

Editor's Introduction to "Pentecostalism and Ecumenism: Past, Present, and Future"

I am pleased to present this important series by Professor Amos Yong. The subject of what ecumenism truly is and what it means to the Pentecostal/charismatic is an important one today.

This article has been specifically written to classical Pentecostals, those whose traditions come from the Azusa Street Outpouring of the early 20th Century. Classical Pentecostals have historically been predisposed against ecumenism. The reason for this is that ecumenism has often been viewed as an attempt by ungodly men to bring together all religions of the earth into a compromised one world religion.

Perhaps at no other time in North American history has the church been on the precipice that we are today. While the rest of the nations of the earth are experiencing dramatic awakenings, the church of North America continues to lose ground. Morally and evangelistically (if nothing else), the church is not the agent for change or preservation she was just decades ago. Some have forecasted persecution of Christians in the relative near future. All Christian leaders seem to realize that something must change in order for the church to impact the rising generations of fatherless, vision-less youth.

Whether the woes of the church can be rectified such that she regains her saltiness is more than a matter of eschatology. Whether you believe that the church is going to usher in the Millennial reign of Christ or that we are on the brink of the Tribulation, we have standing commands in God's Word to embrace believers as brethren and love one another. My prayer is that you will study this subject with heart tuned to what the Spirit is saying to the church. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

— Raul Mock, Executive Editor

PENTECOSTALISM AND ECUMENISM: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE by Amos Yong

Introduction

In this paper, I would like to raise and attempt to answer four questions. First, is there a biblical ecumenism, and if so, what does that mean (this will be answered in Part 1)? Second, what are some of the classical Pentecostal objections to ecumenism, and how might these be answered (Part 2)? Third, does Pentecostalism have an ecumenical history, and if so, how has this related to the ecumenical movement in the mainline churches (Parts 3-4)? Finally, what is the future of Pentecostal ecumenism and what might be ways we could contribute to such a venture (Part 5)? Let us plunge right into this difficult topic.

I. The Biblical Basis of Ecumenism

The English word 'ecumenism' is a transliteration of the Greek word *oikoumene* of which various forms are found fifteen times in the New Testament (Matt. 24:14; Luke 2:1, 4:5, 21:26; Acts 11:28, 17:6, 31, 19:27, 24:5; Rom. 10:18; Heb. 1:6, 2:5; Rev. 3:10, 12:9, 16:14). Derived from *oikos*—house—and *meno*—dwelling—it is invariably translated "world" or "whole world," and signifies the world's inhabitants. Clearly, *oikoumene* most often functions as a figure of speech describing a pervasive reality. It is not used in the modern sense of the term as related to the unity of the Church except in a very indirect way when referring to the widespread influence of Christian actions such as preaching the gospel (e.g., Matt. 24:14; Acts 17:6, 24:5; Rom. 10:18). Instances of the term in the New Testament do not therefore advance our understanding of contemporary ecumenism. Its current use derives more so from the etymology of the term—the whole world or the entire household or inhabitants of the world—rather than from the specific ways in which it is used in the New Testament.

Contemporary ecumenism, however, is intimately connected with ecclesiology, or the doctrine of the Church. Here, of course, there is an abundant wealth of biblical material that emphasizes the unity of the body of Christ. In fact, the metaphor of household (*oikeios*) is applied to the Church as well (Gal. 6:10). In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, the household of God (2:19) is composed of both Jews and Gentiles (cf. 2:11-22), is governed by the gospel (*oikonomia*; 3:2), and is united together 'in the promise in Christ Jesus' (3:6). Later on in this same letter, he writes, 'Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all' (4:3-6). Clearly, for Paul, the oneness of God extends to the effects of the work of God, the Church, its faith, its baptism, etc.

