996), 190ff. Perhaps the consensus behind these varying conclusions is that prophecy was less frequent and of lower quality in the "intertestamental" period. The evidence clearly suggests that, on the one hand, prophetic activity still continued (cf. Giles, *Patterns of Ministry*, 129) and, on the other, no prophecies were accepted by the Jewish community as equal to the scriptural examples. As Keener comments, "while there may have existed in various circles a belief that prophets no longer existed as they had in biblical times, no one, including the rabbis,

- denied that revelatory experiences continued to be possible" (Craig S. Keener, *The Spirit in the Gospels and Acts*; Peabody: Hendrickson: 15) and "particularly outside the rabbinic literature, prophecy was generally not believed to have ceased" (Ibid., 16).
24. Cf Gentile, *Sons and Daughters*, 152. See also Ibid., 32f.
 25. Grudem, *Prophecy*, 79f; comp H.L. Ellison, *Men Spake From God* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1966), 17.
 26. Grudem, *Prophecy*, 36.
 27. The term "frenzy" in the NRSV arises from the description of what happens rather than the Hebrew text, which simply uses the ordinary terminology for prophesying. Turner suggests it may have been "some kind of invasively inspired worship rather than specifically oracular intelligible speech" (*Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*, 189).
 28. Comp Psalm 1:1-3; Luke 11:28; Matt.7:24,26.
 29. Aune, *Revelation 1-5* (Word Biblical Comentary; Dallas: Word Books, 1997),11.
 30. Aune, *Revelation 17-22* (Word Biblical Comentary; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1231.
 31. Aune, *Revelation 17-22*, 1209.
 32. G.K.Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 1151. See also Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 56f; Frederick J. Murphy, *Fallen Is Babylon: the Revelation to John* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998), 439.
 33. David Hill, "Prophecy and Prophets in the Revelation of St John;" *New Testament Studies* 18 (1972):416.
 34. New Testament prophetic words are frequently attributed to the Holy Spirit (cf Crinisor Stefan, "The Paraclete and Prophecy in the Johannine Community;" *Pneuma* 27.2; 2005: 278f).
 35. Cf Gentile, *Sons and Daughters*, 200.
 36. Cf Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 202,607.
 37. Cf Stronstad, *Prophethood of All Believers*, Chapters 5-6. I have omitted discussion of the prophetic activity described in Luke's "infancy narratives" and the ministry of John the Baptist; this seems to be at the top end of the scale of prophetic authority whether classified as Old or New Testament.
 38. The identity of these two prophets or witnesses is hotly debated. Were they actual figures of the early church, e.g. Peter and Paul? Were they representative of the prophetic-witnessing activity of the whole church or "the messianic remnant" of the Jews (cf. Rev 19:10)? Or are they literal future prophets who minister just before the parousia? Cf Hill, "Prophecy and

- Prophets,” 407f; David E. Aune, *Revelation 6-16* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 598-603. The OT figures on which the two prophets are modelled is also debatable, but according to Aune (Ibid., 600), “most modern scholars... think that the author intended to use Moses and Elijah as prophetic models.”
39. As argued recently by Robby Waddell, *The Spirit of the Book of Revelation* (Blandford Forum: Deo, 2006), 170-188.
 40. Perhaps implied by Paul when he writes about people prophesying “in proportion to faith” (Rom.12:6). Cf. Grudem, *Prophecy*, 208f; Turner, *Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*, 211.
 41. This could also be quite “powerful” and disruptive, to judge from passages such as 2 Thess 2:2, 1 John 4:1-3, Acts 16:17 and Rev 2:20-23. Cf. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 27f.
 42. The signs given when believers were filled with the Holy Spirit, including tongues, were prophetic in nature, indicating that the Spirit came as “the Spirit of prophecy” (Stronstad, *Prophethood of All Believers*, 69,108). Grudem (*Prophecy*, 92) compares Acts 19:6 with the companies of prophets associated with Elijah and Elisha. Turner compares it with 1 Sam 10 and 19 and Num.11 (*Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*, 194).
 43. This does not depend on a Futurist or Historicist view of Revelation. Most interpreters of all interpretive schools find at least some (short-term and long-term) prediction in Revelation, e.g. the description of the final judgement in Rev.20:11-15.
 44. Jer 28:8-9 suggests this was normal, though even Jeremiah gave positive predictions at times
 45. See discussion in Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 219f.
 46. See discussion in Gentile, *Sons and Daughters*, 144-153.
 47. Matthias Wenk, “The Creative Power of the Prophetic Dialogue,” *Pneuma* 26.1 (2004): 119. Comp. Graham Cooke, *Developing Your Prophetic Gifting* (Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 2003), 124f.
 48. Fekkes claims that 1 Cor 14:3 “reveals nothing about the content of prophetic speech” (*Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 29); I wouldn't go this far.
 49. Cf. Christopher Forbes, *Prophecy and Inspired Speech* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1997), 237f; Turner, *Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*, 201f.
 50. Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 245. Comp. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 30f and Kay, *Prophecy!*, 59f.
 51. Stronstad, *Prophethood of All Believers*, 90.
 52. These warnings by Jesus were largely for the sake of His disciples, to help them withstand persecution and warn them to get out of Jerusalem at the

- appropriate time (e.g. Mark 13:9-19). For a modern parallel, where Armenian Pentecostals were given advance warning of coming trouble and directed to migrate to the USA, see Gentile, *Sons and Daughters*, 93ff.
53. *Inspired Speech*, 22. See also Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 42.
 54. *Inspired Speech*, 246. Comp Giles, *Patterns of Ministry*, 147f; L. Thomas Holdcroft, *The Holy Spirit: A Pentecostal Interpretation* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1979), 170.
 55. Cf John Goldingay, "Old Testament Prophecy Today"; *The Spirit and Church* 3.1 (2001):34f.
 56. Examples include Isa 13-23; Jer 46-51; Ezek 25-32; Amos 1:1-2:5; Obadiah; Jonah; Nahum. .
 57. Assuming that this was written by Paul. But even if not, it would still reflect early church practice.
 58. Cf. Cooke, *Developing Prophetic Gifting*, 36f.
 59. Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 246; see also Yongan Jeon Ann, "Prophecy in the Pauline Communities;" *The Spirit and Church* 3.1 (2001): 88f.
 60. I have experienced this myself as part of a ministry in the Melbourne (Australia) MindBodySpirit festival which attracts thirty thousand plus spiritual seekers every year. The interdenominational team assembled each year under the banner of the "School of the Prophets" spoke into people's lives with prophecies, "words of knowledge", interpretations of dreams and healing prayers.
 61. Even in the Reformation era, there were valid prophets who pronounced God's judgements on individuals and cities (Deere, *Surprised*, 70-78).
 62. Kay, *Prophecy!*, 65.
 63. Cf. Stronstad, *Prophethood of All Believers*, 60.
 64. Indeed the whole ministry of Stephen is prophetic in power and scope (Stronstad, *Prophethood of All Believers*, 16f, 87-90).
 65. Cf. Gentile, *Sons and Daughters*, 191ff; Stronstad, *Prophethood of All Believers*, 74, 82ff, 118f. Stronstad argues convincingly that the language Luke uses in Acts shows that he sees Spirit-filled witness as prophetic in nature.
 66. See discussion in Waddell, *Spirit in Revelation*, 26-33, 189-191.
 67. Grudem, *Prophecy*, 43f, 110.
 68. Hill, "Prophecy and Prophets," 410. Comp. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 57f.
 69. The extended debate about the genre of Revelation, which included argument about whether it should be seen as primarily prophecy or apocalyptic writing (like Daniel, 1 Enoch, etc), seems to have come to a broad consen-

sus that Revelation is both prophetic and apocalyptic or prophetic-apocalyptic. Apocalyptic writing should be seen as a sub-class of prophecy. Cf. Aune, *Revelation*, 1-5, lxxv-xc; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 37-39; Richard Bauckham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 4-12. For an extended argument that Revelation is more like classical prophecy than apocalyptic, see F.D. Mazzaferi, *The Genre of the Book of Revelation from a Source-Critical Perspective* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1989).

70. Cf. Mazzaferi, *Genre of Revelation*, 102f; Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, liv; Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 51f, 73f (Fekkes identifies four common elements in the call narratives of John, Isaiah and Ezekiel).
71. Perhaps his reports of “hearing” are even more relevant in terms of similarity to OT prophecy, as argued by M. Eugene Boring, “The Apocalypse as Christian Prophecy” (in George MacRae, ed., *SBL 1974 Seminar Papers*, vol.2; Cambridge, US: Society of Biblical Literature, 1974), 47.
72. Murphy, *Fallen Is Babylon*, 101. Aune, however, points out that the phrase was also used occasionally in pagan oracles and Persian decrees (David E. Aune, *Apocalypticism, Prophecy, and Magic in Early Christianity*; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008:217f). Cf. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 53f;
73. Cf. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 54f.
74. Cf. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 50f.
75. What Aune calls a “proclamation formula” that functions as a “prophetic signature”; these often introduce OT prophetic oracles (Aune, *Apocalypticism, Prophecy, and Magic*, 222).
76. Ben Witherington III, *Revelation* (New Cambridge Bible Commentary; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 41; partly quoting from Aune, *Prophecy*, 277.
77. This is one way in which Revelation differs from most apocalypses and resembles classical OT prophecy (Cf. Bauckham, *Theology of Revelation*, 7,12). Of course apocalypses were also written for the current situation of the readers, but in the guise of ancient prophecy now coming to fulfilment (cf. D.S. Russell, *The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*; London: SCM Press, 1964: 99).
78. Of course, there are other predictions which seem unconditional and deterministic (e.g. Rev 1:1; 22:6) but this should not obscure the many conditional statements (e.g. Rev 22:18-19). See also Mazzaferi, *Genre of Revelation*, 135,140,366f.
79. Bauckham, *Theology of Revelation*, 4.
80. Bauckham, *Theology of Revelation*, 3. Mazzaferi argues that John's written communication is determined by his situation of exile rather than generic considerations (*Genre of Revelation*, 330).

81. Exactly how many allusions are made in Revelation to the OT is hard to determine, since the author gives few literary clues to tell us when he is making such allusions. Estimates range from 195 to 1000 (Cf. Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 77, n.16; Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Book of Revelation*; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001: 17f; Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 62). This feature of Revelation is also parallel to at least some OT prophets, who frequently allude to themes in the earlier Scriptural texts, as in Isaiah's "new exodus" passages; Revelation also has many allusions to the Exodus (Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 80f).
82. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *The Book of Revelation: Justice and Judgment* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 136. See also *Ibid.*, 133, 149ff and Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 50.
83. Aune, *Prophecy*, 207. Aune considers that John may have been one of a circle or guild of Christian prophets analogous to the "schools" of prophets in the OT (Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, liv). See also Bauckham, *Theology of Revelation*, 2.
84. Some years ago, M. Eugene Boring ("Apocalypse as Christian Prophecy", 44-62) constructed a list of features of early Christian prophecy gleaned exclusively from Revelation, suggesting that the differences between Revelation and other Christian prophecy are more "in degree than in kind" and hence that Revelation "might still serve as a source of information on prophetism in some Asia Minor churches" (*Ibid.*, 56). As he did not go on to investigate whether or not these features are also found in other New Testament sources, his conclusions are not definitive, but they certainly show that treating Revelation as an exemplar of Christian prophecy is a viable task. Comp. Fiorenza, *Justice and Judgment*, 149.
85. Fiorenza, *Justice and Judgment*, 148.
86. Compare Agabus in Acts 11:28-29, Judas and Silas in Acts 15:32 and the context of Paul's instructions in 1 Cor 14
87. Cf. Robert W. Wall, *Revelation* (New International Biblical Commentary. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991), 13; Bauckham, *Theology of Revelation*, 12-17; Beale, *Book of Revelation*, 38f; Aune, *Revelation 1-5*, lxxii-lxxv.
88. J-P Ruiz, "Betwixt and Between on the Lord's Day: Liturgy and the Apocalypse" (in Eugene H. Lovering, ed., *SBL 1992 Seminar Papers*; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 663. Cf. Bauckham, *Theology of Revelation*, 3f.
89. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 42.
90. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 43-49. Revelation "contains both oracular speech and vision experiences" as is shown by some of its formal literary elements (*Ibid.*, 47). See also Boring, "Apocalypse as Christian Prophecy", 54; David E. Aune, "The Apocalypse of John and the Problem

- of Genre”; *Semeia* 36 (1986): 81.
91. This does rule out the possibility that he was the apostle John, the son of Zebedee, as traditionally affirmed by the majority of the church, and does not negate the idea that it was accepted into the canon on this assumption.
 92. Cf. Turner, *Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts*, 211; Fiorenza, *Justice and Judgment*, 151; Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 66..
 93. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 57.
 94. Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions*, 57, n.116.
 95. Cf. Aune, *Prophecy*, 207f.
 96. Fiorenza, *Justice and Judgment*, 140.
 97. Sang-Whan Lee seems to come close to saying this by repudiating the idea that prophecy is inferior or subordinate to the biblical revelation, suggesting instead that there is an ongoing revelation in history and prophecy can add to the revelation in Scripture in significant ways (“Pentecostal Prophecy”; *The Spirit and Church* 3.1, 2001: 166-169). In one sense this is unexceptional but could make way for “new doctrine”, an idea that nearly all Pentecostals, not to mention other Christians, would reject.
 98. Goldingay, “Old Testament Prophecy Today”, 40. See also Stronstad, *Prophethood of All Believers*, 123.
 99. Cf. Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 58-61. How this can be done is a subject in itself.
 100. For further discussion of this theme, see Newton, “Holding Prophets Accountable”, 63-72.
 101. As argued powerfully in Rickie D. Moore, “The Prophet as Mentor: A Crucial Facet of the Biblical Presentation of Moses, Elijah and Isaiah”; *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 15 (2007):155-172.
 102. One of the best proposals for how this might happen is presented in Cooke, *Developing Prophetic Gift*, especially 217-288. See also Gentile, *Sons and Daughters*, 259

NEXT GENERATION ESSAY:

The Evolving Theological Emphasis of Hillsong Worship (1996–2007)

Tanya Riches

Even if not attending Sydney's largest Pentecostal congregation between 1996 and 2006, most Pentecostal/charismatic Christians would recognise some or even many song titles published by Hillsong Music Australia (HMA) during this time. In 2000, the organisational rebranding of two large independent Australian congregations (Hills Christian Life Centre and Sydney Christian Life Centre) into Hillsong Church reflected the unique success of this music publisher's expansion. Senior Pastors Brian and Bobbie Houston currently oversee nine international campuses. The Hillsong name associated with at least two generations of church rock bands (including "Hillsong Live" and "United".¹ 1996 to 2007) through what was arguably Hillsong's period of greatest change. In a single decade the church and its' associated music operation grew exponentially, from a backyard outfit in Sydney's Hills District into a multi-million dollar industry. These eleven years spanned the employment of Hillsong's most famous worship pastor, Darlene Zschech, and two interim worship music leaders, Donna Crouch and Phillip Dooley. Zschech's resignation as worship pastor of Hillsong Church in early 2007 acts as a logical endpoint from which to reflect and acknowledge her achievements in this role, with a staggering amount of chart-topping product – more than twenty CDs, and twelve live VHS and DVD recordings added to HMA's anthology. Representing a defined "era" of Hillsong music, these songs permeated the liturgy of many contemporary churches. While HMA's 1996 recording showcases Zschech dancing to show-stopping black gospel tune 'God is In The House', and belting out the sweet ballad 'Potter's Hand', this album also marked the introduction and increasing involvement of a younger generation of musicians. This inclusion and training of younger musicians and songwriters could arguably be considered Zschech's greatest achievement. The deliberate adjustment of personnel, repertoire and product contributed to the longevity of this church music publisher, leading to the rejuvenated musical identity it enjoys today (under Joel Houston as Creative Director). Songs written during these eleven years unified Hillsong Gen-

erations - the tunes to which Baby Boomers made the kids' lunches; anthems to which Gen X swayed with arms lifted high at stadium rock concerts, and songs which encapsulate Gen Y's Christian childhood memories.

Hillsong Church currently attracts an estimated 21,000 members internationally, with its operational base located in Sydney's Hills District.² Pioneered in 1989, the church is an independent member church of the Australian Christian Churches (ACC)³ denomination. It began in Baulkham Hills Highschool, subsequently converting a warehouse into auditorium and office space. In the mid-1990s, the church hired a facility known as 'The Hills Entertainment Centre', before in 2000 purchasing property in nearby Norwest Business Park, where it constructed a purpose-built 1000-seat auditorium. An additional 3,500-seat auditorium was opened by Australian Prime Minister John Howard in 2002.⁴ Along with its' exponential growth, Hillsong Church has encountered opposition, mainly with regard to its organisational structures and business ethos. Senior Pastor Brian Houston comments in interview:

I think the idea of a church being big and successful and effective threatens some people. And there are certain people who point at motives and try to make them shallow or try to marginalize our motives.⁵

And while it is true that this Pentecostal church is occasionally besieged by Sydney's influential secular media (and some religious organisations, such as Sydney Anglican media), for many, Hillsong Church is all but invisible apart from its' music. American hymnologist Michael Hawn states, "The music of Hillsong is undoubtedly the best-known church music export from Australia to the world,"⁶ and yet "... for classically trained church musicians and traditional hymn lovers, Hillsong is like the proverbial elephant in the room apparent to all, but totally ignored or dismissed."⁷

This paper emerged in the context of research for an MPhil thesis, aiming to contribute towards understanding between Christians of diverse liturgical styles. The author noted that often—even among performers presenting at Christian music events and festivals—basic understanding was lacking. Not only is liturgical style acknowledged as a key contributor to church splits, full-scale "worship wars" are observed in North America and across the world. *How* we gather around Christ's name seems overall to be a dividing rather than unifying issue. For most people, reaction to the 'other' seems to begin with criticism rather than grace, suggesting the

need for research to examine the strengths of the ways other Christians worship, assisting informed dialogue between worshippers. Also, as a new millennium unfolds it is important to reflect upon current liturgical models, examining them carefully for eternal truths that must be stewarded in the midst of the changing ‘contemporary’. In the context of a relative lack of informed writing on Pentecostal worship, its’ aims and practices, the need for foundational works in this area was clear, particularly regarding recent Australian Pentecostal worship history and “the Hillsong story”.⁸ And so, the author found herself dusting off her old recordings, recovering her lime green choir shirt from the cupboard and singing herself through her own experiences of the 1990s as a member of Hillsong’s church worship team.

A Framework for Liturgical Discussion

In constructing a framework to begin discussion on liturgical music, it is necessary to acknowledge the wide chasms that divide Christians on this subject. Catholic liturgist Gerard Moore’s article entitled ‘Appreciating Worship in All Its’ Variety’ (*The Australian Journal of Liturgy*) acknowledges the contribution of Hillsong and other Pentecostal churches towards contemporary worship practice.¹⁰ Moore analyzes Sydney’s liturgical landscape under three main paradigms: ‘experience’, ‘teaching’ and ‘ritual’. While arguably a fourth, “emergent” paradigm could be added, recognition of these paradigms is fundamental to any useful conversation on worship. Moore establishes three necessary elements required for worship. The Bible (i.e. the teaching and informing function of the Word) is crucial in order to attain truthful worship in a way that engages the *Spirit*, allowing for an experience of the *Holy*. Yet inevitably, no matter how informal, every worship service is also “... governed by the rules of ritual performance”. Moore explains:

What is important is that all three, as essential ingredients of every act of worship, are present and operative in each worshipper. Yet it seems that we do not and indeed cannot approach worship from the standpoint of all three. Rather, and this is the crux of the issue, we tend to reflect upon liturgy using one of the three as the primary lens or horizon through which we view the other two.¹¹

He considers that, “... a balance between all three is probably unattainable and even unwanted. There can be only one primary lens, nevertheless an integrated approach is necessary”.¹²

In contrast to those whose “first movement is through teaching and ritual”,¹³ however, for Pentecostals their first movement is an ‘experiential’ paradigm, music:

... enabled them to achieve what was for them the key ingredient of good worship, an experience of the freedom of the Spirit. All other aspects of the service, then, were understood through the lens of this type of experience, and their success or otherwise.¹⁴

Borrowing heavily from American Pentecostal ritologist Daniel Albrecht’s integration of his Pentecostal faith and heritage in the book *Rites of the Spirit*,¹⁵ this study of HMA text will seek to be based in, and representative of the unique nuances of an experiential paradigm.