This Paul confirms in no uncertain terms in his first letter to the Corinthians where factions had developed among those baptized by Paul, by Apollos, by Peter, and so on (1 Cor. 1:10-16; 3:4, 21-23). In response, Paul again emphasizes, among other things, the unity of the body of Christ (12:12 ff.). The intention of God is that 'there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ and each one of you is a part of it' (12:25-27). Some might respond that Paul is here speaking to the various individual persons who make up the one body of Christ at Corinth. They may therefore say that these words provide no justification for thinking about the unity of various churches as understood by the contemporary ecumenical movement. This ignores, however, both the plain understanding of Paul's usage of the metaphor 'body of Christ' to describe the Church here and elsewhere in his writings, and the fact that in his salutation, he addresses not only the Corinthians but also 'all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours' (1:2). It is therefore arguable that the 'various parts of the one body' metaphor is meaningful at a number of levels, including various individual persons in one local congregation, various congregations in a city or geographic region, various groups of churches in the world, and so on.

To stop with Paul, however, would be to leave the discussion at a fairly abstract level. A much more concrete picture emerges when considering the gospel accounts. Specifically, ecumenists have frequently pointed to Jesus' 'high priestly prayer' for the disciples and all believers in John 17. God's heart for the church and the world is unmistakable as the following lengthy excerpt shows:

My prayer is not for them alone [the immediate disciples, in vv. 19 and before]. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they [the disciples] know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them (John 17:20-26).

Three points should be made about this passage. First, note that Jesus' prayer extends far beyond the circle of the twelve disciples, and embraces all of those who believe in him. The unity that is prayed for, in other words, is universally inclusive of believers in Jesus Christ, then, now, and so long as the our Lord shall tarry.

Second, the unity that is expected derives from the unity between the Father and the Son. This is an important point because the Father-Son unity in the Johannine gospel appears to be all-encompassing: ontologically in terms of shared presence (1:1-2; 10:38; 14:10-11; 16:32) and the divine name (8:58, cf. Ex. 3:14); imagistically in terms of the Son revealing (1:18; 14:7-9) and representing (13:20) the Father; actually in terms of the Son doing (only) what the Father does (5:19; 8:29; 14:31); gloriously in terms of equal honor being due to Father and Son (5:23) and bestowed by each on the other (8:49-50, 54; 13:31-32); judicially, as rendered by the Son on behalf of the Father (5:22, 26-27, 30; 8:16); mutuality in terms of witness and testimony (8:18) and will and intention (6:38; 12:28); evangelistically in terms of Jesus' proclaiming and teaching (only) the Father's message (7:16-17; 8:28; 12:49; 14:24; 15:15); salvifically in terms of Jesus being the way to the Father (14:6); communally in terms of fellowship (11:41-42) and love (14:21); and so on. This is a deep unity that cannot be simply explained in only one or another way. As prayed for by Jesus, then, the unity of believers should be understood not simplistically at any one level, but holistically, embracing every aspect or dimension of reality. As such, this unity transcends all artificial lines of demarcation that human beings so often erect to distinguish themselves from others.

Finally, it would be remiss not to mention the centrality of love to the Father-Son unity and the unity that Jesus prayed for those who believe in his name. Love is that which characterizes the Trinitarian relationship between Father and Son, between the Son and the world, and between the Father and the world. Earlier in the gospel, Jesus had said, 'By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another' (13:35). How do we show forth the salvation that we have experienced? By loving each other. Failure to demonstrate such love to the world betrays our witness to non-believers. On the other hand, the loving unity that should bind believers together in Jesus is precisely that testimony by which others realize the love of God for the world.

John does also mention another motif of the unity between Father and Son that is connected to the sending of the Spirit. Jesus promised the arrival of the Counselor, the Spirit of truth, from the Father, and foretold that 'On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you' (14:20). Later in the same upper room speech, Jesus indicates that the common message of Father and Son will be made known to the disciples by the Spirit of truth (16:12-15). Yet nowhere else in the autoptic gospel is this connection between the Spirit and the ecumenical prayer of Jesus explicated.

Such explication is, however, found in volume two of Luke's writings. Luke, as is well known, is supremely concerned in the book of Acts with the person and work of the Holy Spirit. This pneumatological motif finds expression on the Day of Pentecost when the Spirit is, literally, poured out 'on all people' (Acts 2:17). One should not take this 'all' lightly since Luke goes to great lengths to describe the universality of peoples represented in Jerusalem who heard those in the upper room speaking to them each in their own native tongue. This gathering of Judeans, Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Cappadocians, Asians, Phrygians, Pamphylans, Egyptians, Libyans, Cyreneans, Romans, Cretans, Arabians, residents of Mesopotamia, and others (2:9-11) has long been understood to represent the re-gathering of God's people from their initial dispersal at the Tower of Babel. More importantly, however, it was individuals from each of these people groups who were baptized into the one body of Christ on that day (2:41), and who, in turn, took the gospel from Jerusalem to Judea, to Samaria, 'and to the ends of the earth' (1:8).

The cumulative fruit of the Spirit's outpouring on the Day of Pentecost finds its fulfillment in the eschatological consummation of God's saving work. We are told in the revelation to the seer on the isle of Patmos that those gathered before the throne of God and the Lamb are 'from every tribe and language and people and nation' (Rev. 5:9; cf. 7:9). This is in part because the gospel is being sent 'to every nation, tribe, language and people' (14:6). On that final day, the great multitude representing

such a staggering diversity of persons will lift up one great voice to the Lord God Almighty as they celebrate the great wedding feast joining together once for all the Lamb and his bride (19:6-9). The one body of those who are saved, as this picture and that depicted at Pentecost show, knows no boundaries, whether such is conceived politically, socially, linguistically, racially or ethnically, or otherwise.

To summarize, then, a biblically conceived ecumenism begins with the one work of God represented during the New Testament era as and through the Church of Jesus Christ. The unity of this body is—or should be—a reflection of the unity between the Father and the Son. Put another way, this unity is demonstrated in the love that members of this body have for each other, in the same way that the Father loves the Son and vice versa. It is therefore appropriate to consider this love as ‘the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace’ (Eph. 4:3), begun at Pentecost and to be completed on that great and final Day of the Lord.

II. Classical Pentecostal Objections to Ecumenism Given this biblically defined ecumenism [Editor’s note: please see part 1 in the Winter 2001 issue], then, why is it that most Pentecostals remain staunchly anti-ecumenical? While many reasons have been given, three stand out as representing a fair consensus. First, Pentecostals believe that the unity of the Church should be understood spiritually rather than visibly. Second, many Pentecostals believe that the ecumenical movement represents churches that have betrayed the essence of the gospel, especially doctrinally. Finally, correlative with the previous objection, Pentecostals are generally concerned that non-Pentecostal churches are devoid of the life that is found only in the Spirit of God as ‘pentecostally’ experienced and defined, thus fulfilling the biblical prophecy of widespread apostasy in the last days. Let me respond to each in order.

1. Objection 1: Spiritual rather than visible unity Pentecostals have always valued the spiritual unity that they have found in the experience of the *charismata*, especially speaking in tongues. Manifestations of tongues and other spiritual gifts are, for them, a more incontrovertible sign of the Spirit’s presence and activity in their lives and congregations. The institutional, organizational, and architectural forms of non-Pentecostal churches do not impress Pentecostals. These are considered to be merely outward signs of pomp and circumstance that all human constructions can display, but which do not guarantee inward and spiritual vitality. Rather, these outward paraphernalia are symptomatic of the hierarchicalism, patriarchalism, and traditionalism endemic to the history of the church, all of which has been conveniently covered up or obscured by stain glass windows, Gothic architecture, and iconography that is distracting at best and bewitching at worst. The point is that the unity of the church is found, not in outward forms of organization and agreement, but in the spiritual togetherness that genuine Christians experience through the Spirit in the name of Jesus.

A brief response proceeds along three lines. First, Pentecostals should recognize that this argument actually has its roots in the Reformation and post-Reformation era and is driven by an ideology of individualism. The basic assumption is that God works first and foremost through individuals and not institutions or organizations. Just as *sola Christus* neglected the Holy Spirit, *sola fide* neglected sanctifying works, and *sola Scriptura* neglected the role of tradition in reading and interpreting the Word of God, so did the unspoken emphasis on the individual neglect the centrality and importance of the community of faith. Since the Reformation, the Church has been struggling to counteract the influential but exaggerated importance of Luther’s “here I stand!” A myriad of individuals after the German reformer have come to similar conclusions regarding their parent Protestant churches and movements resulting in the emergence of innumerable denominations.