Research Questions

Three main elements of HMA’s resource are integral to understanding Hillsong’s contribution to contemporary worship: its theological emphasis, its musical repertoire and performance, and its music business practice. Development in these areas can be considered of key interest to understanding Hillsong and its continued success. Within the constraints of this article, the first element only - theological emphasis - will be examined as a case study applied to the lyric (or text) of the songs published by HMA (as ‘contemporary worship text’). The inquiry may be understood through three questions:

1. What degree of consistency in textual style and content can be seen in the text of HMA music between 1996 and 2007?
2. What changes in theological emphasis and style are evident?
3. What influences may be identified behind these changes?

The following discussion will focus upon contemporary worship text as an introduction to this area.

The Importance of Lyric or Text

Text is a particularly important element of any Christian music. For some authors, text is the *primary* feature of the worship song genre. According to Steve Turner “... it [contemporary Christian music] is the only musical category recognised in the record industry that is defined entirely by lyrical content”.¹⁶ Pecklers even considers congregational music the first vehicle of theology within a service, as “... the Church expresses what it believes in worship even before these beliefs are studied or ana-

lyzed".¹⁷ The order of most liturgies means that music usually precedes any exposition of the Bible or preaching, and is therefore the first impression a visitor has of a church's beliefs. While hymns place priority upon historicity (emphasizing tradition and identity), contemporary choruses place priority upon present meaning, evaluated most effectively through the combination of individual responses. (However, this divide is not a complete polarisation, as HMA does record adaptations of hymns and traditional text). On the other hand, authors such as Dawn¹⁸ and Peterson critique contemporary worship, citing theological inadequacy and weak textual features.¹⁹

Such music plays a particularly important role in most Pentecostal traditions, shaping the public confession of beliefs, and creating a common narrative sung by church members. As Scott Ellington explains:

It has been widely argued in emerging Pentecostal theology that Pentecostalism is an orally-based, narratively-expressed tradition, and that testimonies of what God has done in the life of the individual believer and the local community of faith form an integral part of Pentecostal worship and faith.²⁰

Unlike the lyric of secular albums or even of Christian artists, HMA text represents beliefs and values sung by Hillsong's entire community. While songs both represent and reinforce the theological views of the church worship text is not intended to represent the entire systematic theology of the church, but to encourage and challenge believers with Spirit-inspired meditations pertinent to their context. Instated as teaching pastors of Hillsong Church with the acquisition of the City campus in 2000, Robert and Amanda Fergusson (among other functions) provide editorial oversight for songtext. Believing the distinctive of a worship chorus is the exposition of only one theme, Amanda advocates efficiency with words asking, "If one syllable will do then why use two?"²¹ Accepting a range of contemporary styles, she recommends those that appeal to the congregation.²² The congregation actively assesses each song as it is presented, with their responses gauged as indicative of their views. Joel Houston asserts: "... Ultimately, the song is decided on by the crowd. If people sing it, it's good. If it doesn't go over well with them, then it's not. It's the congregation who decides".²³ Songs deemed popular with the congregation are recorded, others are excluded after trial.²⁴ Text is thus also portrayed as a measure of the congregation's maturity. "... Every time we record a live album", Zschech comments, "it's a magnificent night. It's a snapshot of twelve months growth in the heart of a local church."²⁵ More realistically, however, songs reaching the congregation have already been selected from the

large number submitted). By virtue of inclusion, published songs represent a decision by Hillsong leadership that these are the best songs produced within that year, and worthwhile commending to other churches. Songtext is thus a reflection of the generally accepted understandings of both Hillsong's leadership and congregation at that time.

Rather than articles, books or denominational papers, in an experiential worship paradigm, liturgy provides space for learning, discussion and revision of beliefs. As Peter Althouse comments:

Experience as a form of encounter is recognized for its characteristics as constructed, intentional, derivative, and dialectical ... It enters as a moment of discontinuity into a larger, already established context. It is interruptive since, if it were simply continuous with what is already operative, it would not need to be adverted to precisely as "experience." ... Thus, the insertion invites consideration, discussion, revision, change.²⁶

This implies that changes within HMA text over this period are important and meaningful—indeed, as Mark Evans notes, text analysis only adequate within a church's musical and social context. As changes to text are representative of developments in theological emphasis, the liturgy as a whole will now be examined.

The Hillsong Liturgy

Hillsong's service is comprised of a formulaic pattern where spontaneity is restrained to musical spaces. Most Australian Pentecostals are familiar with the "Hillsong experience", beginning in the car-park with smiling volunteers in traffic vests, directing cars.²⁷ Most Hillsong music is written for their services, combining tempo and other musical features to achieve community worship effects. Musical "praise and worship" usually consists of two fast and two slow songs, and almost always lasts for twenty minutes. Previous analyses indicate that the majority of HMA songs are written in 4/4 time signature, with a small number of 3/4 and 6/8 time signatures,²⁸ providing four categories of tempo to serve the organisational elements of the Hillsong service (Figure 1):

Figure 1: Tempo Categories

200 130 99..... 80..... 55
 | Up-Tempo Praise | Mid-Tempo Praise | Anthemic Worship | Slow Worship |

“Up-tempo praise” songs open the service, lifting the faith level and expectation of the congregation through sung statements about God and His church. Zschech explains, “A shout is prophetic. It is faith building ... it is calling things that are not as though they were. It is atmosphere changing”.²⁹ “Mid-tempo praise” often facilitates dancing, with the Hillsong congregation ‘moshing’ and/or swaying. “Anthemic Worship” assists the congregation declare attributes of God’s character and Will. Finally, “Slow worship”—inclusive of reflective instrumental elements—encourages reflection, and creates space for the Spirit to speak through direct communication. Anthemic Worship, or sometimes “Praise” end the section. Songs flow between keychanges, causing minimal distraction to the congregation, as the band moves seamlessly through musical interludes and the congregation vocalizes their own prayers and praises to God, singing or speaking quietly in tongues (*glossolalia*). Tongues and interpretation are rarely amplified: newcomers are unlikely to be aware of it happening among the congregation. At the conclusion of the 40-minute message, a call for salvation is given, often incorporating music. Following this, new converts are led out of the service to be handed Bibles and information about the church, while an MC (not the preacher) closes the service and the band reprise of one of the songs.

Occasionally a theme reflecting an attribute of the Christian life—“strength”, “unity”, or “hope”—is used as a focus for congregational reflection.³⁰ Apart from the seasons of Christmas and Easter, traditional liturgical seasons receive no attention. Instead the year is punctuated by various annual events and conferences, their preparation and advertising. The “Christmas Spectacular”, an amateur dramatic show, tours Hillsong campuses through multiple performances. This is not a traditional nativity play, but an entertaining reframing of the Christmas message for the non-churched community. Special ‘Anointing’ and ‘Water Baptism’ services see believers immersed in water or “anointed” with a small amount of oil. When Spirit Baptism is the focus, prayer for respondents to receive tongues (*glossolalia*, as per Acts 2) as a marker of the infilling of the Spirit is included as an element. Each HB albums included in this study was recorded at a free event in Sydney, in February or March. The live crowd, staging, and visual performance become part of the DVD product, while the music is overdubbed and reproduced as both CD and DVD, released to massed crowds on the first night of the Hillsong Conference in July. The sales opportunity provided by the July conference provides the end date for recording, mixing, mastering and production of its annual album. The conference itself, nevertheless, aims at seeking unity among churches of

like mind (particularly those within the ACC movement) rather than about album launch and sales.³¹ Conference advertising vigorously emphasizes well-known international Christian speakers and musicians rather than the musical product as such.

In contrast to HB's events, only 'youth' aged 12–25 are included in UB music recordings, providing both ministry resource and training for Hillsong's young songwriters and artists. Hillsong's largest department follows a similar annual calendar to the church. Week-long January youth camps are often held at a beach venue, while during the July general Conference Hillsong (JAM) Youth conference is held. A separate day program includes worship led by UB, with the two conferences combining at night. UB's 2007 album recording—which took place in a studio—demonstrated the greater flexibility of the youth product compared to HB's live recordings. Unlike HB recordings, UB DVDs are not sold: instead, footage is often included as a bonus to the CD. UB's marketing is also more internet-savvy than HB, with *All of The Above*—assisted by Joel Houston's blog at www.youth.hillsong.com—becoming the second most downloaded album on iTunes.³² No UB album was recorded in 2003, the only exception to HMA's annual releases from both bands. Available literature relating to this topic will now be explored.

Literature Review

Shane Clifton (*An Analysis of the Developing Ecclesiology of the Assemblies of God in Australia*) notes the general lack of academic publications from Australian Pentecostals.³³ This has left evangelical scholar Mark Evans' doctoral thesis (*Secularising the Sacred*) as foundational in the area: it forms the basis of analysis for this work.³⁴ In *Rites in the Spirit*, Ritologist Daniel Albrecht examines the experiential paradigm of Pentecostal worship, outlining the purpose of songs in facilitating a corporate experience for the congregation. Hillsong has also published a number of popular book titles to assist those seeking to replicate its structures and styles. Amanda Fergusson's book *The Songs of Heaven: Writing Songs for Contemporary Worship*,³⁵ seeks to address songtext. Including interviews with published HMA songwriters, it provides insight into their musical aims and methodology. In reviewing the relevant literature, four recurring themes may be isolated: Trinitarian Address, Testimony, Love, and Expected Transformations in Worship. These four areas—which form the basis for the methodology of this paper—will now be explored.

Trinitarian Address

Evans uses the category ‘Address’ to locate Trinitarian understandings (important for evangelical traditions) in liturgical practice. He notes the importance of the ‘address’ of God (or lack thereof) in analysis of HMA songtext, tracking the words Jesus/God/Spirit and Lord in text published between 1992 and 1999. He demonstrates high usage of the address “Lord” in Hillsong lyrics during the Bullock period (prior to the present study period) and occasions in the repertoire where the Godhead is not addressed at all but implied.³⁶ As James Torrance notes, Christian worship for evangelicals constitutes “... our participation through the Spirit in the Son’s communion with the Father, in his vicarious life of worship and intercession”.³⁷ All three persons of the Trinity are considered distinct but equal in the ACC’s theology.³⁸ As Gordon Fee explains:

... our worship is as Trinitarian as our experience of God and our theology. Obviously, it is the presence of the Spirit among us as we gather in Christ's name that makes it so.³⁹

As Lim,⁴⁰ McClung⁴¹ and Chant note,⁴² Paul also attributes the Spirit as the bestower of charismata (spiritual gifts, 1 Corinthians 12). The importance of Trinitarian address within the literature is clear.

Emotionalism, Love and Feminisation

Discussion regarding the nature of the relationship between the Trinity and the worshipper features is also notable in the literature. Authors such as Evans and Chant are critical of so-called “Intimacy/Relational” songs, which he finds prevalent in Pentecostal worship:

These songs have the power to call upon sentimentality and emotionalism without directing the participant's gaze toward God. They also have the power to manipulate the emotions of participants within the gathering, making them feel as though they are experiencing something they are not.⁴³

He terms this sentimentality “Feminisation”:

Many males confirmed a sense of isolation or inadequacy being created in their worship due to this “gendering” of the music. Colloquially within the Church, songs of this ilk are known as “Jesus is my girlfriend” songs.⁴⁴

In contrast to Evans, however, Shepherd believes all musicology is thrown out of balance by inherent societal gendering, and thus is inevitable in our

discussion of music:

... the relational and emotional is downgraded to a second-class status—something vaguely undesirable and intimately associated with women—to be controlled by superior, “rational” men.⁴⁵

Questions must be raised as to whether descriptors such as “Feminisation” degrade women’s contribution to worship or reinscribes unhelpful gender types.⁴⁶ While most church environments are identified by a degree of patriarchal leadership and parochial liturgical styles, Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, through pioneers such as Sarah Jane Lancaster, demonstrate an understanding of God’s desire for women to have equal place with men in God’s kingdom following Pentecost.⁴⁷ Verses such as Acts 2:17 point to the redress of earthly inequalities are through the outpouring of the Spirit⁴⁸—and do not seek to denigrate or lower the feminine under the masculine. Given the fact that a high percentage of ‘sentimental’ HMA songs are written and performed by males, Evans’ description (echoed by Barry Chant)⁴⁹ of male isolation through worship text is difficult to comprehend.⁵⁰

The love relationship between God and worshipper is the ‘target’ of emotion in worship. Former Hillsong member Tanya Levin claims confusion exists regarding the role of love and romance in Pentecostal text:

Having a love affair with Jesus is an established expectation.... [But] I don't want to date Jesus. I don't think that was the idea. All that “Jesus is my boyfriend” music makes me nauseous.... I continue to find this whole thing strange.⁵¹

By way of contrast, Sydney Anglican director of EMU music, Phillip Percival, considers emotion crucial in worship:

When we suppress emotion in church we train ourselves to lack excitement in the rest of our Christian lives ... Singing is the obvious place to show authentic and appropriate emotion in response to the gospel of grace – and it is this same response of gratitude that should mark the whole of our lives as his servants.⁵²

The relationship of love and place of emotion can be seen to be of importance within worship literature, and features in the methodology below.

Testimony

The casual vernacular language of contemporary worship text, and its emphasis on the “I”, is criticised heavily by theologians such as Brian

McLaren⁵³ and musicians such as Matthew Ward,⁵⁴ who identify in the latter evidence of Western individualism. Philip Percival criticises the replacement of biblical narrative by personal testimony, exhorting contemporary songwriters to write material which reflects the fact “... that song is God’s gift to his church to soak up the Word of Christ, and to respond authentically and emotionally to that Word.”⁵⁷ By way of contrast, Evans defends the use of the personal pronoun, citing its use by the psalmists, hymn writers such as Isaac Watts, and the central role of testimony. Over 60% of contemporary worship songs are written in the first person, with only 5% using plural pronoun “we”.⁵⁶ Clifton disagrees that biblical text is absent in Pentecostal liturgy, arguing for consideration of a particular hermeneutic:

Pentecostals posit a hermeneutical spiral, which moves from the experience of the Spirit in the community of faith, to the text of scripture, and back again, to the experience of the Spirit in the community of faith.⁵⁸

In Pentecostal songs, symbolic narratives of conversion, water baptism, healing and other experiences simultaneously cultivate a backward-looking thankfulness and a forward-looking desire.⁵⁹ Personal testimony holds a fundamental place in Pentecostal worship, as noted by Althouse,⁶⁰ Lawless,⁶¹ Jennings,⁶² and Anderson.⁶³ Testimonial is also conducive to fostering both revival and revivalism (Clifton).⁶⁴

This paper will identify personal pronouns to identify whether Hillsong holds to an individualistic view of worship, and as a marker for the presence of ‘testimony’.

Expected Transformations (or Themes in Pentecostal Music)

One of the most significant areas of discussion in the literature regards the categorisation of themes for church choruses. Evans, citing Dawn, constructs eleven content-based categories of song text.⁶⁵ Application of Evan’s categories to Pentecostal songtext, however, is not only difficult, but arguably inappropriate in gauging the contribution of Pentecostal contemporary music which is, as Moore outlines, operates from an experiential rather than teaching focus.⁶⁶ Albrecht’s adopts a different approach, using participant-observation and interviews to identify commonalities in the rites of three North-American Pentecostal churches.⁶⁷ This results in his seven “modes of sensibility”, that extend Moore’s study. Describing these modes as “... embodied attitudes, sensibilities, affections with which ritualists perform and experience ritual”,⁶⁸ he considers these

methods by which Pentecostals engage in the liturgy, and keys to understanding Pentecostal music. These “modes” generally flow in rough order within the worship service.

The first mode, termed ‘Celebration’ “... takes root in the action and attitude of play”,⁶⁹ accompanied with “expressiveness” and “spontaneity”.”⁷⁰ This is usually facilitated in Pentecostal services through fast songs and physical participation such as clapping, dancing, and joyful smiling - enacted to appropriate the joy found in Christ. The second mode Albrecht names ‘Transcendental Efficacy’, which “... refers to an attitude of “... pragmatic ritual work”, “... particularly in relationship to a trans-reality [i.e. God] to produce an effect”.⁷¹ Albrecht states:

When Pentecostals pray in this mode they expect an answer. Unlike the sensibility of celebration that may freely play, enjoying and experiencing the meaning of symbols, the mode of efficacy employs the symbols, declaring how things work by working them. The mode of efficacy reveals an attitude that is more concerned with consequence than meaning.⁷²

The third mode (‘Contemplation’) involves “... deep receptivity and openness to God”,⁷³ mostly seen during the slower songs. Of this mode Albrecht states:

While the mode of celebration actively plays and the mode of transcendental efficacy engages in ritual work toward its pragmatic goal, the contemplative mode attentively waits. The “tarry until” attitude of the Pentecostal mode of contemplation generally holds sway, that is ... the aware congregation participates in the understanding that ultimately it seeks the action and presence of the other, the one that cannot be controlled.⁷⁴

The fourth ‘Penitent’ mode entails “... contrition, repentance, remorse, sorrow, lamenting or grieving”.⁷⁵ While repentance is facilitated in Hillsong’s public altar calls, Narelle Melton writes:

Within the Australian context there has been little evaluation of the early Australian Pentecostal use of lament. As such it is unknown whether the practice of lament has been lost progressively, ... or if it was ever utilized within Australian Pentecostalism.⁷⁶

The fifth mode, ‘Transcendental Ecstasy’ occurs when “... ritualists believe they are having an experience, performing rites or manifesting behaviour that is directly influenced by their God.”⁷⁷ These behaviours may or may not be obvious to the observer, and particular manifestations vary

between congregations. However, ultimately the mode represents the Pentecostal desire to be open to the Spirit's direction in worship.⁷⁸

The sixth mode ('Improvisational') involves "... cultivating or inventing rites", allowing for spontaneous innovation (a feature of Pentecostal music also noted by Evans).⁷⁹ The direction of the first six modes by a leader/s is in itself the seventh mode. Albrecht explains that "... the empowered leader directs, even controls, liturgical forms dominated by this sensibility".⁸⁰ Whether this is actually a 'mode' is questionable, but it does serve to explain Moore's distinction between the realities of participant and leader.⁸¹ These modes are facilitated primarily through the use of musical features such as tempo, and/or dynamic, but also through text.