Pentecostals are especially prone to such developments given the restoration of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers during the Reformation. Empowered by a dynamic and liberating

experience of the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals have understood their lives and ministries as commissioned by the Spirit. This includes an emphasis on spiritual freedom that makes for an even greater tendency toward individualism, independence, and self-aggrandizement. The fragmentation of Pentecostalism into hundreds of thousands of house churches, independent churches, parachurch groups, apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic and teaching ministries operating in isolation, not to mention denominations as well as sects and (even!) cults, is evidence of this infection with the individualist strain.

This accent on individualism, however, does not tell the entire story about why Pentecostals claim to understand the unity of the Church in spiritual rather than visible terms. Now, I cannot speak for the 500 million plus Pentecostals estimated today that represent the breadth of global Pentecostalism; rather, my Pentecostal affiliation is more specifically North American, and of the classical type that traces its roots back to denominations emerging out of the Azusa Street revival. Yet I sometimes wonder if Pentecostals reject as valid outward forms of structural unity because they are motivated by fear—fear that they would be compromising their former decisions to come-out-from-among-those visible denominations; fear that pursuing such relationships would jeopardize their identity as Pentecostals; fear that visible unity would camouflage the lack of spiritual fervor; fear that outward signs would eliminate reliance on the inner witness of the Spirit. These are, along with other issues yet to be discussed, legitimate areas of concern. But to recoil from engagement simply because there are issues of concern is inappropriate, and this especially for Pentecostals who claim to be led by the Spirit.

Finally, however, I find it odd that Pentecostals object to the notion that there have to be visible signs of unity for the Church given their own insistence on the import of outward signs. Most classical North American Pentecostals continue to hold to some version of tongues speaking as evidence of receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Glossolalic tongues in these cases are outward signs and manifestations—“initial physical evidence,” as some denominations put it—of the Spirit’s infilling. Why would the true unity of the Church not be accompanied by such outward signs and evidence as well? Christians are coming to increasing agreement that the gospel truthfully proclaimed and faithfully lived out is not only spiritual. Rather, it is most truly spiritual when practically embodied, whether in concrete acts, tangible encounters, palpable manifestations, physical healings, and, I would suggest, visible signs. Perhaps it might be objected that visible signs do not translate to structural or organizational unity, or that the evidence of Spirit baptism is biblically derived in contrast to the goals of the ecumenical movement. I have addressed the biblical issues above, and will focus on the ecumenical movement itself below. Part of my motivation for accepting the invitation of the editor of *The Pneuma Review* to write this piece is to present evidence for a biblical and “pentecostally” informed ecumenism to the readers of this journal. I ask you to render judgment at the conclusion of this article.

Objection 2: The erosion of the gospel, especially doctrinally

A second reason Pentecostals have given for their anti-ecumenical stance is their belief that the ecumenical movement is built on an insecure doctrinal foundation. Specifically, the doctrinal basis of the ecumenical movement is watered-down at best and supportive of heresy at worst. At best, Pentecostals feel that the Basis of the World Council of Churches (WCC), for example, is either too hollow or admits of too much latitude in what it does not say:

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Thus, many Pentecostals feel that this platform is minimalist in allowing agreement across a wide

spectrum of churches. At worst, some denominations that adhere to doctrines clearly rejected by the historical church—such as universalism or annihilationism, or the advocacy of homosexuality as a viable lifestyle—would also be able to sign on.

Let me respond in this instance with three counter-questions. First, on a more rhetorical note, since when have Pentecostals elevated doctrinal or creedal purity above their experience of the Spirit? It seems to me that such happens among Pentecostals only as an act of self-righteous indignation against those on whom they look down. Pentecostals have always been much more interested in the demonstration of Spirit's power than in wise and persuasive words (1 Cor. 2:4). I certainly do not want to minimize the importance of doctrine; as a theologian, doctrines are what concern me supremely. My point here is twofold: to highlight what appears to be the case—that Pentecostals seem to have resorted to the 'doctrinal argument' as a convenient excuse for not engaging in ecumenical activity—and to suggest that such seems to be an ironic reverse application of fundamental Pentecostal intuitions and priorities.

Yet the doctrinal issue should not be ignored. To begin addressing that concern, let me pose the second counter-question. What is or should be the norm by which doctrinal creeds in general and statements in particular are to be measured? This is not an idle question since it is arguable that most classical Pentecostal denominations—Assemblies of God, Church of God in Christ, International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, etc.—appear to have adopted the basic framework and even wording of doctrinal statements from fundamentalism during the first quarter of the twentieth century. This occurred in part because of the polemics between fundamentalists and modernist or liberals during that period of time. The emerging Pentecostal churches were confronted with few theological alternatives: either fundamentalism or liberalism. Thankfully, Pentecostal leaders during that time opted for the former rather than the latter.

This decision, however, came with a price. Whereas the liberals followed the modernist emphasis on religious experience and subjectivist feeling to the neglect of the authority of the written Word of God, fundamentalists insisted on the priority of Scripture to the neglect of sensitivity to the Spirit's illuminative inspiration. The one subsumed Scripture to contemporary experience while the other denied the validity of pneumatic experiences as false enthusiasms in favor of a wooden reading of Scripture. The result is that Pentecostal doctrinal statements have not reflected the richness of our experiences of the Spirit. Rather, they have tended to be not much more than a reproduction of fundamentalist doctrines, almost verbatim, with the addition of one or two paragraphs regarding the person and work of the Spirit, and tongues as initial evidence. Is this, however, what a genuinely Pentecostal doctrinal and theological framework should be like? Is it not the case that Pentecostals should be the first to continue the struggle for an authentic balance of the Word and Spirit? Do we not need to continuously rethink about the relevance and applicability of our doctrines and theologies for each generation? Why then did we allow the primary rules and assumptions underlying doctrinal thinking and formulation to be set by fundamentalists whose worldview is articulated according to various axioms that are at odds with what we as Pentecostals believe and experience? It goes without saying that Pentecostal doctrinal construction should not bow to the pressures exerted by liberals either.

My proposal is not that that we as Pentecostals should discard doctrinal reflection, but that we should go about that task according to the rules of the game that Pentecostals play, rather than abide by rules that Pentecostals can never win with. We should, in other words, set out our own terms for reflecting and articulating doctrine. To remain within a fundamentalist framework will force us to use their categories, restrict our theological and doctrinal methodology, and require us to continue answering their questions and concerns rather than figure out and resolve our own. That this is no figment of my

imagination is demonstrated in the extensive debate over the continuance of the charismata featured in almost every issue of this journal. Even after publication of Jon Ruthven's groundbreaking book which effectively demolished the cessationist argument, we are still having to defend the validity of the charismata. I am not trying to disparage these arguments. They are important and need to be made. My point is to call attention to the fact that our doctrinal and theological agenda is driven by fundamentalist concerns. What about our obligation to engage the arguments of liberals, and to battle for the truth with those on the left instead of those on the right? Or, to return to the focus of this essay, what about our obligation to witness in the context of the wider Christian (read: ecumenical) community? What about our calling to theological and doctrinal debate with those having ecumenical concerns? More to the point, is it not time for Pentecostals to take the Pentecostal message to the farthest reaches of the Christian community? And if that question is answered affirmatively, does that not require a distinctively Pentecostal kind of ecumenism?

Having issued the challenge the way that I have, however, assumes that all ecumenists and even churches that participate in the ecumenical movement are liberals. That this is far from the truth should not need to be stated. There are Christian movements, communities and denominations that are far from liberal theologically or doctrinally. Various Pentecostal and evangelical type churches are WCC members, as well as Eastern Orthodox churches that are stridently conservative on theological matters. In fact, many of these Orthodox churches, longtime members of the WCC, have been contemplating withdrawing from the WCC precisely for these reasons. This raises the third counter-question in all its specificity: what exactly is the goal of the ecumenical movement and what role should doctrine play in this regard?

There is a widespread perception among Pentecostals that the ecumenical movement is a last days play by Satan to deceive the elect. In fact, the ecumenical movement in general and the WCC more specifically have been thought to be representative of the great harlot of Revelation 17-18. Pentecostals fear that the ecumenical vision of a worldwide unity is a masquerade for the beast's establishing a global anti-Christian church. I will return to this issue later. For now, however, it suffices to note that the WCC understands itself to be a cooperative fellowship of churches, each of which have a "sustained independent life and organization," including the right to decide to apply for WCC membership without the permission of any other body or person." In short, the WCC operates with the understanding that local denominations and churches large enough to apply (at least 10,000 members) are fully autonomous and remain such.