Rather than governing content, these modes allow for movement and progression in the experience of worship, and serve to provide a basis for analysing intentions behind Pentecostal songs, and their contribution towards experiential liturgy. Combined with Evans' approach, Albrecht's modes provide phenomenological content to disconnected categories. Text plays a crucial role in teaching and reinforcing expectations placed upon worship by the congregation, as noted by Albrecht,⁸² Evans⁸³ and Dawn.⁸⁴ The mode of Transcendental Efficacy or "pragmatic ritual work" holds particular relevance to the study of categorisation of text, as Pentecostal congregations present their expected transformations to God in song form, both in faith/belief they will occur (Transcendental Ecstasy), but also as a commitment towards their occurrence where possible (Transcendental Efficacy). As divine passive transformation is difficult to ascertain, the second mode forms a basis for understanding the underlying purpose of worship for Pentecostals. Worship, especially through song text, provides space for the individual to actively transform towards God's immutable character, following repentance.⁸⁵⁻⁸⁶ Adapting Evans' methodology, then, we can identify eight Pentecostal Expected Transformations:⁸⁷ Anointing, Personal Development, Revival, Evangelism, Supernatural Empowerment, Prosperity, Social Transformation and Presence in Suffering. These Expected Transformations will now be explored.

Evans presents the theme 'Anointing' as particularly relevant to songs sourced from Sydney's large Pentecostal congregations including HSA and Christian City Church (CCC) Oxford Falls. Anointing as a theological precept is absent from Clifton's ecclesiology, and the term rarely appears in HMA text. 'Revival', however, *does* feature as a corporate expectation (see Clifton, above).⁸⁸ Expectation, fostered by testimonies and stories, is key in maintaining 'revival' as a desire and focus of the congregation.⁸⁹ By way of contrast, Evans' 'Personal Development' category

represents the range of individual outcomes considered to result in Christian maturity—as evidenced in such attributes as a moral lifestyle (particularly sexuality, a positive attitude etc).⁹⁰ This reveals Pentecostalism's Holiness origins, noted by many authors including Matzerath⁹¹ and Anderson.⁹²

A third Pentecostal Expected Transformation ('Evangelism') is noted by Silvia Giagnoni as a stated goal for many Christian musicians.⁹³ Chant laments the replacement of 'the great evangelist' of postwar neo-Evangelicalism (e.g. Billy Graham) with modern musicians.⁹⁴ Journalists including Power,⁹⁵ Zinchini⁹⁶ and Zwartz⁹⁷ acknowledge the contribution of music to Hillsong's evangelistic expansion. Historically, moreover, the ACC emphasised a fourth Transcendental Efficacy, 'Supernatural Empowerment', with miracles including healing sought during the liturgy.⁹⁸ Towns notes this as a particular role of the Spirit's at Good News Hall in 1908 under Sarah Jane Lancaster's ministry (including, tongues, prophecy, tarrying, laying on of hands, anointing, dancing, miracles, exorcism, visions etc):⁹⁹ With "power from on high" (Acts 1:8) given to the disciples through baptism in the Spirit, Pentecostal expectation of the miraculous is foundational and ongoing. Hillsong's emphasis on 'Prosperity' (greatly influenced by Korean Pastor Yongi Cho) is in constant tension with this older tradition.^{100, 101, 102} While North American emphasis upon the Second Coming is not substantiated in the text, a "wealth gospel" has become synonymous with Hillsong's public persona.¹⁰³

This development leads to a relatively new Expected Transformation: 'Social Transformation' (termed "Social Justice" by Hillsong members): the progression from a belief in material prosperity into church-based redress of global economic inequality.¹⁰⁴ (By way of contrast, Anderson criticizes Assemblies of God congregations in North America for rejection of a social gospel).¹⁰⁵ Catholic Theologian Marva Dawn promotes another development beyond prosperity theology—an inspired understanding of God's presence in our pain, trial or suffering that features heavily in both the literature and HMA text. Wheelchair-bound, Dawn asks:

How does our worship deal with the intensity and scope of suffering? Do we proclaim true hope, universally accessible? Are we equipped by our worship to work to ease suffering and to build peace and justice in the world? Or do we merely provide a private happiness, a cosy comfortable-ness in our own safe sanctuaries?¹⁰⁶

Dawn advocates worship text that prioritises the spiritual above the material, with an expectation that worship is a reminder of God's presence in

our suffering rather than a vehicle for the abolition of it. Having discussed pertinent literature, the scope and methodology of the study will now be examined below.

Scope of The Study

Across the eleven-year period (1996 – 2007), HMA released twenty albums, variously by the Hillsong Live Band (HB) and United Band (UB). In order to deal with this large amount of text and music, three phases are used. During Phase One (1996 – 1998), HB releases represented the primary music product of the church. With the departure of worship pastor and songwriter Geoff Bullock, Donna Crouch led until Darlene Zschech was appointed as worship pastor. Phase Two (1999 – 2003) is marked by a move to the production of two annual HMA live worship products, the establishment of the UB and continuation of HB releases. Other developments included the employment of Reuben Morgan as Youth Music Director (2000), the acquisition of the City Campus, the planting and growth of the London Campus (2002). In Phase Three (2004– 2007) Reuben Morgan's resigned from UB (2004) to focus on HB recordings and events, Joel Houston was appointed as UB leader (2004), Darlene Zschech's resigned as Worship Pastor of HB (2006), followed by the appointment in 2008 of Joel Houston and Reuben Morgan to the leadership of the creative department.

Methodology: Quantitative Measurements

Between 1996 and 2007, HMA's HB and UB releases featured 281 songtexts. Qualitative and quantitative analysis on these texts was performed in a spreadsheet, using an adapted Evans methodology.¹⁰⁸ Text categories were analyzed for evidence of similarity and change across the three phases of the study period, arranged around the four areas identified in the literature review.

Table 1: Categories for Text Analysis

1. Number of Words	5. Use of word “Love”: Context of use of word love.
2. Address - Point of View (1 st /2 nd /3 rd Person)	6. Testimony (Evidence of conversion, water or Spirit baptism testimonials)
3. Trinitarian Perceptions: Instances of the words Jesus/Christ, Spirit, God/Father, Lord	7. Expected Transformation: (Personal Development, Revival, Evangelism, Supernatural Empowerment, Prosperity, Social Transformation and Presence in Suffering)
4. Other names addressing God	

Category 1 (“Number of Words”) is useful in terms of assessing published text, but not in terms of actual length of songs (time it takes to sing it) or musical ease/difficulty. The value placed on spontaneity at Hillsong¹⁰⁸ means that the chorus is usually repeated multiple times. Dai Griffiths’ “Verbal space” or text rhythmic patterns could be considered a better indicator, but is beyond the scope of this study.¹⁰⁹ “Trinitarian perceptions” were analysed through recording names used for God, such as “God/Father”, “Jesus/Christ”, “Spirit” or “Lord”. Presence of and context of the word “love” was listed (Category 5) e.g. ‘The Father’s love for us’. “Testimony” was tracked using semantic references to spiritual experiences, such as conversion, water baptism, and Spirit baptism. “Expected Transformation” evaluates the prevalence and accuracy of the eight expected Pentecostal transformations discussed above: “Personal Development”, “Supernatural Empowerment”, “Evangelism” “Prosperity”, “Presence in Suffering”, “Revival” and “Social Transformation” (see Table 1).¹¹⁰ Evans’ theme “Anointing” was discarded from the methodology after only one reference was found within HMA text.

Qualitative aspects of text highlighted by Fergusson are examined below including rhyme scheme (perfect rhyme, assonance and consonance, parallel constructions), rhyming patterns and word imagery.¹¹¹

*Research Findings: General Features of Text***Table 2:** Summary of HMA Releases

	PHASE ONE (1996 – 1998)	PHASE TWO (1999 – 2003)	PHASE THREE (2004 – 2007)
Number of Songs	44	99	138
Number of Albums	3	8	9
Number of Bands	1	2	2
Number of Writers	12	29	38
Average Word Count	99	89	98.6

A large increase of published songs occurred with the inclusion of UB products from 1999, with another increase of HMA songs in Phase Three. While ‘wordiness’ is often informally seen as a ‘youth’ phenomenon, word count dropped on average by ten words in Phase Two, but returned to a relative average. Phase Three’s highest word counts were contained in UB’s *All Of The Above* (2007) release, where four songs exceed 190 words. No songs reached this amount in preceding years, resulting from UB’s adoption of more secular song forms in which small chorus and bridge variations added to word count. UB’s music represented a shift from church resource to radio singles. Two strophic hymn-like verses can be seen during Phase One, “Jesus What a Beautiful Name” (1996) and “So You Would Come” (1997): none occur after this time.

References to the “Holy Ghost” rather than “Holy Spirit” show the influence of American black gospel style upon this Australian church. “Steppin’ Out” (1996) shows HB’s characteristically wordy verses in Phase One, as well as shortened terms, both also characteristic of black gospel:

*We're a generation saved by grace and set apart to change this land
 We're standing strong, pressing on, we know in Jesus Christ we can
 The church of God is growing every day
 We're taking ground, and we are steppin' out.*¹¹²

The song "I Know It" (1997) also displays gospel colloquialisms and informal language.¹¹³

In Phase Two, UB albums contribute to the development in HMA's language and style. Attempting move beyond the musical limitations of their congregation, UB writers contributed to song form more intricate verses mediated with two or four-line choruses (e.g. "Everyday", 1999).¹¹⁴ Such choruses act as the repetitive "glue" between sections, and the congregation picks up the melody and, by way of frequent further performances and recordings, the verses of a song. Four or eight bar musical riffs add verbal space.

With regard to language style, Fergusson advocates the use of word images through literary features such as metaphors and simile, which also becomes very popular for UB writers in Phase Two, e.g. "Heaven" (1999):

*I need Your love
 Like the desert needs the rain
 I need Your touch
 Like the fire needs the flame.*¹¹⁵

"Stronger Than" (2000) is another example of this.¹¹⁶

HMA 'covers' (rerecorded songs) appear on UB albums in 2001, including "All Day",¹¹⁷ (authored by Sampson for interdenominational ministry Youth Alive)¹¹⁸ and a rearrangement of the traditional hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy" (2001).¹¹⁹ This demonstrated a wider genre range in comparison to HB, retaining its' focus upon contemporary song.

During Phase One, text displays many instances of both loose and perfect rhyme, often referencing large amounts of biblical text. It is sophisticated in its construction. The song "Joy in the Holy Ghost" (1996) is an example of long meter and a perfect rhyme scheme:

<i>The Holy Spirit fills me up</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>And I need him every day</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>For fire faith and confidence</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>And knowing what to say</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>I gave my heart and all I am</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>To the one who loves me most</i>	<i>E</i>

We've got love grace peace and power F
*And joy in the Holy Ghost. E*¹²⁰

The song “Can’t Stop Talking” (1997) also evidences perfect rhyme, though in couplets.¹²¹ *B*

Certain stylistic changes, reflecting musical changes, are seen after Phase Two. From 1999, deliberately ending with non-rhyming lines can be seen, in a move away from ‘corny’ text:

Standing tall in this wide space A
Getting lost in Your embrace A
I see a fire burning brighter C
*It's calling me to catch the flame.*¹²² *D*

In this case, assonance with the vowel “a” allows the verse to complete, with underlying chords creating further resolution. From Phase Three, however, repetition replaces rhyme in HB songs, e.g. Morgan’s “You are My Strength” (2007):

You are my strength
Strength like no other
Strength like no other
*Reaches to me.*¹²³

The song “Angels” (2003), shows non-rhyming verses, featuring repetition in the chorus.¹²⁴

Throughout Phase Three, UB text evolves towards an arguably post-modern “linguistic fragmentation”, termed by Jameson “Pastiche”.¹²⁵ Here, seemingly separate statements are hung together in a musical framework, the meaning often understood only within the originating community.¹²⁶ Experience and emotion is prioritised above rational logic in the text, seen in “Solution” (2007):

In Your Name
There is truth where logic fails
Understanding that makes sense of our days
*You are worthy.*¹²⁷

In this song, no rhyme scheme is discernable. Instead, musical innovation including distinctive introductions, and rhythmic drumbeats assist the congregation with text recall. Findings on Trinitarian Address as covered in the literature review will now be considered below.

*Trinitarian Address***Table 3:** Trinitarian Address in HMA Text

	PHASE ONE	PHASE TWO	PHASE THREE
Total Spirit	11	9	7
Total Lord	20	42	56
Total Jesus	19	28	44
Total God/Father	13	24	45

During the study period, an increase in the words “Jesus/Christ” and “God/Father” was noted in the text, consistent with the increase in songs.¹²⁸ By way of contrast, references to the Spirit decreased (see Table 3). Although many songs interchange multiple addresses, showing evidence of Trinitarian belief, not all HMA songs address a member of the Godhead. While some aspects of the work of the Spirit are consistent across HMA repertoire,¹²⁹ perception of His role in worship changed during the years under review (see below). Throughout Phase One, 25% of songs mention the Holy Spirit, with songs such as “Let The Peace of God Reign” using direct address:

Oh Holy Spirit
Saturate my soul
Fill me now
Let Your healing power
*Breathe life and make me whole.*¹³⁰

The song “Holy Spirit Rain Down” (1998) (made famous by American gospel singer Alvin Slaughter) is another example of this address.¹³¹

Biblical reference to the Spirit is also incorporated into the text e.g. “Joy in the Holy Ghost” (1998) citing Luke 12:11-12 “... do not worry about how you will defend yourselves ... for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say”.¹³²

However, during Phase Two, direct address to the Spirit occurs less frequently in the text. The Spirit is sometimes presented as an attribute of Christ as in “You” (2000):

*Now I, I belong to You
 Lord I need
 Your Spirit, Your word, Your truth
 Hear my cry
 My deep desire
 To know You more.*¹³³

By Phase Three, the Spirit’s role is yet further reduced. No song addresses or refers to the Spirit in HMA albums 2002 to 2004, or in 2006. One reference to the Spirit is found in HB’s recordings in 2005, and two in 2007. UB’s song “Fire Fall Down” (2006) is a characteristic example of song style of this third phase. Addressing Jesus, it cites his work on the cross “You bought my life”.¹³⁴ Following acknowledgement of the crucifixion, it refers to Jesus’ resurrection, using conversion testimony (“... now alive in me”). The second verse proclaims prosperity for the believer; “... When I spoke and confessed in You I’m blessed”. These concepts build upon salvation, with the musical climax and chorus proclaiming Spirit baptism “Fire fall down”. However, there is no development of the Spirit’s person beyond the metaphor of “fire” (viz. Acts 2), and no understanding of the Spirit’s ongoing role in Christian life beyond Pentecost. Other songs in this phase such as Saviour King (2007) also refer to “the Spirit of Christ”,¹³⁵ empty of biblical references to the Spirit’s unique role in the gospel narratives or Acts. This pneumatological regress could be considered a change in theological emphasis, and arguably a loss of Trinitarian understanding in Hillsong’s text in the years after 2002. This move towards Christology and away from Pneumatology mirrors Sydney Anglican conservative evangelical Christianity, increasing the acceptability of HMA products to non-Pentecostal Christians within the city.¹³⁶ The complete absence of “the Spirit” in most years following 2000 indicates either deliberately omission, or the editing of text.

Use of the Word “Love”

Performing love towards God unites Hillsong’s congregation. As Zschech states:

We often hear the phrase “worship is a lifestyle”. What does this really mean? It simply means to live a life of love. To love extravagantly. The first commandment, to love the Lord your God

with all your heart with all your soul, and with all your mind means exactly that.¹³⁷

During Phase One (1996–1998), the word love appears in approximately half of tracks, primarily as an immutable characteristic of God as Spirit. The song “Love of God Can Do” (1996) shows God enabling the Christian to act in love when human strength is inadequate:

*He can make a way where there isn't a way
That's what the love of God can do*.¹³⁸

A paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 15 occurs in the bridge of this song:

*Love is patient, love is kind
If someone else wins, love doesn't mind
Love believes and love forgives
And God is the start of all of this*.¹³⁹

The perfection of God's love (distinct from human love) is explored in “Jesus Your Loving Kindness” (1997):

*Jesus Your loving-kindness
I'm so blessed by all that You've done
This life that You give
Your love is better than life I know it well*.¹⁴⁰

References of the word “praise” exceed “love” in this first Phase, suggesting the declaration of God's *attributes* and *power* rather *intimacy* with Him. Texts in this Phase distinguish human-divine love from human-human love, using words such as “adore”.¹⁴¹ Titles such as “My Greatest Love is You”¹⁴² and “Love You so Much”,¹⁴³ draw connections between singing, praise and love. Throughout this phase many references connect love directly or indirectly to the Spirit, echoing Wesley's description of Spirit baptism as a “heart warmed with love”,¹⁴⁴ e.g. “You Gave Me Love” (1997) sings “... You gave me a love that caused my heart to overflow”.¹⁴⁵ This reinforces desire within the congregation to experience Spirit Baptism. Reference to the Spirit's supernatural love is not continued in the text after 1999; instead a distinct change of emphasis will be found. Phase Two (1999 – 2002) sees an increase in occurrences of the word “love” as a human emotion.

The word “worship” by this phase is almost synonymous with music and/or singing, e.g. in “Forever” (2000), “... I'll worship at Your throne / Whisper my own love song”,¹⁴⁶ And “Dwelling Places” (1999):

*From my heart a song will rise
I love you, I love you, I love you*

*I love you, I love you, I love you
 I love you, I love you, I love you
 And my heart will follow wholly after You.*¹⁴⁷

“You are Holy” (1997) also continues the notion of singing as expression of love.¹⁴⁸

Teenage writer Marty Sampson and Joel Houston first become visible in the UB release *By Your Side* (1999), with “My Best Friend” (2000) - one of the first of the youth songs to cross-over to HB’s album. This song establishes what could be considered an immature or simplistic view of the human–divine relationship:

*Jesus You are my best friend
 And You will always be
 And nothing will ever change that.*¹⁴⁹

In Phase Two the introduction of the words “want” and “need” in reference to God first occurs in title track “For This Cause” (2000) “... All I want is, All I want is You, Jesus”.¹⁵⁰ Emotionalism is redolent in the albums, despite protestations otherwise.¹⁵¹ UB’s influence sees faith expressed through life-long commitment, as “Jesus Lover of My Soul” (rerecorded 2001) declares:

*I love You, I need You
 Though my world will fall, I’ll never let you go
 My Saviour, My closest Friend
 I will worship You until the very end.*¹⁵²

This song is sung by Pentecostal worshippers as an act of dedication and continued commitment.

Phase Three (2003–2007) is marked by more Christological song-writing and the location of emotion as response to the cross, e.g. “At the Cross” (2006) which references John 4:19¹⁵³ contrasting God’s love with human failure:

*Oh Lord You’ve searched me
 You know my way
 Even when I fail You
 I know You love me
 I know You love me
 At the cross, I bow my knee
 Where Your blood was shed for me
 There’s no greater love than this.*¹⁵⁴

Text continues to express devotion but emphasizes God rather than the worshipper (e.g. UB’s “Saviour King” 2007).¹⁵⁵

During this phase, love compels the Christian to act, particularly in reversing poverty (or social justice). The believer's love for God is connected to responsibility for the welfare of the world, reflecting the extra-curricular ministries of the team during this time. Zschech's involvement in Australian and overseas aid increased the profile of Christian responsibility to the poor—with public campaigns for Christian child welfare ambassador group Compassion Australia¹⁵⁶ and the initiative “Hope Rwanda”. The HB title track ‘Hope’ (2003) illustrates the beginning of this change:

*You are righteous
You love justice
And those who honor You will see Your face.*¹⁵⁷

Hope Rwanda's website explains:

In April 2004 while Mark and Darlene Zschech and their family were on a missions trip to Africa, they learned the horrific recent history and current situation of the beautiful country of Rwanda and its people ... In response [they], launched Hope Rwanda: 100 Days of Hope, a global effort designed to bring hope to a nation seemingly forgotten by the world since the horrific genocide of 1994.¹⁵⁸

UB's song “Solution” (2007) continues the call to action in redressing poverty accompanying Christian confession (acting on behalf of God's love):

*It is not a human right
To stare not fight
While broken nations dream
... Higher than a circumstance
Your promise stands
Your love for all to see
Higher than protest line and dollar signs
Your love is all we need.*¹⁵⁹

Testimony

Presenting the narrative of salvation in song encourages non-Christians to seek a conversion experience for themselves,¹⁶⁰ and testimonials encourage Christians (particularly from other denominations) to seek fullness in Christian life (through water and Spirit baptism).¹⁶¹ A summary of references to testimony in the HMA song texts throughout the study period can be seen in Table 4 (below):

Table 4: Testimony in Hillsong Text

	PHASE ONE	PHASE TWO	PHASE THREE
Conversion	23	58	72
Water Baptism	0	1	0
Spirit Baptism	15	16	10

Hillsong choruses are almost always sung in the first person (either singular or plural), and testimonies of conversion appear consistently across the entire period (and in almost all songs), suggesting that the main purpose of Hillsong music is evangelistic.¹⁶² Such sung testimony of salvation may be seen in “God is In the House” (1995):

*As for me, God came and found me
As for me, He took me home
As for me He gave me a family
And I'll never walk alone.*¹⁶³

“Sing of Your Great Love” (1999),¹⁶⁴ and “Exceeding Joy” (2003) explore joy as an emotional response to the salvation experience:

*I have found exceeding joy
Jesus answered when I called
This Name that has saved me
Pure love that embraced me.*¹⁶⁵

Interestingly, in contrast to overwhelming testimonies of conversion in all phases, only one account of water baptism occurs (in Morgan's song “What The Lord Has Done In Me”, 1999).¹⁶⁶

Testimony of Spirit baptism decreases across the phases, consistent with the findings regarding Trinitarian Address (above).¹⁶⁷ Most Hillsong services conclude with a staged public prayer or “altar call”,¹⁶⁸ an appropriation of Romans 10:9 “... if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved”.¹⁶⁹ The song “So You Would Come” (1997) was written for such a moment:

*Everything was done
So You would come.*¹⁷⁰

While Phase One text directly teaches on Spirit Baptism, e.g. “The Holy Spirit fills me up and I need Him everyday / For fire, faith and confidence, in knowing what to say”,¹⁷¹ such detail also diminishes in subsequent years. However, the desire for *corporate* renewal of the Holy Spirit through revival remains a feature text after 1998. (explored below).¹⁷² Such findings suggest that while Hillsong considers their music to be evangelistic, using testimony to explain conversion and its benefits, the role of this music in teaching and discipling of the congregation is of lesser importance, as seen in the text.

Expected Transformation

Albrecht’s “Transcendental Efficacy” mode describes the preemptive, pragmatic prayer of Pentecostal worship text, sung in expectation of change. Evidence for his seven themes (or “Expected Transformations”) may be seen in Hillsong songtext (see Table 5, below).

Table 5: Expected Transformations in Hillsong Text

	PHASE ONE	PHASE TWO	PHASE THREE
Personal Development	18	16	9
Supernatural Empowerment	18	5	12
Evangelism	5	7	6
Prosperity	6	4	2
Presence in Suffering	4	6	24
Social Transformation	0	0	4
Revival	6	8	2

Personal Development

Personal Development is strongest in Phase One, with decreasing references in subsequent phases (see above), something which is of interest given the increase in numbers of song titles in later Phases. The role of

worship and sung confession in personal development is, however, consistent across all three phases, as seen in “I Give You My Heart” (1996) which portrays our selfish desires being exchanged for God’s perfect will:

*Lord I give You my heart
I give You my soul
I live for You alone
Every breath that I take
Every moment I’m awake
Lord have Your way in me.*¹⁷³

A dichotomy between soul (representative of humanity) and Spirit (representative of Christian redeemed nature) is consistent across all phases, with worship seen to facilitate surrender, allowing God to transform humanity’s sinful minds and hearts. Dependence upon God for personal development is seen in songs such as “Never Let Me Go” (2005) (“... Create in me a heart that’s pure / Replace in me what’s not of You”). Hillsong’s emphasis upon replacing negative thoughts with faith is discussed by Clifton,¹⁷⁴ and seen in Morgan’s song “Faith” (2000):

*Faith! I can move the mountains
I can do all things through Christ
Who strengthens me.*¹⁷⁵

The song “You Alone Are God” (2006) shows the use of both positivism and confession to reorient the self, submitted under God’s authority (*In the light of Your salvation ... I will find You’re all I need.*)¹⁷⁶

Supernatural Empowerment

In Luke 24, the disciples were encouraged to wait for “power from on high”, culminating in the Pentecost event so central to Pentecostalism’s understanding of Christianity.¹⁷⁷ “Supernatural Empowerment” is a theme seen mainly in Phase One, with both church and individuals understood to be recipients of supernatural power. Lyrics such as “... let Your healing power / Breathe life and make me whole” evidence a desire for miraculous healing during worship.¹⁷⁸ The text of “Lord of All” (1997) reinforces this desire for “Supernatural Empowerment”, with “... all my heartfelt dreams I put aside / To see Your Spirit move with power in my life”.¹⁷⁹ In contrast to HB text (in which the frequency of the word ‘power’ lessens after Phase Two), UB text (such as “Fall”, 2001) shows greater openness to Supernatural Empowerment (*I love to worship You, my Lord, And see Your Spirit fall in power.*)¹⁸⁰

By Phase Three, the dominant signs of the power of the Spirit are “growth” and “unity” rather than miraculous healing – presumably as, due to the sheer size and momentum of the church, uniting Hillsong’s large congregation is considered impossible in human strength alone. Accordingly, appropriation of “Supernatural Empowerment” for “Social Transformation” begins to occur in songtext, as in “Kingdom Come” (2007):

*The power of Your Name
In faith we will rise to be
Your hands and feet.*¹⁸¹

Evangelism

As mentioned above, conversion testimonies are consistent in all phases of HMA text. For the mature Christian, sung expression of the testimony of salvation is used as a discipline—both of appropriate emotional response to God’s act upon the cross, and also as a way of retaining a hunger for evangelism within the local community. References to “Evangelism” as an “Expected Transformation” of worship is seen in the text. Expectancy for God to move in Evangelism as His people gather is seen predominantly during Phase One (e.g. “Love Can Do”, 1997: “... hearts to save and a world to win / That’s what the love of God can do”; “Church on Fire”, 1998;¹⁸³ and 1996’s “Steppin’ Out”).¹⁸⁴ The metaphor of waiting fields of grain (from John 4)¹⁸⁵ is promoted in “Touching Heaven Changing Earth” (1998)¹⁸⁶ and also in “You Take Me Higher” (2000):

*He takes me through open doors
They open onto fields of white
He tells me to see and perceive
And to hear their cry.*¹⁸⁷

Reference to Evangelism also occurs in “Jesus The Same” (2004) (*There’s a fire that burns in our hearts / To see the lost return*),¹⁸⁸ and in “Take It All” (2006) (*Searching the world / The lost will be found*).¹⁸⁹ The expected transformation of Evangelism occurs consistently in HMA text in the study period.

Prosperity

The belief that God’s transformation includes material circumstances, resulting in a higher quality of living is known as “prosperity theology”. This is strongly represented in the text until 2002, with lines such as, “God

says yes and I know that I'm blessed".¹⁹⁰ Hillsong's progression towards prosperity doctrine is noted in Clifton's ecclesiology (and in the Sydney's media).¹⁹¹ The expectation of prosperity culminates in the text with the 2002 album *Blessed*

*Blessed are those whose strength is in You
Whose hearts are set on our God
They will go from strength to strength
Until we see You face to face.*¹⁹²

Throughout this album, text both promotes and rejects the idea of material prosperity as an expected transformation of the gospel. The song "Better Than" states:

*Better than getting what I say I need
Better than living the life that I want to
Better than the love anyone could give
Your love is.*¹⁹³

Interestingly, confessions of prosperity, (and the word "blessed") are absent in songs published between 2003 and 2006, but re-emerge twice in 2007 (including once in the UB song "Fire Fall Down").¹⁹⁴ In this phase, the notion of prosperity is overwhelmed by the category "Presence in Suffering", as seen in Table 5 above.

Presence in Suffering

Prior to 2002 God's presence in suffering occurs in the text only four times, and in every case the power of the Spirit triumphs over weakness, e.g. "And That My Soul Knows Very Well" (1996):

*When mountains fall, I'll stand
By the power of Your hand
And in Your heart of hearts I'll dwell
That my soul knows very well.*¹⁹⁵

"My Heart Sings Praises" (1996) likewise shows suffering as a brief season, "... in my heart You are the power / In my night never-failing light".¹⁹⁶

Phase Two introduces the idea of God's Presence sustaining the Christian in suffering and trial. Whether through individual choices or global events, sin is presented as part of fallen humanity and experienced by all through widescale phenomena such as war, poverty and ecological damage. "Through It All" cites both joys and hardships in the Christian

life:

*You are forever in my life
 You see me through the seasons
 ... I'm carried in everlasting arms
 You'll never let me go
 Through it all.*¹⁹⁷

Metaphors and references to war, reflecting world events at that time, are seen in the *Blessed* album (2002). As Zschech says:

When I wrote the song, "My Hope", it was just after the horror of September 11th became reality. I really felt strongly to write a song that would help the Church in restoring certain ways of thinking, based on the truth of the word, not on feelings or circumstances.¹⁹⁸

The song was sung by the congregation as a reminder of God's presence in unjust circumstances.¹⁹⁹ Not only is lyric important in attributing meaning to world events, but such changes in songtext in order to acknowledge suffering represent a maturing of Hillsong's theological emphasis in response to contextual challenges to political and cultural assumptions in the years following 9/11. It may also reflect the ageing of the leadership. Theological emphasis moves towards an understanding of God's presence sustaining the Christian even in suffering, rather than protecting them from suffering. While Hillsong text continues to promote God's transformation of the material world of the believer, a more realistic transformation is expressed in the worship text with the expectation of God's presence through all seasons and conditions of life.²⁰⁰

Revival

Pentecostal song includes an expectation for God's normal activity to increase as the congregation worship and pray for manifestations of God's Spirit. Desire for Spiritual renewal (termed "revival" in Hillsong lyrics) is consistent in the text. In "Touching Heaven Changing Earth" (1998), for instance, the Spirit is implored to "Send revival to us".²⁰¹ This is also seen in the song "Hosanna" (2006) (*I see a near revival / Stirring as we pray and seek.*)²⁰² The word "revival", while present in all three phases, is seen to decrease in the text across the study period.

Social Transformation

Occurring only in the third phase, "Social Transformation" becomes an expected outcome of the worship experience. The emergence of

the word “justice” in title track “My Hope” (2003) is the first instance of this Expected Transformation, ultimately (as seen above) of major importance in Hillsong Church’s worship.²⁰³ Songs such as “Tell The World” (2005),²⁰⁴ and UB song “Solution” present the idea of the Church’s responsibility to redress global inequality.²⁰⁵ This theological emphasis can also be seen as a response to secular music endeavors such as the Live Aid concerts by Bono and Bob Geldoff.²⁰⁶ The leadership of HMA continues this direction, particularly through the *I Heart Revolution*²⁰⁷ products released by Joel Houston and the Hillsong Foundation.

Conclusion

In answering the research questions, it must be noted while certain values and doctrines are constant across HMA recordings (such as testimony, and Christology), other aspects of Hillsong’s theological emphases have changed significantly over time. Key findings include the inclusion and development of concepts such as love, and theological changes in the purpose of worship—particularly the transition from “confessing” prosperity towards social transformation through the abolition of poverty. The Church’s increasing participation in the needs of the world through various mission endeavours is in direct contrast to the earlier, somewhat insular, Phase One faith in which emphasized the Church’s domination over the world. Corrections of over-emphases are found in the text, most notably (from 2002, subsequent to the 9/11 tragedy in the US) the acceptance of suffering. Increasing reference to worship in drawing the believer close to the Presence of God is found in the text following this date. The personal life of Darlene Zschech throughout Phase Two was of particular influence in the direction of the team in these years, influencing the inclusion of suffering in the text from 2002 and the desire to address issues of poverty and brokenness from 2003.

Influences upon HMA’s theological emphasis are varied, and include secular music celebrities such as Bono and Bob Geldoff. The team play a large role in the development of theological concepts, and Russell Fragar’s involvement as a key writer and staff member was particularly influential in the inclusion of Biblical content during Phase One (1996–1998). Though a writer from 1996, Reuben Morgan’s influence grows from 1998 through the remainder of the study period. Morgan’s influence generally reinforces certain key theological concepts. The most significant influence in HMA text to date occurred in 1999, with the decision to promote youth songs, and subsequent inclusion of writers Marty Sampson and Joel Houston in the team. Probably as a form of cross-promotion of

UB product, their songs were increasingly sung in church meetings, and—due to the increasing age and popularity of the UB writers—contributed significantly to the HB repertoire. This bears particularly on promotion of “love” as a theme in the text.

HMA writers are more aware than the average congregation member of the theological and musical inadequacies of their songs, and often write to compensate for the perceived needs of the congregation, rather than just the wants or needs of the leadership. However, Hillsong’s leadership increasingly determined theological emphases in the songs, with Robert and Amanda Fergusson taking a role in shaping the text from 2000. In terms of theological emphasis, since 1998—whether as a marketing strategy, in order to be received positively by other denominations, or as a rejection of traditional Pentecostal understandings of the Spirit’s role in the individual’s life and within corporate church—Hillsong songs lost their unique emphasis upon the Holy Spirit, His person and place in the believer’s life. This loss is seen throughout the second phase, but become particularly clear in Phase Three. This leaves future room for songs to promote the role and person of the Holy Spirit, and place for more rounded Trinitarian theology in future releases.

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157. "...She [Zschech] is an ambassador for the work of Compassion International, and is committed wholeheartedly to relieving human suffering in any possible way" www.hoperwanda.org, "100 Days of Hope" 2009, Hope Rwanda.org. 29 April 2009. <www.hoperwanda.org>.
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159. "100 Days of Hope" 2009.
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A Review Symposium on:

Wolfgang Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda* (Eerdmans, 2010).

Chair:

- Professor Jeffery Gros, Distinguished Professor of Ecumenical and Historical Theology, Memphis Theological Seminary, USA.

Panelists

- Dr. Mark Powell, Harding University Graduate School of Religion, USA
- Dr. Ann K. Riggs, Principal, Friends Theological College, Tiriki, Kenya.
- Professor Dennis Doyle, Department of Religious Studies, University of Dayton, USA.

Respondent

- Dr. Wolfgang Vondey, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, Regent University, Virginia Beach, USA.



Introduction

This discussion presents three reflections on the Vondey book, and a response by the author. These were presented at the 2010 American Academy of Religions meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

The year 1910 is often referenced as the initiation of the modern ecumenical movement, with the Edinburgh World Mission Conference. Today the Orthodox, Catholic and Pentecostal churches—all absent from Edinburgh—have taken their full place in the ecumenical pilgrimage of Christians together as they face a global future.

The three essays included here represent an evangelical response by Churches of Christ scholar Mark Powell. Powell outlines the context of the Pentecostal movement in global Christianity, Vondey's theological

proposal for theology seen as *play*, and some critical comments about his model. Quaker scholar and international ecumenist Ann Riggs provides a more critical appraisal, highlighting the positive role of imagination, drawing on her African experience—Pentecostal and ecumenical, providing a critique from a Global South perspective. Catholic ecclesiologist Dennis Doyle provides an exuberant engagement with the *play* imagery and its limitations, harkening to the larger heritage of the Church and such spokespersons as Henri de Lubac, and drawing on the contribution of John Wesley in his response.

The symposium is wrapped up by an overview and response from the author; emphasizing the potential Pentecostal contributions to crises in contemporary theology, contrasting the emphases on performance and play, reviewing and responding to the evaluations of his three reviewers, ending by calling for ever deepening and expanding ecumenical dialogue on the future of Christian theology in our globalized world.

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THEOLOGY AS PLAY: A REVIEW OF A PENTECOSTAL PROPOSAL

Scholars in the fields of religious and theological studies cannot afford to ignore Pentecostal Christianity, which has grown from humble beginnings in the early twentieth century to a global religious movement. As Philip Jenkins suggests, it is Pentecostalism—not Fascism or Communism—that deserves the distinction of being the most successful social movement of the twentieth century.¹ Timothy Tennent scolds Western theologians for spending “countless hours learning about the writings of a few well-known, now deceased, German theologians whose global devotees are actually quite small,” while nearly ignoring more significant global religious perspectives like Pentecostalism.² Wolfgang Vondey’s *Beyond Pentecostalism*³ is significant because it both introduces classic Pentecostalism, and proposes a vision for a global Pentecostal theology. Vondey views classic Pentecostalism, which emerged out of North America, as a manifestation of “the late modern and postmodern theological crisis” (2), and global Pentecostalism as a resource for addressing and end-

ing the crisis. As Vondey summarizes, "Theology 'beyond Pentecostalism' is Pentecostal theology for the world" (8).

The primary metaphor Vondey adopts for the "renewal of the theological agenda" is "theology as play". In presenting his own position, Vondey interacts with George Lindbeck's postliberalism and Kevin Vanhoozer's evangelical appropriation of postliberalism. According to Vondey, Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic view of doctrine grounds Christian beliefs and biblical authority in the life of the church, while Vanhoozer's canonical-linguistic proposal grounds Christian beliefs in the biblical canon. For both, Christian doctrines and scripture primarily address human reason, and shape the way Christians interpret and live in the world. Vondey seeks to advance these proposals by stressing the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit and the importance of human imagination. Theology is play in that it is the dynamic interaction of the Spirit and the Word in the Christian community. An emphasis on Christian imagination leads us beyond the past to an awareness of the work of the Spirit today in exposing unjust structures and ways of living, and creating new possibilities for the future. Vondey does not suggest that all theological reflection be reduced to the activity of play, but he does challenge "the circumstances that contradict or restrict the possibility and operation of theology as participation in the joy of God" (14).

A personal example may help illustrate the heart of Vondey's proposal. During the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, Christian activists did not simply view doctrines and the narrative of scripture as delineating the culture of the church, or shaping the way the church speaks about injustice and liberation. Further, appeals to scripture were not simply about what God had done in the past, and scripture was not viewed as a script that we continue to perform today. These observations are true to an extent, but they are also insufficient. Christian leaders in the Civil Rights Movement saw God at work in their day, through the Holy Spirit, in the church and in the world. The stories of the Exodus and of Israel entering the Promised Land were not simply about past events, but the work of God in the present confronting injustice and creating new possibilities of peace and reconciliation. Vondey emphasizes the imaginative and ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, through the people of God, in ways that go beyond the strict limits of the biblical text. For Vondey, theology is not best conceived as a culture or the performance of a script, but as play that is open to new and imaginative possibilities.