Clearly, the WCC does not see itself as a Church, much less the world church that Pentecostals are suspicious about. Rather, member churches retain their own autonomy and WCC programs and initiatives are considered only as recommendations by the member churches to the churches. These are in no way binding upon individual denominations or churches except insofar as they are received as reflecting biblical truth and explicitly adopted to guide Christian practice. Given the predominance of Protestant churches in the WCC and the increasing trends toward the establishment of indigenous national churches (see also below), the trajectory of contemporary ecumenism is in the direction of an ecclesiology that emphasizes unity only amidst diversity rather than toward increasing authoritarianism, hierarchicalism, or any other kind of control (whether considered in terms of the WCC, or the Roman Catholic Church). Assuming for the moment that this is true, such an arrangement is certainly more conducive to Pentecostal participation. But what then about the role of doctrine in the quest for Christian unity?

It is here that the wide variety within Christendom needs to be appreciated. Some churches, like the Orthodox, think of theology and doctrines in its literal sense as *orthodoxa*—right worship, right liturgy, right contemplation and meditation, and so on. Other, more conservative Protestant churches,

think of theology and doctrines as simple biblically derived or grounded propositional restatements, without concern for right interpretation. The Catholic church, on the other hand, thinks of theology and doctrines always in terms of the conjunction between Scripture and tradition. Without making further distinctions, it should be clear that the doctrinal statement of the WCC needs not be understood as a minimalist device designed to gain widespread acceptability. Rather, it should be seen as the fundamental essence of the gospel to which all Christians should adhere and from which all Christians should theologize. In this case, Christian ecumenism now becomes the arena where all of those who call Jesus Christ as their Lord celebrate their diversity and bless each other and the world with their gifts. This is a far cry from the rhetoric that castigates ecumenism as a deceitful subterfuge of the enemy focused on eroding the truth of the gospel.

Objection 3: The apostasy of the church in the last days

There is, however, one more related and frequently heard objection that Pentecostals have leveled against the ecumenical movement: the concern that ecumenical churches are spiritually dead, representing the last days apostasy predicted in Scripture (cf. Matt. 24:10-12 and 2 Thess. 2:3). This is related, of course, to the apocalyptic mentality that was pervasive among early Pentecostals. First generation Pentecostal pioneers were imbued with the missionary spirit and viewed taking the gospel to the farthest reaches of the earth as the final opportunity for the heathen to convert before the coming of the Lord (Matt. 24:14). The established church was certainly in no position to be used of the Lord for this final mission, having abandoned doctrinal truth, spiritual fervor, and missionary empowerment. In fact, as the church of the last days, the established churches were, like the Laodiceans, about to be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord because of their lukewarmness (cf. Rev. 3:14-22). It is for this reason that God had to raise up an obedient remnant through the pentecostal outpouring of the latter rain—so that the gospel could be taken where it had previously failed to go.

By way of response, I would like to make three observations. First, I think it is important to note that Pentecostals have, until very recently, uncritically appropriated the eschatological framework of a foreign theological system (again) through which they've understood the "last days." This system is called dispensationalism. What is ironic is that most turn-of-the-twentieth century dispensationalists were also cessationists regarding the charismata precisely because of their dispensationalism framework of interpreting Scripture. Pentecostals, fundamentalists, and most Bible-believing Christians, however, were attracted to this very literal way of reading of Scripture, and therefore swallowed dispensationalism almost without question.

The fact of the matter, however, is that Pentecostal intuitions about the "end times" derive more so from their experience of the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days than from any previously laid-out theological grid or hermeneutical framework. It is precisely because of the empowering experience of the Holy Spirit that Pentecostals have much more of an already-not yet eschatological orientation. For Pentecostals, the present dynamism of the Spirit's reality means that the Spirit-filled believer values the embodied character of Christian life, is committed to holistic forms of missionary work, and is empowered to make a difference in this world. This explains why Pentecostals believe in the physical healing power of God. It also undergirds Pentecostal convictions about the miraculous, and about the power of prayer. Certainly, Pentecostals maintain an expectancy about the coming of the Lord—the not-yet aspect of their eschatological faith. However, such is far less an other-worldly attitude that seeks to escape gloomy historical future than it is an expression of vibrant love for their Lord.