Vondey develops his vision of theology as play by addressing scripture, creeds, the liturgy, and the church. In each instance, Vondey

believes modern theology has viewed these in ways that are too static and institutionalized, and that do not provide sufficient space for the imagination and the ongoing work of the Spirit. Regarding scripture, Vondey traces the development of the traditional distinction between the formal principle of theology, divine revelation, and the material principle of theology, the content of scripture. Vondey argues that this distinction objectifies scripture and relegates divine revelation to the distant past. Instead, he suggests abandoning the distinction between the formal and material principles of theology, and proposes an ongoing vision of revelation where scripture serves as a means through which and beyond which the Spirit continues to encounter the church today. In other words, Vondey argues for “the play of revelation in Spirit, Word, and community” (78).

Vondey examines the Nicene Creed in light of the longstanding *filioque* controversy, as well as the concerns of Oneness Pentecostals who maintain a modalist understanding of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. While Vondey stresses his own Trinitarian convictions, he argues that both the *filioque* controversy and the emergence of Oneness Pentecostalism illustrate the crisis of creedal theology. Furthermore, the structure of the Creed promotes a “theology of articles” that leads to several problems. For instance, the Nicene Creed leads us to focus on the immanent Trinity more than on the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the economy of redemption. The separation of the articles obscures the dynamic, mutual activity, or *perichoresis*, of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The *filioque* clause in Western versions of the creed has “decidedly impeded the development of pneumatology” (87). Creedal theology, then, represents a static, fixed attempt to summarize the Christian faith and preserve orthodoxy that conceals the dynamic activity of God both in the economy of redemption, and in the Spirit’s ongoing “play” with the church.

Similarly, the liturgy and an institutionalized view of the church can be problematic, especially to the extent that these replace the ongoing play of the Spirit with fixed rituals, sacraments, and boundaries that are intended to preserve Christian identity rather than open the church to the world. Interestingly, Vondey recognizes that classic Pentecostal practices—such as speaking in tongues and Spirit baptism—can function as fixed sacraments and rituals to the extent that they are both expected and reproducible in normal Christian experience. Vondey also highlights four influences that have led to the institutionalization of classic Pentecostalism: “the numerical and geographical expansion of Pentecostalism, the occurrence of internal divisions, the demands of global missionary activity, and an increasing ecumenical exposure of the Pentecostal movement

worldwide” (155). While these maladies have affected classic Pentecostalism, Vondey hopes a global Pentecostalism focused on the play of God can avoid rituals and institutions that prohibit the free and creative activity of the Spirit.

Vondey’s vision of theology as *play* is refreshing and inviting, as it allows for freedom, spontaneity, and generosity. At the same time, Vondey’s proposal is a large-scale, programmatic one that raises a number of basic issues. For instance, while Vondey is ready to move beyond the distinction of divine revelation and scripture, surely he does not want to equate divine revelation and scripture (as in a theory of divine dictation), or disregard the historical nature of Christianity and the significance of the foundational events of Christian history. One can speak of the ongoing work of the Spirit through and even beyond scripture without abolishing the interrelated but distinct relationship between divine revelation and scripture. In fact, if one has a vision of the ongoing work of the Spirit through and beyond scripture, one would want to maintain this distinction.

For Vondey, theology-as-play is open to the Spirit and pushes the boundaries of theological orthodoxy. As such, one concern that Vondey’s vision raises is the potential for syncretism and heresy. Vondey addresses this shortcoming by emphasizing that theology is the play of the Spirit, Word, and church. The voice of the Spirit does not stand alone, but interacts with scripture and the discernment of the church community. Vondey invites us not to reject Christian orthodoxy, but to play with Christian orthodoxy. However, Vondey’s understanding of the basic contours of Christian orthodoxy is unclear, and any specific proposal would appear to go against his emphasis on play and freedom. Theology as play can be liberating within certain boundaries, but outside such boundaries it can also quickly denigrate into chaos. For the early and undivided church of the first millennium, the basic vision of God as articulated in scripture and the creeds served as such as boundary.⁴ Vondey rightly points out the shortcomings of an overly epistemic conception of scripture and the creeds, but he does not suggest how God regularly uses materials like the creeds, the liturgy, and the sacraments as means of grace through which God comes to us and leads us to salvation.

Consider Vondey’s discussion of creedal theology. For Vondey the concerns of Oneness Pentecostals illustrate the crisis of the Nicene Creed and the limitations of creedal theology. While it is certainly true that the Nicene Creed has its limitations, I would argue that, in this instance, it is Oneness Pentecostalism that is the crisis, while the Nicene Creed is a resource provided by God’s Spirit to help address the deficien-

cies of non-Trinitarian proposals like modalism. While Vondey is critical of a “theology of articles,” the articles of the Creed rightly distinguish the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and this distinction is important, even for Vondey’s own proposal. Throughout his work, Vondey repeatedly emphasizes the play of the Spirit, Word, and church. However, if the Word is to have any guiding and critical function at all, then it is crucial to both relate and distinguish the Spirit and the Word. Even his theology of play is highly dependent on a Trinitarian understanding of God, as Vondey himself undoubtedly recognizes. Vondey is right to stress that God is not limited by our best attempts to articulate orthodox belief, but an orthodox vision of God can still be a gift of grace that leads us into a more adequate understanding of and deeper communion with God.

Furthermore, consider Vondey’s negative evaluation of the sacraments and ecclesial institutions, since these can conflict with the freedom of the Spirit. At one point, Vondey bemoans the institutionalization of classic Pentecostalism because classic Pentecostalism has adjusted to “the demands of reality rather than to the possibilities of the imagination” (191). Such a comment begs the question of whether his vision of theology as play is a realizable possibility at all. While we should certainly reject any understanding of rituals and institutions that oppose the freedom of the Spirit, we also need a vision of how the Spirit can work through sacraments and institutions, even if the Spirit is not limited by these. Institutions and fixed, reproducible practices like the sacraments can be a means of contact with the gratuitous and free work of the Spirit. We need to be able to answer simple inquiries like, “What must I do to be saved?” even as we recognize the freedom of the Spirit. Vondey teaches at a Christian educational institution, so institutions cannot be all bad.

Overall, Vondey’s proposal for theology as play, and particularly his emphases on the Spirit, Word, and church and the crucial role of the imagination, is an important Pentecostal contribution to the larger ecumenical dialogue and “global theological agenda.” His emphasis on the church being open to the world, rather than being solely concerned with its identity, challenges us all to follow the leading of the Spirit and view God’s work in the world with creativity and imagination. However, while we need to celebrate the free and gratuitous work of God in the world, we also need to recognize and celebrate the way God regularly works through such fixed means of grace as scripture, the creed, sacraments, and ecclesial structures to come to us and lead us to salvation.

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The Church Catholic, Global Christianity, and the Pentecostal Contribution to the Renewal of the Theological Agenda

Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda,⁵ published in the Eerdmans Pentecostal Manifestos series, reads very much like a manifesto, even perhaps an *apologia* for Wolfgang Vondey's personal theological life. In a sense critical engagement seems an inappropriate mode. The author is simply explaining himself and asking others if they would like to join in his project.

Yet I do have difficulties in responding positively to the invitation to play which Vondey has extended to his ecumenical and theological colleagues. Here I will offer my reflections gathered into two clusters. I want to first comment on Vondey's use of the terms and categories of "imagination" and "theology".

I lead a theological college in rural Western Kenya sponsored by Friends (Quakers). In our area there is a family of Pentecostal churches, the African Church of the Holy Spirit, with entirely Quaker roots. Charismatic/pentecostal spirituality is common in some local areas of Quakerism, although rare or absent in others. And there is a substantial presence of Pentecostal faculty members and students at the school. Second, I want to comment from this African location on Vondey's vision of theology as play.

In both cases difficulties arise not as much with Vondey's proposal itself as with claims made about the proposal. Far from being a global, catholic theology the proposal is highly contextual and makes its best sense within a certain First World theological and cultural context.

Imagination and Theology

First, then, we address the terms and categories of "*imagination*" and "*theology*" and their relationship. In his book Vondey recounts an "emergence of a crisis of the imagination from antiquity to the modern age" (p. 17) in an historical account of alternating cycles: "(1) Plato's subordination of the imagination to the authority of reason, (2) the elevation of the imagination in patristic thought, (3) the discrimination against the imagination during the Middle Ages, (4) the triumph of the imagination in

German idealism, and (5) the deconstruction of the imagination in the postmodern era.” (p. 18)

Three difficulties arise:

a) The historical trajectory that Vondey traces is entirely Western: Plato; Augustine; Richard of St Victor; Thomas Aquinas; Kant; Derrida and Lyotard. No Indian Thomas Christians, no Ethiopians, no Armenians, not even Cappadocians and Irish Celts, both major contributors to the development of Western thought. This is certainly not a global philosophical-theological vision.

b) It is entirely theoretical: when Vondey discusses imagination in the Old and New Testaments he considers what the Scriptures say about “imagination” rather than instances within the Scriptures in which imagination is actually used theologically. In so doing he, presumably inadvertently, gives us a Bible in which the floods are never called upon to clap their hands or the hills to sing together for joy (Ps 98:8); the Bride never searches for her beloved, with his cheeks like beds of spices and his lips distilling liquid myrrh (Song 5:13); and we never learn that the Kingdom of God is like “yeast that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour” (Luke 13:21) and like a landowner giving the same wage to the first worker and the last (Matt 20:1-16).

c) Vondey confines his use of the term “theology” to the product of a particular kind of theological activity. Other bodies of theological thought and production are excluded, even in the West. From the very earliest Christian times and throughout Christian history Christian theologians have used poetry, visual arts, narrative, ascetical apophthegms, mystical evocations, apocalyptic, and other “imaginative” forms for theological reflection. The typological methods of ancient Syriac sacramental theology; Origin’s homilies in which he considers the “four senses of Scripture”; the theological poetry of Dante, Milton, Hopkins; the hymnody of St Ephrem, Charles Wesley, and Fanny Crosby; the Lutheran paintings of Lucas Cranach the Elder that so vividly contrast with his pre-Reformation paintings; the meetinghouse designed by James Terrell for Live Oak Friends Meeting (Houston, Texas, USA), with its central roof that can be retracted during worship to allow the natural sunlight, symbolizing the Divine Light, to pour in upon the worshipping assembly; the theology of James Cone with its multivalent, non-linear use of the terms “black” and “white;” Julian of Norwich’s *Revelations of Divine Love* and Teresa of Avila’s *Interior Castle*; the myriad depictions of Jesus in which he appears to be of the same ethnicity or experiencing the same lesions and wounds as the Oceanian, South Asian, African, Amerindian, or skin-diseased believ-

ers of the Isenheim hospital (Grünwald's Altarpiece, 1506-1515) who share the space of their faith experiences with these objects . . . the list could go on and on. Logical reasoning has *always* been only one vehicle of Christian theology.

The importance of theologies of the imagination in the life of the Christian church has not always been in correlation with its theoretical respectability as traced by Vondey. The high value placed on rationality in medieval Scholasticism stands in marked tension with the profusion of theological elaboration through visual and poetical means of the same period. Further, the rationality of medieval Scholasticism is often in fact itself highly imaginative in the same sense that innovations in engineering or computer science require leaps of intuition and imagination as well as rational, technical, and computational precision.

It may be that Vondey has constructed a straw-man in order to attach and defeat him, or, more likely, Vondey is simply mistaken in his account of how much pre- and non-Pentecostal theology has consisted in ordered arguments communicated through logical rationality as compared to other forms. His argument makes most sense as a contextual theology created for discussion and consideration within a semi-Scholastic milieu within the First World. Yet, he has also put his fingers on a real hunger within the North America, at least, for theology that can direct and nurture connection with the divine mystery in forms that are congruent with that mystery.

Nevertheless, the theologies of the imagination from across Christian history were not necessarily "playful" as Vondey has used this term. As Hans Belting has shown in relation to the Christian visual images of pre-modern Europe, such imaginative theology had important work to perform within its own context.⁶ In contrast, Vondey's approach is similar to Romantic and Modernist understandings of "art for art's sake."

Play

The concept of play is central to Vondey's Pentecostal response to a stultifying rationalism in the "orthodox" theology he rejects. Drawing on Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* and other theorists of play, Vondey describes Pentecostal worship as play, as "a free activity standing quite consciously outside 'ordinary' life as being 'not serious,' but at the same time absorbing a person intensely and utterly." (p. 173, quoting Huizinga) Vondey argues that Pentecostal worship, as it was originally and as it ought still to be, is not instrumental, not performative. Rather he claims it is free to be open to unlimited possibilities in creative, chaotic vitality.

Vondey clearly intends to include African thought and faith life in his vision. Indeed, he traces a root of and in some sense an authentication of the “play” he proposes as a constitutive element of authentic Pentecostalism to African influence upon African-American slave religion. (pp. 120-2) Yet, speaking from the vantage point of Africa, it is hard to imagine anything more different from Vondey’s proposal than the reality of the African Christianity of today and the roots of this Christianity in the African Traditional Religion of the past. His call, following Harvey Cox, for “primal speech and primal piety” (p. 181) stands in deep contradiction to the actual primal religions of Africa. Vondey has misunderstood the African root he seeks to claim.

African Traditional Religion (ATR) is overwhelmingly performative and instrumental. From conception and birth to burial and subsequent memorialization, human life within ATR is accompanied by a stream of instrumental activities, rituals, regulations, and proscriptions which are engaged in order to prevent spiritual and physical harm and procure safety and blessing. These activities simply cannot be correctly understood as “play”. They are work, work of the highest importance. The work so performed is intended, in the words of John Mbiti, the most widely recognized interpreter of ATR for Christian audiences, to make life’s journey “meaningful, happy, safe and satisfactory, . . . worthwhile for both the individual and the community.”⁷ The dancing, clapping, singing, shouting, collapsing in trances, entering euphoric states: in ATR these are all purposive, directed toward acquiring blessings and escaping damage.

Christianity came to Tiriki, where our college is located, in 1902. Many of our students, faculty, and staff have relatives who still follow African Traditional Religion in whole or in part. Both there and in the wider theological community in Eastern Africa the language and experience of a “crisis” in theology is unfamiliar. Earlier this year I was present at the revival and re-launch of the Eastern Africa section of EATWOT, the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians. We discussed current needs and future plans: nothing resembling Vondey’s sense of pervasive crisis in *theology* was evident. The overwhelming theological preoccupation in every African venue is inculturation: how does Christianity relate with African culture, with its base in African Traditional Religion and its many colonial legacies?

The concluding section of John Baur’s *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History* speaks to the minds and hearts of many: *A Church Challenged by a Continent in Crisis*. Baur continues, “the crisis has developed through all the years of Independence and is now

breaking out like a bursting ulcer, revealing the bankruptcy of the political leadership and the impoverishment of the masses, provoking in the people's cry for democracy, justice and peace. In this situation Church has to live up to the challenge and find answers to the cries of the time, to the fears and anguish which plague the minds of so many Africans today."⁸ A "praise worship center" in a town near the campus declares on its outdoor sign that it is a "fear free space."

The other morning during the campus chapel service I took notes on this very typical event, for use in responding to Vondey. It was a "prayer" day as contrasted with a preaching day or a day of extra time given to musical and other presentations. The student leader was mature, coming to the end of his program of study shortly, and a good student. He presided well.

After the customary two lively praise choruses, with clapping, dancing, ululation, and electronic keyboard, the presider reminded us that this was a prayer day, that is in his words, a day to bring our petitions before the Lord and give thanks for all he gives and has given to us. God is a provider the presider observed. Isaiah 56:7 was then read: "these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar." Next all sang together the hymn *All to Jesus I Surrender* in Kiswahili. Here in Eastern Africa the hymn's meaning is understood not primarily in terms of surrendering one's will or desires, but in terms of surrendering one's worries and fears, to Jesus' powerful care. Prayer requests were voiced: for a family member in the hospital; for a sick wife at home; for a revival at a school where a FTC student is chaplain; for a successful election in neighboring Tanzania, the home country of several students; for the college in general, the up-coming graduation, the graduands, the guest speaker and the safe travel of all; for a "financial break-through" for students having difficulties paying their tuition fees; for the wedding and marriage of a graduating student. There followed an extended period of "concert prayer" in which each individual prayed either interiorly or, mostly, out loud in a strong voice, in Kiswahili or English or mother tongue or "tongues." Keyboard music and singing accompanied much of the prayer session. The college chaplain was then asked to articulate a single concluding prayer. Characteristic phrases abounded. At appropriate points all joined in, as when we repeatedly rejected bad spirits, such as a spirit of division in our community, in the name of Jesus Christ. The Father was requested to cover persons in any kind of need or danger, such as the dangers of traveling the roads to the graduation ceremonies, "with the

blood of Jesus.” We entrusted our concerns into the “able hands” of God. We “stood in the gap” for those for whom we interceded, and we were reminded that the Spirit also intercedes for us all (Cf. Rom 8:27). We prayed that the Holy Spirit will have its way in our hearts. The presider concluded by petitioning that we “be blessed.”

The service was entirely Christian, although with an orientation toward Old Testament sensibilities. It was freely and emotively expressive. It was at times playful. Yet much of our prayer session was simultaneously an almost direct translation from ATR. Instrumentality and efficacy were central. It was not play in Vondey’s meaning of the term.

In his discussion of theology as play Vondey has directed our attention to an important possibility. Following Huizinga, Harvey Cox, and others, Vondey proposes that worship experienced as play restores a balance in life and that—very importantly—theology should do the same. The needs for balance to which theology ought to respond are the same needs to which worship responds. For Vondey these are needs for play. Vondey urges that we conceive “theology as a noninstrumental, nonproductive, and ‘useless’ activity. Theology betrays itself ‘when it accepts the industrial-technical closure of the world of human meanings.’” (p. 181, quoting Harvey Cox, *Seduction of the Spirit: The Use and Misuse of People’s Spirit* [NY: Simon and Shuster, 1973], 318)

Few in Kenya live in the industrial-technical world of the “secular city.” Whether in the hideous Kibera slum or among the surviving pastoralist communities or within the day to day life of the Kenyan majority of subsistence farmers, other needs predominate. The balance sought in worship, then, differs from that sought by those in the industrial-technological First World contexts that produced Cox and Vondey.

If Vondey is correct in calling for a theology in the same mode as the worship that responds to the real need of the people, then he has pointed toward an important feature of the global, catholic church. The theologians of EATWOT do not create theology within an industrial-technical world. The people on whose behalf they write seek blessing and safety in productive, instrumental worship. Vondey’s thought suggests that their theology ought properly to do the same. Christian partners around the global, while their needs and theological responses differ, can find new ways to understand the theology of others as feeding the spiritual hungers and thirsts of their diverse contexts.

Nevertheless, the performative and instrumental reality of actual African religion has important implications for the cogency of Vondey’s

argument. If it is not a fact that the African-American root of originating Pentecostal worship was play rather than instrumental performance, on what basis does Vondey claim that Pentecostal theology ought rightly be play now? Is this in the end simply a personal predilection of Vondey's, as the manifesto concept of the Eerdmans series might suggest? On what basis can one speaking from the relative security and comfort of the First World, urge Christians of the Two-Thirds World who seek efficacy, blessing, and safety in worship and theology that they are theologically incorrect in bringing their fears and sufferings to the "able hands" of the Father and wounded feet of Jesus, in the power of Pentecost?

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Review of Wolfgang Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism*.

With *Beyond Pentecostalism*, Wolfgang Vondey has written an academically impressive as well as a personally engaging book. His contagious passion never fades even as he unfolds a creative thesis that is remarkably well-organized and meticulously structured. I hope that Professor Vondey takes my comments on his book's organization and structure as the compliments that I mean them to be, though it appears throughout the text that he tends to lament the presence of organization or structure in any human endeavors as unfortunate necessities to which one must concede a bit.