My point is not to undermine Pentecostal belief in the imminent return of Christ. Such is the proper stance the Bible indicates we should have regarding the parousia: Maranatha—"Come, O Lord!" (1 Cor. 16:24). Instead, I want to raise the question again of why Pentecostals have uncritically bought into a dispensationalist system of thinking that is, at various points, wholly antithetical to their

experience. I am certainly convinced that the “last days” commenced with the founding of the Church at the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17), so I am not even suggesting that the entire dispensationalist scheme be discarded. I am only querying into the Pentecostal appropriation of the full range and details of dispensationalist eschatology. It may be the case that Jesus will return tomorrow. I don’t think, however, that the dispensationalist time lines will therefore be vindicated. Too many variants have been proposed, too many adjustments have had to be made, too many confusing speculations have been proffered, and too many mistakes have impaired the credibility of dispensationalist eschatology. If that is the case, then the uncritical correlation between the ecumenical movement and the great harlot of Rev. 17-18 is at least called into question. I say this not to baptize the ecumenical movement as an unblemished work of God. Surely this also is not the case as my exposition in the next section hopes to show. I am only asking that Pentecostals come to a fresh reading of Scripture on eschatology and other matters by beginning with Pentecostal—rather than dispensationalist, fundamentalist, or any other—premises, sensibilities, and experiences.

My next two observations will be much more succinctly stated. I am concerned that Pentecostals continue to perpetuate the idea that all mainline or established churches are spiritually dead. This is especially disconcerting in view of the charismatic renewal movement that has swept the world during the past two generations. Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians/Anglicans, United Church of Christ members, Baptists of all stripes, and even Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians have all been touched and transformed by fresh encounters with the Holy Spirit. All of these denominations and churches have charismatic churches and have developed ministries designed to foster and nurture charismatic experience, piety, and mission. And while some who have experienced the Holy Spirit have left to join Pentecostal churches, many have chosen to remain committed members of these mainline churches and are fervent ecumenists. On the other hand, we have also recently begun to see many leave Pentecostal churches for mainline, Catholic and Orthodox churches because of their depth of tradition, the richness of their liturgy, and the sense of greater connectedness that Christian life within these communities evoke. How can Pentecostals continue to believe that those involved in the ecumenical movement are apostate or lukewarm churches in the last days?

Finally, even if we grant that the established churches are, generally speaking, spiritually dead, given the revivalist fervor that the charismatic renewal movement has had in some quarters of these churches, I believe that we as Pentecostals have an obligation to engage these churches and be instruments for their further renewal and revival. We can and should take heart from the difference that even one person can make. I am thinking about the life work of one of the first globally recognized Pentecostal ecumenists, David DuPlessis. Here was a man who was obedient to the Spirit’s leading to take the pentecostal message to the mainline churches, and he experienced rejection by his Pentecostal community in the process of doing so. Yet it is undeniable that this one man was a catalyst for the charismatic renewal in the mainline churches. And, what else does it mean to be such catalysts other than we be Pentecostal ecumenists? How else can we hope to be used of God apart from engaging in the ecumenical task? Not to take up this challenge will render a guilty verdict on the charge that Pentecostals are guilty of continuing to perpetuate the scandal of Christian disunity before a world looking for the love of God.

III. Ecumenical Pentecostalism: A Historical Overview

I hope to have shown that Pentecostal anti-ecumenism stems in part from theological convictions imported into rather than derived from the Pentecostal experience of the Spirit. Such importations have inhibited Pentecostals from a genuine understanding of what the biblical ecumenism stands for. On the other hand, it has also certainly been the case historically that there has been a lack of spiritual

fervor within the mainline churches, especially in terms of how Pentecostals gauge these expressions. Going back to the biblical material in section I, however, this should come as no surprise. Different communities of faith bring different gifts to the one body of Christ. It goes without saying that these various communities also bring different liabilities and have diverse struggles.