The task he sets out to accomplish is to convince theologians and others that the current situation of global Christianity is calling us out to play. As a Roman Catholic, I must give a traditional response to such an invitation: I will first have to ask my mother. And, as Henri de Lubac, whom Vondey cites favorably, used to remind us, "the Church is our mother."⁹

I intend this opening of my essay to be itself somewhat playful. Actually, Vondey himself comments in his postscript on the tension between his advocacy of "play" as a privileged category and the task-oriented manner in which he goes about that advocacy. I consider this ten-

sion to be an ever-present paradox. “Paradox” is a category used often by de Lubac, and I wonder what Vondey thinks about this category, which can have some connection with play. One paradox, as we find expressed in Seneca, is that “true joy is a serious business.” One might substitute the word play for joy. True play is a serious business.

And so my quoting of de Lubac—that the Church is our mother—is playful and serious at the same time. I want to play, believe me, and I do play, probably too much. But when it comes to matters of ecclesiology and ecumenism, Vondey and I both play and get serious in different playgrounds. He acknowledges this, and is trying to talk about what Pentecostals have to offer to the global theological agenda.

I think he does this very well. A big part of the ecumenical process these days is coming to understand and appreciate each other. Vondey draws upon a wide range of authors, a wide scope of centuries, and a variety of different types of theorists to place Pentecostalism, both classical and global, within the context of an overarching Christian story. He dispels stereotypes by exploring distinctive elements of Pentecostalism that go far beyond glossolalia and Spirit-baptism. Some of these distinctive elements are challenging the status quo, imaginative engagement with the presence of God, spontaneity, and playfulness. At the same time, he is careful to acknowledge that many of these distinctive elements are not unique to Pentecostalism.

Vondey has helped me to get an initial grasp of oneness Pentecostalism and of the serious theological and historical discussions in which the oneness Pentecostals have been engaged. He has helped me to see the narrowness of biblical interpretation associated with some Pentecostals in a new light as well as to become aware of how Pentecostals themselves are struggling with this issue. He has given me a new sense of how Pentecostals are now engaged intelligently with a variety of academic disciplines and pursuits. And he wrote in a voice that expresses an integrated vision of academic, Pentecostal, Christian, and global concerns.

Vondey does not himself bring up numbers, but I heard recently that there are now 600 million Pentecostals in the world. And they are growing so rapidly that who knows how many there will be by the time I complete this review. They don’t as yet outnumber the rest of us Christians, but pretty soon they may have us surrounded. At the present rate we might project playfully if not statistically that by the year 2015 we will all be Pentecostals. Of course one should not be overly impressed by numbers, but the numbers are staggering. One can hardly help but pay attention.

It isn't just the numbers, though. One doesn't have to be a Pentecostal to discern that there seems to be some connection between this movement and the Holy Spirit. In a volume of proceedings from an ecumenical meeting held in Bose, Italy in 2002, four movements or events were consistently identified by participants from a wide range of Christian traditions as modern representations of the activity of the Holy Spirit: Wesley's Methodist movement, the ecumenical movement of the 20th century, the Second Vatican Council, and Pentecostalism.¹⁰ Vondey helps us to make a few qualifications here: that Pentecostalism itself goes beyond just this one person of the Trinity, that not everything connected with Pentecostalism is of God, and that the Holy Spirit is not limited to Pentecostalism. Still, it remains clear to most of us that Pentecostalism is connected with the Holy Spirit in a discernible and real way, and that this connection is not accidental or coincidental or momentarily fleeting. For this reason, one that is far more important than the mere numbers, one can hardly help but pay attention.

I agree with and am touched by the main thesis of Vondey's book. I agree that the churches that are no longer movements, including classical Pentecostal assemblies, are in critical need of a theology of renewal and that they should all be looking toward global Pentecostalism as a resource in developing such a theology. In another context, I argued on a small scale a similar thesis focusing on contemporary Roman Catholicism and why it should foster the movement presently within it of small Christian communities by allowing it to be inspired by John Wesley and the early Methodists.¹¹

I find a striking point of comparison between Wesley's Methodist movement and global Pentecostalism. Wesley desired that Methodism remain a movement and not become a church in its own right. Most 18th century English Methodists were Anglicans, but some were Puritans and a few were Roman Catholics. Wesley refused to allow Methodists to hold meetings at the same time as Anglican services, for he expected Methodists to continue to attend church. He predicted near the end of his life that once he died, perhaps about one-third of Methodists might break off and start their own church, but that the separatists would soon exhaust themselves and Methodism would continue on as a movement of renewal within the churches. Wesley believed that once a sufficient number were converted from being just nominal Christians to being real Christians, differences would fade away and there would remain just one established but renewed church in the land.

Wesley is known for being a task-oriented worker. He was like an efficiency expert using modern organizational strategies to get the most Christianity out of Christians as possible. He doesn't seem to be remembered for his playfulness. Yet he fostered a quarterly love feast among Methodists in which those admitted would stay up late into the night eating penny cake and drinking punch and praising each other for the good works that they had been able to achieve in the Lord.

Wesley was an Anglican priest who celebrated mass frequently. He believed that there should be one established church in the land and that the rightfully established church in his land was the Church of England. And yet he saw the Church of England as dry bones that needed to be brought back to life by the Spirit. He thought that Christians could only break fellowship with each other if it would not be otherwise possible to live a true Christian existence without doing so. And so he saw the break with Rome as a necessary but tragic event. He said that closing the breach with Rome could not be considered until Rome would apologize for the murder of Jan Hus at the Council of Constance in 1415. In December 1999, Pope John Paul II did officially apologize for the death of Jan Hus, but it was a bit too late for Wesley.

Wesley's playground was conceptually somewhere between Vondey's and my own. One of the things that I most appreciate about Vondey's book is his attempt to place Pentecostalism within a trajectory that includes the entire historical sweep of Christianity. I believe that a comparative focus on how historical narratives are constructed differently within different Christian traditions constitutes a needed and underdeveloped step in ecumenical progress. As a Roman Catholic, I can find myself much more easily within Wesley's story than I can in Vondey's story. But I appreciate deeply the fact that Vondey has put his story out there. It's a story about how the Christian imagination and playfulness are crushed again and again, by Constantinianism, by medieval Christendom, and by the industrialized modern world. It's a story about how creativity and spontaneity are continually being swallowed up by objectification, definition, organization, structure, and finally, dreadfully, by institution.

Vondey draws favorably upon many Catholic authors in telling his story. I did not experience his book as in any way anti-Catholic, but on the contrary as a sincere attempt to tell the Pentecostal story in a historical and analytical framework that highlights what it has to offer to all Christians in the global situation of today. Even if he is playing in a different playground, there is a lot of legitimate overlap between his story and his analysis and my story and my analysis. As I name some of these differ-

ences, I want to be understood as doing so in the spirit of serious and playful conversation between Christians who share partial but not yet full communion with each other.¹²

Vondey finds things to value in the work of Yves Congar. As Vondey mentions, Congar rejects the style of ecclesiology that he labels “hierarchology.” For Congar, ecclesiology must be in its depth a study of spirituality. Congar’s three volume ecclesiology written after Vatican II is entitled *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*.¹³ It is Congar who takes seriously a wide breadth of Christian witness, East and West, to develop a pneumatological and ultimately Trinitarian approach to ecclesiology. At the heart of Congar’s ecclesiology is what Vondey labels “ecclesiality.” The contemporary Catholic ecclesialist Rick Gaillardetz calls it “ecclesial vitality.”¹⁴ Ecclesiology should not be simply a study of authoritative structures that ignores the presence of God’s spirit in the life of the church.

The difference in a Catholic focus on “ecclesiality” lies in our insistence that some of what we call structures we believe are gifts that emerged from the presence of God’s spirit. According to Francis Sullivan, for example, the church-wide emergence of the episcopacy in the late second century was nearly unanimously accepted by Christians of the time as it saved the unity of the church in response to the Gnostic threat.¹⁵ Roman Catholics believe that the Holy Spirit has guided the church throughout its history, especially when it comes to important decisions that have helped Catholics stay unified such as the designation of the canon and the formulation of the creeds. For Catholics of today, the juridical structure of the Church is tied in with its sacramental meaning and even with some of its potential for prophetic witness. Today, there is much diversity and much tension within the Roman Catholic Church, and of course we face many problems within. We are, however, united with each other in a way that those who are named Pentecostal are not. Many of us who are Roman Catholics believe that in some way, perhaps beyond what we can fully envision at this time in history, our form of unity may prove to be a gift that we can offer as a resource to the various manifestations of global Christianity.

I say these things in this context mainly to point out that the historical account of the trajectory of Christianity needed to support my story will differ in key points and in emphases from Vondey’s story. I think there is almost as much to be said about the importance of the imagination in relation to established doctrines and scripted performances as there is in relation to improvisation and spontaneity and play. I think that renewal can almost be as concerned with penetrating and reinvigorating established

forms of thought and praxis as it is about challenging them.

If I tell Vondey that I have a different read of Augustine, or of the Age of Constantine, or of the Middle Ages, or of the Romantics, I'm not saying that I don't appreciate his history or his analysis, but that I don't as yet see room for myself in his story. If I tell him that I think his view of "Christendom" is about as differentiated as my view of "Pentecostalism" was before I read his book, I'm really saying that I need to write my own book about it and hope that he will read it.

Yes, I am embarrassed that I had to ask my mother if I could go out to play, and that she has told me that—at least for now—I can go out but I have to stay in my own playground. She said that I could invite Vondey over to play, but I'm not even going to tell him the requirements she says he would have to meet because, at least for now, and especially after reading his book, I don't think he would really be interested.

I say directly to Vondey, "thank you for this book". I enjoyed it and I agree with your basic thesis that all the churches can benefit from the movement to be generated by a theology of renewal, and that we should all look to global Pentecostalism as a serious resource for learning how to play.

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Response to the Reviewers of *Beyond Pentecostalism*

I would like to begin my response by expressing my sincere gratitude to Mark Powell, Ann Riggs, and Dennis Doyle for engaging my book with such thoughtfulness and in the sense of a critical engagement that is the fundamental prerequisite for scholarship and learning. The respondents skillfully identified some of the contemporary impulses that provide the contexts for my book and that inform my writing at this point. They correctly understand my intention to provide not a definitive form of Pentecostal theology but an integration of Pentecostal sensitivities in global Christianity. The focus of *Beyond Pentecostalism* is the church catholic, global Christianity, and the Pentecostal contribution to the renewal of the

theological agenda. To that end, a number of concerns were raised about the appropriateness or applicability of the major ideas I present. Let me begin by briefly outlining the major proposals of the book.

The heart of my study suggests that global Pentecostalism offers indispensable resources to overcome a number of different manifestations of a crisis in contemporary theology. I expand on this thesis in six interrelated chapters that each consist of three main parts. Each chapter begins by examining one aspect of the crisis from a broad historical-systematic perspective that aims at a critical reconstruction of the global state of affairs. I use the notion of crisis as a positive term defined as both turning point and prerequisite for the development of global Christianity. In this sense, the content of the first section is expansive in scope in order to address a shift of foundations that has taken place in global Christianity in the late modern world.¹⁶ The result is an emphasis on a crisis of the imagination, a crisis of revelation, a crisis of creedal theology, a crisis of the liturgy, a crisis of Christendom, and a crisis of play. The analysis of each crisis is followed by a narrative that reveals classical Pentecostalism as a manifestation of that particular crisis. In this second section of each chapter I tell the story of Pentecostalism in North America from the broad perspective of theological affairs raised in the first section, and thus in ways the story has not always been told. In the final part of each chapter I begin to conceptualize a constructive and programmatic proposal for global Christianity that offers resources to overcome the crisis from within the Pentecostal tradition and thereby integrates Pentecostalism into the broader theological landscape. I suggest that the task of theology at the beginning of the twenty-first century requires an awareness of the critical issues of our time as they relate to both the established theological paradigms and the new directions suggested by Pentecostal thought and praxis. As the titles of the chapters indicate, this task leads theology beyond the confines of reason, beyond Scripture, beyond doctrine, beyond ritual, beyond church, and beyond orthodoxy.

On a different level, I suggest that the various manifestations of theological crisis show a general tendency of theology toward performance. In contrast, I characterize the Pentecostal perspective as more genuine to the idea of play.¹⁷ By using this metaphor, I do not intend to make light of the sincerity and importance of Christian thought but rather to outline the emerging contours of global Christianity characterized by a distinct manner of being and self-understanding that stands in contrast to the dominant forms of the established theological "enterprise." Put differently, the status quo of Christian theology is at odds with the changing face of

Christianity worldwide.¹⁸ With play, I refer to any activity done for the joy of doing it and not for any performative, competitive, functionalistic, rationalistic, or utilitarian reasons. Theologically speaking, play is the joy of God in which we participate. This admittedly broad definition is further clarified in each chapter with focus on addressing the various crisis moments of the contemporary theological agenda. My intention is not to develop a romantic idea of theology as play but to allow the image of play to shed light on the current theological ethos, both critically and therapeutically. This necessary realism shows that play itself has entered a substantial crisis in the late modern world.¹⁹ What I envision, then, in going “beyond” the various aspects that define the current state of Christianity is a fundamental attitude of flexibility and openness, a dynamic of playfulness, that repossesses and liberates traditional theological structures. I do not suggest that theology can escape the use of reason, the text of Scripture, doctrines, rituals, and the community of the church, as might be suggested by the titles of the chapters. On the contrary, I propose that the resources provided by global Pentecostalism are able to integrate these orthodox theological structures and, by so doing, to transform them in an attitude that releases their full potential. In this sense, the work presented here is intended, on the most fundamental level, as an invitation to play with Christian orthodoxy. The reviewers have acknowledged this invitation and added important insights and corrections.

Mark Powell offers a very helpful overview of my book. He correctly observes that my primary intention is to construct a dialogue in which Pentecostalism is not only integrated but acting as a transformative agent. Each chapter in principle serves only as an illustration of the main thesis that Pentecostalism functions as a chief catalyst in the formation of a global Christian theology. Pentecostalism perpetuates this transformation at the cost of its own particular identity. At the same time, I would argue that what I have presented in the book is a reading of Pentecostalism supported by primary and secondary sources from within Pentecostalism and yet in a manner not always recognized by Pentecostals. The critique of the Christian enterprise I offer is therefore not my critique but the Pentecostal critique thus far. It remains to be shown if my reading of Pentecostalism is accurate. What I suspect is that I have not been careful enough to engage all the nuances of Pentecostalism.²⁰ I look forward to those who wish to add their voice to a more accurate and complete assessment of Pentecostalism beyond my own.

At the same time, I would be more careful than Powell in using the word “beyond.” As I emphasize repeatedly, the intention of Pentecostal-

ism is not a forsaking of orthodoxy. The paths beyond the different elements of orthodox theology lead toward a transformation of orthodox theology, not its destruction, the globalization of theology, not its Pentecostalization. In other words, orthodoxy is big enough to allow for play, although a playful orthodoxy will look different from its current performative state. In this transformation, the path leads also beyond classical Pentecostalism, and it seems to me that Powell has not always clearly followed my distinction between the second and third part of each chapter, which show respectively how classical Pentecostals can be seen as participating in the crisis while offering global Pentecostalism as a solution to the crisis. This is an important distinction, because it allows us to see Pentecostalism as already participating in the theological task, even if that has not been recognized and even if that participation was only to perpetuate the crisis of late modern theology. It allows us to recognize that global Pentecostalism is no longer classical Pentecostalism, and that global Pentecostalism would do things at times quite differently from its historical forebears. Hence I certainly have no negative view of the sacraments, as I have shown in other publications, but actually propose that sacramentality is a fruitful venue for understanding Pentecostalism.²¹ It is classical Pentecostalism that is critical of a static framework for the celebration of the sacraments; and it is the traditional sacramental framework that ostracizes Pentecostal practices, often seen critically from a performative perspective.²² Global Pentecostalism, with its integration of sacramental contexts worldwide, would offer not only a critique of the inflexible, closed structures of performance but also constructive proposals on how those structures can be transformed. The starting point for this transformation may not have been Pentecostal, neither may we call the end result Pentecostal.²³ What Pentecostalism does offer, however, is a catalytic function in the process of transformation, even if it is at the cost of its own particular identity. Pentecostalism is a transitional, or as Victor Turner says, liminal phenomenon.²⁴

Ann Rigg's critique sheds a ray of light into what might otherwise be constructed as my rather bleak portrayal of contemporary theology. She identifies an important aspect in the pursuit of a global theology, namely, that not all contexts are experiencing the theological reality in the same way. Generalizations about the global state of affairs are without substance if not accompanied by concrete phenomenological evidence. To that end, as she observes, my research is of course helplessly contextual. At the same time, I would be surprised to find an example for a functioning decontextualized theology that claims to be concerned with global

affairs. In that regard, I feel confirmed in my limited intention only to make sense of Pentecostalism and its integration in the global theological agenda. I have identified no more than what I have called a map for the terrain of future research. A map, much like the ones we find in the schools in our parts of the world which typically place our location in the middle of the globe. We stop the world from turning, for a moment, and look at the state of affairs from our context, always aware of the need eventually to let go of the world again. If you have observed the dramatic change in maps over the past 20 years, you understand how difficult and yet how necessary this task is. In the limited moment observed in my book, I look at global Christianity from the perspective of classical Pentecostalism while letting go of this context to reach beyond Pentecostalism to the Christian world at large.

In light of this task, I am surprised at Rigg's initial criticism that I constructed a straw-man in my portrayal of the crisis of the imagination. In my first chapter, I do not suggest as she says, that all pre- and non-Pentecostal theology has been dominated by rationality. In fact, I outline five alternating cycles of historical developments in which sometimes reason, sometimes the imagination persevere. She faults this description for not including certain other, non-Western, non-industrial sources, many of which are treated more thoroughly than I could have achieved in the extensive literature I cite.²⁵ However, at the end of the day, I do not think that including those other traditions would have changed the portrayal of the up and down of the imagination in the history of Christian thought in any substantive manner. What I would emphasize from my argument at the beginning of the book is the fact that we are currently in a phase of suppressing the imagination even if, as Riggs has pointed out correctly, it is dominant in Scripture and many periods of Christian history. Her criticism is even more surprising since she does not make use of the details of my analysis of the doctrinal, ritual, ecclesial, and cultural issues that support my claims in the subsequent chapters, especially my treatment of inculturation which she rightfully sees at the center of debate in African Christianity.²⁶ My use of Pentecostalism remains realistic, since even classical Pentecostalism (as I show in the final chapter) has succumbed to a performance-oriented pursuit of the theological task. In that sense, I find Rigg's critique to confirm my own thoughts.

Her portrayal of African Traditional Religion as overwhelmingly performative would indicate to me that the performance-trap I have lamented in Christianity is present also in other religions. It is an aspect I have highlighted in my treatment of rituals, but which goes beyond the

scope of the book. The fact that she can describe a worship service by interpreting its playful aspects in the terms of instrumentality and efficacy bears witness to the pervasive nature of performance. This tendency is particularly evident in the industrial world of the West, but as Riggs has suggested, it exists in Africa not only because of the import of colonial Christian forces but as indigenous to African traditional religion. It is at this point that I would locate the challenges and opportunities of engaging the resources of global Pentecostalism in terms of play.

In his review of the book, Dennis Doyle picks up on this intention and highlights what he calls a paradox. Play, to paraphrase Seneca, is serious business. Or as others have put it, play is actually hard work. This paradox is important because it helps clarify the point I wish to make that the concept of play is often misunderstood. Play is seen as immature and not serious, an ambiguous and even frivolous behavior that contradicts orthodox theological sensibilities. Seemingly affirming this fact, Huizinga's play-theory calls play deliberately "not serious," but at the same time describes it as "absorbing a person intensely and utterly."²⁷ Play, in fact, as Piaget and others have pointed out, gets closely and permanently to the heart of what it means to be seriously human.²⁸ If play is serious, then it is so in the sense of being able to fascinate the human being in the most fundamental manner.²⁹ The paradox that play is serious work functions because play has been artificially separated from work. But as I suggest, Pentecostalism offers various opportunities to repossess the character of work in the play of the people. I would find reflected in Pentecostalism what de Lubac has called paradox and mystery,³⁰ and I call it "play," not because it sounds better but because it contrast more explicitly with the performative, productive, utilitarian mindset of the late modern world.

Doyle also picks up on my use of the term "playground." It is a useful, but somewhat unfortunate term. When we use it, we tend to speak of the Catholic playground, or the Pentecostal playground, or the Wesleyan playground, thereby distinguishing our terrain, our community, and our manner of play. For that reason I speak of Pentecostalism as a movement that enlarges the playground. I would have preferred to speak of the world at large, or life itself, as the playground in which Christians find themselves theologically, but that would be to misconstrue the reality of work that still dominates the theological mentality. Theology and its structures, I would agree with Doyle, is a gift to preserve the unity of the church. But it ceases to function as a gift if it serves to demarcate different playgrounds in which we play by different rules.³¹ Theology then becomes competitive, a game, not play. If you invite a Pentecostal over to your

playground to play, you better be prepared that the rules may be changed, the structures loosened, the playground enlarged. The object of this play is to invite all, to include all traditions in a play that is not constituted by one tradition, that is neither typically Catholic, nor clearly Reformed, Lutheran, Wesleyan, Anglican, or Pentecostal.³² Pentecostalism, I would say, is simply the most curious theological movement at this time. Curiosity is a gift Pentecostals bring to the playground.

It is the modest goal of *Beyond Pentecostalism* to arouse curiosity in a constructive, ecumenical, and stimulating, in short, playful manner. The engagement my book has received from this panel is essential for the prosecution of the larger project that is only begun with this work: the renewal of the theological agenda and the integration of Pentecostalism in global Christianity. The reviews of *Beyond Pentecostalism* serve as important reminders that this task cannot be carried out from one perspective or context but requires the knowledge and experience of the diversity of Christian voices. In this sense, I hope to have added one small voice to illuminate the complexities of the contemporary situation. I want to conclude by inviting all of you, the reviewers of my book and who else may be inclined to read it, to this joint task of understanding and formulating the challenges and opportunities of global Christianity beyond Pentecostalism.

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Endnotes:

1. Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 9.
2. Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 49. Tennent's comment occurs in a chapter on Islam, but equally applies to other global religious movements he discusses such as Pentecostalism.
3. Wolfgang Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).
4. A similar proposal is found in three recent edited volumes: William J. Abraham, Jason E. Vickers, and Natalie E. Van Kirk, eds., *Canonical The-*

- ism: A Proposal for Theology and the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), Timothy George, ed., *God the Holy Trinity: Reflections on Christian Faith and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), and Christopher R. Seitz, ed. *Nicene Christianity: The Future for a New Ecumenism* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001).
5. Wolfgang Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda* (Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2010).
 6. Hans Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, trans. Mark Bartusius and Raymond Meyer (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1990) and *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
 7. John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, 2nd rev. ed. (Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers, 1987), 87.
 8. John Baur, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa; An African Church History*, 2nd rev. ed. (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 2005), 517.
 9. Henri de Lubac discusses the image of the church as mother in several of his ecclesiological works. See the story that Hans Küng tells about de Lubac standing in the back of a talk Küng had given in St. Peter's in Rome during the time of the Second Vatican Council, at the end of which de Lubac said: "One doesn't talk like that about the church. *Elle is quand-même notre mère*; after all, she's our mother!" In *Christianity: Essence, History, and Future*, trans. by John Bowden ((New York: Continuum, 1995 [German orig. 1994]) 4.
 10. See Doris Donnelly, Adelbert Denaux, and Joseph Famerée, eds., *The Holy Spirit, the Church, and Christian Unit: Proceedings of the Conference Held at the Monastery of Bose, Italy, 14-20 October, 2002* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005).
 11. "Wesley's Methodist Movement: What Might It Have to Offer to Contemporary Roman Catholics?" in *Via Media Philosophy: Holiness Unto Truth: Intersections between Wesleyan and Roman Catholic Voices*, ed. L. Bryan Williams (Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 159-69.
 12. For a discussion of "full communion," see Jeffrey Gros, "The Requirements and Challenges of Full Communion," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 42 (Spring 2007) 217-42.
 13. *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, 3 vols. trans. David Smith (New York: Seabury; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1983 [French orig. 1979, 1980]).
 14. Richard R. Gaillardetz, *Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2008) 114.

15. Francis A. Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops: The Development of the Episcopacy in the Early Church* (New York: Newman Press, 2001) 223–30.
16. See Hans Schwarz, *Theology in a Global Context: The Last Two Hundred Years* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005); Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005); Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000); William A. Dyrness, ed., *Emerging Voices in Global Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994).
17. See Jean-Jacques Suurmond, *Word and Spirit at Play: Towards a Charismatic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994).
18. See Michel S. Koppel, *Open-Hearted Ministry: Play as Key to Pastoral Leadership* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008); Thomas Klie, *Zeichen und Spiel: Semiotische und spieltheoretische Rekonstruktion der Pastoraltheology*, *Praktische Theologie und Kultur* 11 (Gütersloh: Christian Kaiser, 2003); Robert K. Johnston, *The Christian at Play* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983); James V. Schall, *Far Too Easily Pleased: A Theology of Play, Contemplation and Festivity* (Beverly Hills: Benziger, 1976); Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Play*, trans. Reinhard Ulrich (New York: Harper & Row, 1972); David L. Miller, *Gods and Games: Toward a Theology of Play* (New York: World Publishing Co., 1970); Harvey Cox, *The Feast of Fools: A Theological Essay on Festivity and Fantasy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969).
19. Wolfgang Vondey, *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crisis of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda* (Pentecostal Manifestos; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 172–82.
20. See David Martin, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parrish* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002); Allan H. Anderson and Walter J. Hollenweger, eds., *Pentecostals after a Century: Global Perspectives on a Movement in Transition*, *JPTS* 15 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999); Murray W. Dempster et al., eds., *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1999); Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody: Hendrickson: 1997).
21. See Wolfgang Vondey and Chris W. Green, “Between This and That: Reality and Sacramentality in the Pentecostal Worldview,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 19, no. 2 (2010): 243–64; Wolfgang Vondey, “Pentecostal Ecclesiology and Eucharistic Hospitality: Toward a Systematic and Ecumenical Account of the Church,” *Pneuma. Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 32, no. 1 (2010): 41–55; idem, *People of Bread: Rediscovering Ecclesiology* (New York: Paulist Press, 2008), 141–94.
22. Cf. Estrela Y. Alexander, “Liturgy in Non-Liturgical Holiness-

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23. For an example, see Wolfgang Vondey, “New Evangelization and Liturgical Praxis in the Roman Catholic Church,” *Studia Liturgica* 36, no. 2 (2006): 231–52.
 24. Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 94–97.
 25. See, for example, Douglas Hedley, *Living Forms of the Imagination* (London: T&T Clark, 2008); Garrett Green, *Theology, Hermeneutics, and Imagination: The Crisis of Interpretation at the End of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); John Llewelyn, *The Hypocritical Imagination: Between Kant and Levinas* (London: Routledge, 2000); J. M. Cocking, *Imagination: A Study in the History of Ideas*, ed. Penelope Murray (London: Routledge, 1991); Garrett Green, *Imagining God: Theology and the Religious Imagination* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989); Richard Kearney, *The Wake of Imagination: Toward a Postmodern Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).
 26. See J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Paul Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity: Pentecostalism in a Globalising African Economy* (London: Hurst & Co., 2004); Jeffrey S. Hittenberger, “Globalization, ‘Marketization,’ and the Mission of Pentecostal Higher Education in Africa,” *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 26, no. 2 (2004): 182–215; Allan H. Anderson, *African Reformation: African Initiated Christianity in the 20th Century* (Trenton: Africa World, 2001); Ogbu Kalu, “The Third Response: Pentecostalism and the Reconstruction of Church Experience in Africa, 1970–1995,” *Studia Historiae Ecclesiasticae* 24, no. 2 (1998): 1–34.
 27. Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), 13.
 28. See Jean Piaget, *Play, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood*, trans. C. Cattegno and F. M. Hodgson, *The International Library of Psychology* 25 (London: Routledge, 1951; repr. 2000); Eugen Fink, *Spiel als Weltsymbol* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1960); Hugo Rahner, *Man at Play* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967); Brian Sutton-Smith, *The Ambiguity of Play* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).
 29. Cf. Wolfgang Vondey, “Christian Enthusiasm: Can the Olympic Flame Kindle the Fire of Christianity?” *Word & World* 23, no. 3 (2003): 312–20.
 30. Henri de Lubac, *The Church: Paradox and Mystery*, trans. James R. Dunne

(New York: Alba House, 1969).

31. See my assessment "Denominations in Classical and Global Pentecostalism: A Historical and Theological Contribution," in *Denomination: Assessing and Ecclesiological Category*, ed. Paul M. Collins and Barry Ensign-George (Ecclesiological Investigations; New York: Continuum, 2010), 178–92 and the essays in Wolfgang Vondey (ed.), *Pentecostalism and Christian Unity: Ecumenical Essays and Critical Assessments* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2010).
32. Cf. Wolfgang Vondey, "Pentecostal Perspectives on *The Nature and Mission of the Church*: Challenges and Opportunities for Ecumenical Transformation," in *The Nature and Mission of the Church: Ecclesial Reality and Ecumenical Horizons for the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Paul M. Collins and Michael A. Fahey (Ecclesiological Investigations; New York: Continuum, 2008), 55–68; Wolfgang Vondey, "Presuppositions for Pentecostal Engagement in Ecumenical Dialogue." *Exchange: Journal for Missiological and Ecumenical Research* 30, no. 4 (2001): 344–58.

Book Reviews:

Yves Congar: essential writings. Edited by Paul Lakeland, Maryknoll: New York: Orbis Books, 2010. 204 pages. \$US20.00 (paper)

The latest in Orbis Books' 'Modern Spiritual Masters Series', *Yves Congar: Essential Writings* is a compilation of Congar's works, selected by the editor, Paul Lakeland, with an extended biographical introduction. Lakeland's purpose is to present selected excerpts from Congar's opus of over 2000 works, as a means of introduction for the student or theologian to one of the 20th Century's most influential Catholic Theologians. The book is reader friendly, and does not require extensive education in Catholic theology, history, or specific Catholic conventions. Despite its introductory character, I was impressed with the insightful contributions Congar has made in Catholic ecumenism, ecclesiology, lay theology and Pneumatology which form the significant partitions of the book.

When one reads theology, the ideas presented are often disconnected from the life of the author. We learn theology, but we do not necessarily see or learn how the individual *lived* as a *theologian*, in relationship with their Church and to others. The personal aspect of the materials included are thus perhaps one of the most inspiring aspects of this book, which includes excerpts from interviews, and Congar's personal diaries. Lakeland does well to describe the man behind the writings, and the struggles and triumphs he had with his beloved Church.

Yves Congar was born in France in 1904. Having suffering under German occupation as a teenager in World War I, he entered minor seminary in 1919. He then moved to Paris in 1921 to study at the Institut Catholique and, after finishing his preparatory philosophical studies in 1924, he entered the Dominican Novitiate in Amiens in 1925. He studied theology at Le Saulchoir in Belgium, and was ordained on July 25, 1930. He began teaching at Le Saulchoir two years later, which began his career as a teacher and writer.

Despite growing up in traditional circles, he was a man devoted to the pursuit of truth, on the Aquinian model (p. 26) open and progressive in thought. His passion for truth, and his candidness, at times led to chastisement by his superiors. Most significant among these conflicts was his exile in the early 1950s, after a period of turbulent relations with his supe-

riors during the conservative regime of Pope Pius XII. He was at first in “virtual house arrest in the Dominican Friary in Cambridge, England, and later in Jerusalem.” (pp. 21-2) In a letter to his mother at the time, which Lakeland insightfully includes, he writes:

The French Dominicans... have been persecuted and reduced to silence... because they were the only ones to have a measure of freedom of thought, action, and expression.... It is quite clear to me that Rome wants and has ever wanted only one thing: the affirmation of its own authority.”

He was soon to be reinstated to his teaching position, and with the election of Pope John XXIII and the announcement of Vatican II, he found himself a participant and significant contributor to the great *aggiornamento*. Indeed, Lakeland notes, “by most estimates, [he was] the single most important theological influence on Vatican II (pp. 23). His influence can be seen in the central document of the Council, *Lumen gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, as well as the ecumenical nature, which vindicated his works preceeding and can be witness in his published journals of the time, *Journal d'un théologien* and *Mon journal du concile* (2 vols.). Congar's contribution to Catholic theology went beyond the Council though.

His significant other works include his early ecumenical, *Divided Christendom* (1937);¹ his Lay theology, *Lay People in the Church* (1953; rev. ed. 1964); his ecclesiological works, *Tradition and Traditions* (1960)² and *True and False Reform in the Church* (1950);³ and his monumental three volume Pneumatology, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit* (1979-80).⁴ He was later in life elevated to cardinal, but was too sick to participate in the ceremony which was to be taken by Pope John Paul II. Congar was a disciplined man, private and humble, who lived a long and accomplished life, devoting himself to his study for his Church, and paying personal sacrifices willingly to do so. He worked hard right up until his death in Paris in June 22, 1995.

Of all his work, it was his Ecumenical involvements which were his first passion, and these remained with him throughout his life. For Congar, “The disunion of Christians is verily a rending of Christ and a continuance of his passion.” (p. 41) In light of the missiological nature of the church in post-christendom western society, I can only agree with Congar that church disunity, both inter-denominationally, and also within denominations, is a scandal with which no genuine believer can be content. Congar writes, “Unbelievers are far more scandalized than we realize by the divisions among Christian. Although, unfortunately, we cannot yet

show a united front, when we show that we are moving in that direction and that dissension and misunderstanding among Christians is at an end, then the world listens.” (p. 48) For us Pentecostal-charismatic Protestants, with our emphasis on Free Church autonomy and individuality, our situation is even more complicated denominationally as we have implicitly - and sometimes explicitly - promoted a local church praxis at the expense of a cooperative universal ecclesiology. True sacrificial ecumenical work, both institutionally and through local church laity, has to move beyond mere inter-denominationalism. One will find insightful the way Congar balances his tradition and his desire for ecumenism. While still maintaining that the Catholic Church is the ‘Ark of Salvation’, he also understood ecumenism as requiring all to conversion, and all to acknowledge the sins of their denomination.

While an ecclesologist by specialty, Congar’s Pneumatology was particularly influential. There are two introductory chapters in the book that relate to this: ‘Congar and the Spiritual Life’, and ‘Congar and the Holy Spirit’. I felt that the emphasis on Congar and his Spiritual life was a little more abstract, it outlined a more traditional and pietistic aspect to Congar, and also his versatility. But his Pneumatology proper was, in my opinion, a little neglected, and could have portrayed his unique insights further. This is the case since Congar’s Pneumatology was hugely influential on the Catholic Charismatic Movement, among the most practically ecumenical arms of the Catholic Church, and so this section acts as an important point of ingress for Pentecostals and Charismatics of other traditions into his work.

Congar’s theology of the Laity is also worth highlighting. Considering Pentecostalism’s voluntarist and grass roots beginnings, and the recent Apostolic shift in local church ecclesial structures, I found Congar’s lay theology insightful and timely. The need for a Theology of the Laity and the Priest, invariably implies a theology of the Church, something Congar was well aware of, and qualified to contribute to. Congar was a great champion of the recognition of the Laity, one of his lasting legacies in the outcomes of Vatican II. Congar writes, “We must not posit authority first and in itself, and then say that it is wielded over Christians for spiritual ends, and must be used impartially in a spirit of service. Christianity must be posited first, and then the fact of authority in it...” He goes on to say, quoting Augustine but reversing the order, “We must first lay down the “with you I am a Christian,” and then, included in it, “for you I am a bishop.””(p. 68) Congar’s lay theology is most refreshing, and I found

myself reacquainting myself with elements of my Pentecostal heritage, though ironically in the writings of a Catholic.

While Congar was far ahead of his time in many aspects, he was loyal to his tradition. On the other hand, one finds that he did not accept the status quo without seeking to develop it, or even to challenge it. He writes, "In the outward forms we have inherited from a venerable past we must be ruthless critics of anything that may on the one hand betray the spirit of the Gospel, and on the other, of anything that may isolate us and set up a barrier between us and men [sic]." (p. 77) He never stopped journeying, and his opinions changed throughout his career. In this he shows incredible maturity, often acknowledging publicly later in life mistakes of his earlier writings. As a theologian who engaged critically with his Church, he maintained incredible love, patience and humility.

Considering that Lakeland had more than 2000 works from which to choose in his compilation, there are always grounds for readers to argue that he did not include the most significant or important passages. Despite this, the wealth of what is accumulated will excite the student or theologian who wishes to acquaint oneself with one of the greats of the contemporary Catholic Church.

As the editor notes:

If I had to look for a twentieth-century theologian to canonize, I wouldn't look any further than this man, whose proudest accomplishment was that he was a poor Dominican friar, whose role model was Thomas Aquinas. (p. 31)

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Notes:

1. In French, *Chrétiens désunis* 1937, the English translation as published in 1939
2. In French, *Tradition et les Traditions* (1960), the english translation published in 1966
3. Never translated into English
4. In French, *Je crois en L'Esprit Saint* (1979-80) and translated in English in 1983.



Maxwell Johnson, ed., *American Magnificat: Protestants on Mary of Guadalupe*, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2010, pp. 204.

For Pentecostals the role of Mary as ‘Mother of God’ is one of the more difficult affirmations of classical Christianity to explain. The devotional life of the majority of Christians, Orthodox and Catholic, in which she plays a central role in the worship and personal piety of so many, is particularly alien. The historic Reformation churches remain closer to the biblical and orthodox 5th century faith in the incarnation and its attendant attention to the communion of saints and the mother of Jesus.

The 19th and 20th century Protestant revival movements, on the other hand, inherit a polemical spirituality that attends less to the passages of Scripture and confessions of the Church, not to mention the variety of pre-Reformation devotional practices that have enriched Christians’ attention to Christ through history. This volume by a contemporary group of Protestant scholars is a welcome balance, and a useful bridge to a piety that has served the Christian Gospel for centuries. It focuses on the icon and devotional practices that are such a dominant force in the Western hemisphere, the Native American legend from Mexico speaking of the vision attributed to the indigenous Juan Diego in 1531.

The Virgin of Guadalupe devotion is often characterized as helping the indigenous population of the New World understand Christ’s incarnation through one of their own race and flesh, helping them to understand a Gospel that embodied the truly divine in the truly human, and that transcended language, culture, race, ecclesiastical rank and the violence with which the Good News came into their homeland. The editor, a Lutheran scholar of history and worship, explains how Mexican culture and Hispanic Protestants can understand the role of Mary under this title as part of their own patrimony. He gives examples of how, especially in the immigrant North American community, Protestant congregations are beginning to approach this dimension of Christian devotional life. As a Lutheran, he also documents Luther’s strong commitment to the role of Mary God’s gracious saving work as outlined in the bible and evangelical worship as he reformed it.

He is particularly attentive to the Reformation concerns for mediation and grace, and the centrality of Christ and the cross, in situating the role of God preparing Christ’s mother for her role in the redemption. The volume includes twelve chapters by Protestant authors, with a conclusion

by Virgilio Elizondo, senior Hispanic Catholic theologian and seasoned ecumenist. Essays are written from Methodist, Reformed and Lutheran theological perspectives; treating psychological, cultural, feminist, post-colonial, aesthetic, and spirituality dimensions of Protestant reflections. The author makes a case for including a liturgical festival for Mary under the title of the Virgin of Guadalupe in the Advent celebrations of Protestant worship.

While the proposals here may be too bold for many in the evangelical and Pentecostal traditions to implement in their congregations, the essays provide rich resources for preaching and an effective text for discussing the popular religion of Christians in a variety of academic and pastoral contexts. For most Christians, popular piety, be it Marian or charismatic, and popular prejudices and misconceptions, have a stronger hold on the imagination than historical affirmations of the Incarnation or careful biblical exegesis. This study, therefore, is an important contribution to building bridges among Christians and deepening understanding on one of the most contentious issues in Christian piety.

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Rodney Stark, *God's Battalions: The Case for the Crusades*, New York: HarperOne, 2009, \$39.99, pp. 248+bib+index.

There is a species of religious literature common on the bookshelves of chain stores around the world which is commonly called 'revisionist'. In his recent book *God's Battalions*, Rodney Stark (Distinguished Professor of the Social Sciences at Baylor University, Texas) takes direct aim at the inhabitants of this best selling world, in particular the handwringing literature of people such as Karen Armstrong. It is probably a misnomer to use the word 'revisionist' of such literature. Good revisionist literature deliberately engages with opinions from the past within the same body of literature in order to challenge and to stretch the scholarship in the field. The problem with authors like Armstrong, as Stark deliberately sets out to demonstrate by summarising what he considers the quality literature about the Crusades, is that they are not really interested in scholarship at all. Rather, they are part of a broader alliance of

opinion makers who share the opinion that Christianity was perhaps an unfortunate mistake, and that the contemporary world would be a better place without it.

A very current example was the decision by ABC Television's *Compass* program to air, in the same week the Richard Dawkins was evangelising for atheism in Australia, Howard Jacobson's personal view of the origins of Christianity in Judaism. Naturally, the program ended up in talking about the Holocaust. The Shoah becomes the hermeneutical interpretation point for 2000 years of Christianity. While, Jacobson kindly proposes, the Holocaust was not a Christian event/process, he concludes that Christian history predisposed the outcomes, and that Christians connived in the process. The enormity of the statement is readily made apparent by imagining a Christian scholar attempting the obverse. The observation that the persecutions of the Christians under the Roman Empire were not 'a Jewish thing' but were the result of the Jews 'conniving' towards the outcome through their denial of connection to the Jewish origins of Christianity (so rendering them *religio illicita*), and their political actions resulting in the military suppressions in AD70 and AD132-5, would never find a publisher. Just as one has to ask the question as to why Jacobson has a market on ABC TV, one has to ask why the accounts of Armstrong *et. al.* have such appeal to the Borders-buyers of the world.

What Stark contributes to the debate in this book is the well-illustrated and unwavering conclusion that authors such as Armstrong and Jacobson are not revisionists so much as 'anachronists'. Their accounts of the actions of Christians (self-described) through the ages rely upon fixing a hermeneutical interpretation point in the present, against which they first select and then judge everything else. Stark points out what is taught by most balanced historians—that the rise of 'Christendom' (particularly in its feudal, militaristic form) was a direct result not only of the adoption of Christianity by the Roman Empire under Constantine, but of the 'hammer and anvil' effect of nearly a thousand years of attempting to sustain the Helleno-Roman synthesis against mass people movements (particularly Germanic and Turkic) from the north, east and south. In other words, if the Crusades were barbaric 'holy wars' (a conclusion which he forcefully rejects), they were so because Islamic militarism provoked the response both in terms of general culture formation (defensive feudalism, Poitiers, Charles Martel and the *riconquista*) and in the proximate causes of the Crusades (oppression of pilgrims and *dhimmi* peoples, sacking of Santiago de Compostela and destruction of the Holy Sepulchre, the threat to Constantinople etc.) His consistent theme reflects the very proper historical

dictum that people should be understood in the context of their times. Ignoring this, authors such as Armstrong will inevitably 'play down' Islamic enormities (such as the annihilation of Antioch in 1268), and expand upon Frankish barbarism in order to create a platform for contemporary secular ecumenism.

In entering such debates, of course, the danger is that one will adopt the techniques of the enemy. It would have strengthened Stark's account if he had adopted Fletcher's observation that Christendom was formed not only against Islamic 'barbarism', but also against Nordic and Mongol 'barbarisms'. Perhaps because he was attempting to sketch rather more starkly the advances of European civilisation against its Arabophile detractors, he fails to make much of the Norman/ Viking narrative, which is pressing upon the north and western flanks of emerging European civilisation at the same time as the Islamic forces are conquering the Middle East and North Africa. One wonders whether he does himself a disservice at this point—countering one 'straw man' with another it is an effective debating technique, but not necessarily a contribution to scholarship. This tendency is to be found throughout the book—the tendency to make apologetic points, of overstating in the other direction, in the hope that it all balances out in the end. If an author attacks another on the basis that the latter has adopted an 'ends justifies the means' approach, and yet adopts the same approach, there is a danger that the book will convince only those who were predisposed to agree in the first place.

The reason Stark takes this tack is apparent. He understands that the issue is not so much about the literature, as about the market. Baylor University sits in the middle of the Evangelical attempt to reclaim its place in scholarship, and to counter 'anachronist' secularism. It is precisely because he buys into the public debate – which is not about the history, but about the place of Christianity in the globalised public square—that his book is published by a commercial publisher, rather than the traditional evangelical options. In North America, religious debates are public property in the way that they are not in other societies. Perhaps this is the reason that some enthusiastic publishing wonk included the following statement on the inside jacket:

In *God's Battalions*, award-winning author Rodney Stark takes on the long held view that the Crusades were the first round of European colonialism, conducted for land, Luke, and converts by barbarian Christians who victimised the cultivated Moslems. To the contrary, Stark argues that the

Crusades were the first military response to unwarranted Muslim terrorist aggression.

The inclusion of the word 'terrorist' does no credit to the sophistication of Stark's approach, and is a bald attempt to tie the book into debates which it specifically tries to avoid. It does however demonstrate the commercial imperative behind the market-positioning of the book by the publisher. As Samuel Johnson noted, 'Among the calamities of war may be jointly numbered the diminution of the love of truth, by the falsehoods which interest dictates and credulity encourages.' In this case, we have a book which is about religious wars, which are swept up into the ongoing culture wars which surround the sporadic outbreak of hot wars in the contemporary Middle East. The combatants are safely ensconced in their market shares, supported by the literate but credulous on both sides. In such a context, truth barely stands a chance.

The fine detail necessarily suffers—for his part, Stark readily conflates the categories of 'Arab' and 'Muslim', a lack of nuance which particularly affects the discussions about the cultural qualities of the protagonists. Moreover, as a sociologist he is not attuned to the effects of time—and in this narrative, stretching from 600 AD through to 1300 AD, there is a tendency to emphasise the advances of Europeans, but to dismiss (perhaps largely due to the lack of English-language sources) cultural, political and technological developments in the Islamic world. But then, he readily admits that he is not a historian of the period, and that he is more interested in casting a critical eye over the quality literature and in providing a popular account which strips away some of the cant imposed by contemporary debates.

That said, like most of the lengthy re-examination of Christian history which Stark has produced over the past several decades, the reader is presented with a bracing and unique perspective. Stark scores most significantly when taking on the misrepresentations and misunderstandings passed on through the literature. Unlike Howard Jacobson, he understands the historical nature of Christianity, and is prepared to allow for error. At times, the reader finds themselves cheering him on, for finally being prepared to state 'the bleeding obvious': that much contemporary history is still informed by the Enlightenment project; that people of religious faith really are motivated by the spiritual aspects of their cosmologies, which are not simply the result of underlying material forces; that cultures are dynamic and events emerge out of the complexities of social and cultural interaction rather than because of some Shakespearean tragic flaw or lingering evil at the core of a particular culture; and that most historical

events occur because of rational historical reasons, rather than because of the intrinsic value of one element over the other. Such observations hold as well for Muslim actors as they do for Christian historical agents. It would be a shame if Stark's steady eye for the obvious were to be swamped in claims for one side or another. As a whole, Stark's book is an example of the worthy craft of the revisionist. He is a gadfly, calling the popularisers back to the facts. Avoiding transmutation into the very opinionated populism which it opposes is a delicate balancing act, an act which on the whole Stark performs well, if not invariably.

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James K. A. Smith, *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy*, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010.

“What Hath Athens to do with Azusa Street?” is a favorite question of James K. A. Smith, a Pentecostal philosopher who teaches at Calvin College. He attempts to provide a preliminary answer to this question in his newest book, entitled *Thinking in Tongues*. At first glance, the title may misdirect its readers, and while the last chapter does address the practice of tongues-speech, this book primarily introduces those interested in philosophy to a Pentecostal worldview and its contribution to various subjects in philosophy. As a result, the language that Smith uses throughout the book can be technical in nature, and indicates that his intended audience is comprised of those with an educational background in philosophy or theology.

Throughout the book, Smith intentionally uses a small “p” in ‘pentecostal’, to make it clear that his analysis of Pentecostal spirituality covers the entire Pentecostal movement and not just Classical Pentecostalism. Some may question anyone’s ability to encapsulate and articulate a Pentecostal philosophy rooted in the Pentecostal spirituality and practices of such a global movement. Yet, one needs to give credit to Smith for

making the effort, and for the general direction which Smith prescribes for what a Pentecostal philosophy *should* look like. Yet, at times, the reader may be pushed by Smith toward certain positions instead of being pulled into what is already resonating within Pentecostalism.

The first chapter opens up with Smith's 'advice to Pentecostal philosophers', similar to Alvin Plantinga's 'advice to Christian philosophers'. Here, Smith lays the groundwork for Pentecostal philosophers to legitimately philosophize from their Pentecostal commitments, and encourages them to exercise confidence in the autonomy and integrity of Pentecostal philosophy. Smith argues that there is in fact a distinct and implicit Pentecostal philosophy that arises out of the practiced spirituality of global Pentecostalism.

In the next chapter, Smith shows what this would look like, by articulating the elements of a Pentecostal worldview which he believes is implicit among Pentecostals in general and across cultures: 1) A position of radical openness to God, 2) an "enchanted" theology of creation and culture, 3) a nondualistic affirmation of embodiment and materiality, 4) an affective, narrational epistemology, and 5) an eschatological orientation to mission and justice. Smith arrives at these five elements based on his analysis of Pentecostal spirituality.

Unfortunately, in the introduction of the book, Smith makes too strong of a distinction between Pentecostal *spirituality* and Pentecostal *theology* by simply ignoring how Pentecostals themselves articulate their beliefs and practices (or 'doctrine' and 'dogma'). This is largely due to his charge (which I think is largely correct) that much of the intellectual formation of the Western Pentecostal movement is too heavily influenced by "off-the-shelf theological paradigms" carried over from evangelical theology. Yet it is not enough to simply ignore the formative influence of Pentecostal doctrine and theology upon a Pentecostal worldview, and spirituality. Put simply, Smith takes the opportunity to critique the portion of Pentecostalism that—based on their pre-cognitive practices and behavior—is overly rationalistic and dichotomistic. Unfortunately, his exclusive focus on Pentecostal spirituality in its pre-cognitive/affective practices results in unbalanced conclusions regarding a Pentecostal worldview. Surely an adherence to biblical revelation, some sort of christocentric gospel (savior, baptizer, sanctifier, healer, and soon coming king), and how one understands Spirit baptism plays at least as significant a role in a Pentecostal's worldview as the believer's precognitive commitments.

There are, after all, tensions within the spirituality of Pentecostals as a whole. Pentecostal spirituality involves both practices and theological

articulations, both affective and the cognitive elements. Put simply, Pentecostal spirituality has historically always navigated the tension implicit in holding onto both ‘Word’ and ‘Spirit’, without allowing the one to be swallowed by the other. It would have been preferable for Smith to argue for a more balanced and consistent goal for Pentecostals to head *toward*, without simply ignoring the theological beliefs of Pentecostals.

The next four chapters further explore the contribution of Smith’s understanding of a Pentecostal worldview in relation to the following subject areas: epistemology (chapter 3), metaphysics (chapter 4), philosophy of religion (chapter 5), and philosophy of language (chapter 6).

The third chapter focuses on articulating a Pentecostal epistemology. Here, the author describes Pentecostal epistemology as being proto-postmodern, in that it critiques the overly cognitivist understandings of anthropology and epistemology inherent in modern rationalism. Smith rightfully points out that when one looks at Pentecostal worship there is a distinct emphasis on an affective and narrative epistemology. Yet, as noted above, Smith simply ignores the cognitive and intellectual features of Pentecostal spirituality rooted in its commitment to biblical truth. Furthermore, while historic Pentecostal worship services have featured a kind of proto-postmodern epistemology, at the same time, Western Pentecostalism has also featured a modernistic epistemology in its intellectual formation. Smith’s aim in this chapter—to help Western Pentecostals value and holistically emphasize affectivity and emotions as being just as central (if not more central than the intellect) to Pentecostal spirituality—is laudable. Ideally, both the cognitive and emotional elements of the whole person should be engaged without compromising one over the other. Writing from a disciplinary and ecclesial context which has often over-emphasized the individual intellect, Smith has done a good job of demonstrating the legitimacy and value of an affective epistemology.

Chapter Four helpfully describes the philosophical spectrum of ideas concerning the nature and structure of reality (metaphysics). He lays out the landscape as follows:

- Reductionistic naturalism (Dennett, Kim)
- Nonreductionistic naturalism (Clayton, Peacocke, Griffin)
- Enchanted naturalism or noninterventionist supernaturalism (implicit in Pentecostal spirituality)
- Interventionist supernaturalism (often expressed in Pentecostal language)

Smith says, “embedded in pentecostal practice is a worldview—or better, social imaginary—whose ontology is one of radical openness and thus resistant to closed, immanentist systems of the sort that emerge from reductionistic metaphysical naturalism” (p. 88). He admits that Pentecostals generally hold to an interventionist supernatural model, yet he argues that Pentecostals should espouse an enchanted naturalism or noninterventionist supernaturalism which would more consistently line up with their Pentecostal commitments. At issue here is Smith’s rejection of a dualistic framework which separates the “natural” from the “supernatural.” Instead, he proposes an integrated vision of reality where nature is not an autonomous, closed system without the presence and activity of the Spirit of God. He explains that creation is more accurately understood as “en-spirited,” in that

the Spirit is always already present at and in creation. The Spirit’s presence is not a postlapsarian or soteriological ‘visiting’ of a creation that is otherwise without God; rather, the Spirit is always already dynamically active in the cosmos/world/nature. God doesn’t have to ‘enter’ nature as a visitor and alien; God is always already present in the world. Thus creation is primed for the Spirit’s action. (p. 102-103).

This would posit God’s relation to the world as being noninterventionist, while at the same time affirming the miraculous work of God. On the one hand, I welcome Smith’s more integrated vision of reality. His proposal moves the conversation forward with regards to refining a Pentecostal understanding of metaphysics. On the other hand, since Smith only sets out to provide an introductory exploration of Pentecostal metaphysics, there is further need for his proposal to engage the traditional critiques against the panentheistic implications of his vision of reality.

In the fifth chapter, Smith offers a Pentecostal critique of standard philosophies of religion. Again, he reiterates his push against rationalist philosophical anthropology, and rightfully asserts that philosophy of religion must take into account a holistic understanding of the human person which includes the embodied experience of believers and not just their beliefs.

The last chapter explores what the Pentecostal practice of tongues-speech may contribute to the philosophy of language. Smith acknowledges the wide perspectives on both the New Testament and contemporary practice of tongues-speech, and suggests four types of functions in the New Testament:

- Acts: public utterance (communicative)
- Paul: public utterance (communicative with interpretation/translation)
- Paul: public ecstatic utterance (noncommunicative, but expressive of divine reality)
- Paul: private prayer language (communicative, but non-expressive)

Most of Smith's reflection upon the contribution of tongues-speech to contemporary speech-act theory (locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary effect) centers on the third function of tongues listed above. And as such, Smith suggests that tongues-speech, in its noncommunicative function, needs to be re-positioned with regard to contemporary speech act models that automatically rule out a noncommunicative act as valid for a working model of the speech act. Smith's biblical-exegetical analysis of the function of tongues within both Lukan and Pauline writings may be problematic. His strength, however, is his recognition of the differences between Luke and Paul, and even the distinctions within Paul's own understanding of the function of tongues-speech. In general, Pentecostals do acknowledge different functions of tongues-speech in Scripture and in practice, but what those functions really are and how they relate to contemporary practices remains a fuzzy issue both within the church and the academy. As a result, it may be that Smith's philosophical conclusions leap ahead of both his own exegetical abilities and the contemporary scholarly consensus regarding this subject. This may not be entirely his own fault—the ecclesial and historical bias in the literature renders the area a difficult one.

Lastly, Smith develops the socio-political nature of tongues as a speech act by suggesting that tongues-speech is a language of resistance. He states:

As an action, one of the things that speaking in tongues does is to effect a kind of social resistance to the powers-that-be. Or perhaps we should say that tongues-speech is the language of faith communities that are marginalized by the powers-that-be, and such speech can be indicative of a kind of eschatological resistance to the powers. We might say that the proletariat speaks in tongues (p. 147).

He goes on to point out the socio-political and economic nature of tongues by suggesting, "at least on a certain level or from a certain angle, tongues-

speech could be seen as the language of the dispossessed—or the language of the ‘multitude’—precisely because it is a mode of speech that can be an expression that resists the powers and structures of global capitalism and its unjust distribution of wealth” (p. 148-149).

Here Smith’s political theology runs up against the vast majority of Pentecostal opinion (they do not view tongues-speech this way either in theology or in practice), against the biblical evidence. I am all for resisting the unjust elements of capitalism, and all other injustices of various socio-political-economic systems for that matter. But here, Smith seems to be infusing his own political agenda and meaning into a theology of tongues as practiced by Pentecostals, unfounded on Scriptural or historical support. Granted, an experience with the Holy Spirit and the gospel may naturally lead one to wrestle with the current socio-political-economic structures of the world, but to say that it is *constituted* and *motivated* by such a struggle is to misunderstand the nature of the phenomenon.

Overall, *Thinking in Tongues* has an introductory and exploratory feel to it. Personally, I found much that I resonate with, in particular: 1) the five elements of a Pentecostal worldview, 2) an epistemology that is not overly rationalistic, and values affective ways of knowing, and 3) a non-dichotomistic anthropology and metaphysics. Readers will notice that throughout the book there remains the difficult tension between trying to articulate what is already latent within Pentecostalism, and pointing Pentecostalism in the direction it should go. This will make this book a helpful sounding board for the efforts of future Pentecostal philosophers.

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