My goals in this and the next section are threefold. First, I would like to demonstrate that Pentecostalism and ecumenism have not been inherently antithetical historically. This historically oriented presentation supplements the biblical and theological arguments presented in the first two sections. Secondly, I want to make a similar case on behalf of the ecumenical movement. I wish to show that historically, ecumenists have shared many of the convictions and goals of Pentecostals. Third, however, I also want to demonstrate that the devil is at work not only on “their” side but on both sides of the fence. The history of God’s work among the people of God always features both triumphs and failures, and this applies to both ecumenists and Pentecostals alike.¹¹

Let me begin with what I call “ecumenical Pentecostalism.” I want to focus in what follows on the ecumenical character of Pentecostalism in three stages. There is, first, the ecumenism of the Azusa Street revival. Second, there is the ecumenism of the charismatic renewal. Finally, there is the ecumenism now inherent within a Pentecostalism that has grown to be a global phenomenon. Let me overview each in order.

Azusa Street ecumenism One of the least well-known facts about the Azusa Street revival is its multi-racial environment. This is especially remarkable given the segregationist mentality prevalent in North America during the first half of the twentieth century. From 1906-1908, the Azusa Street mission drew persons from several races, ethnic groups, cultures and nationalities together in worship. Blacks and whites were found worshipping and singing together, tarrying before the Lord and praying for one another, “mingling and even touching[!] in the mission.”¹² One participant recollected that at Azusa Street, “the ‘color line’ was washed away in the blood.”¹³ What happened at Azusa Street, in other words, was unprecedented. The result was not only a transformation of hearts, but also a tearing down of barriers to the experience of genuine Christian unity such that “there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all” (Col. 3:11; cf. 1 Cor. 12:13, and Gal. 3:28 which adds “male or female”).

That the ecumenical miracle at Azusa Street did not last is also a well-known historical fact. Whites and blacks formed their own denominations due to the socio-economic and political pressures in force at that time. White Pentecostals drifted toward their yankee (read fundamentalist and, later, evangelical) relatives, thus forging alliances that have, in more recent times, left many Pentecostals wondering what has happened to the Pentecostal fervor. Many contemporary Pentecostals complain that one can attend any Pentecostal service on a Sunday morning today, and feel as if one were in a Baptist, Covenant, Alliance or other evangelical-type congregation. This is the case, however, only among white Pentecostal churches and denominations. Black Pentecostals have continued to emphasize the shout, the dance, the sway, the clap, and the many other electrifying features of the Azusa Street revival. This parting of ways has signified, in some respect, the socio-economic distinctions between whites and blacks in this country. Upwardly mobile whites moved farther and farther away from lower class blacks, leaving, in places, a chasm unbridgeable (sad to say) even for a Spirit-led people. In hindsight, it is seen that Pentecostals squandered a golden opportunity to continue as a prophetic voice not only on racial and ethnic issues, but also on socio-economic ones as well. Racial discrimination and socio-economic segregation would persist for another sixty plus years before being legally confronted. What might have happened if the original ecumenical character of Pentecostalism would have persisted and developed instead?

Even in light of the civil rights movements of the 1960s and 70s, however, Pentecostals have been slow to respond to the need for racial reconciliation. It was not until October 1994 when the all white

Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA) voted to dissolve and reconstitute as a racially inclusive group. The result was the emergence of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA). Whites and blacks were led to seek forgiveness from and dispense forgiveness to each other, celebrate the Lord's Supper together, and, at one point, participate jointly in a spontaneous foot-washing ceremony. One should not disparage the import of this "Memphis Miracle," as it has come to be called.¹⁴ As the old saying goes, better late than never. One cannot help but lament, however, the fact that rather than being the pacesetters in reconciliation, Pentecostals have been slow in acting out the impulses inherent within its original ecumenical experience.

This original ecumenical Pentecostalism was not limited to racial and ethnic distinctions in the body of Christ. As will be noted below, the modern ecumenical movement also began about the same time, and early Pentecostals were not oblivious to those developments. Further, these Pentecostals also recognized the denominationally schismatic nature of the body of Christ, especially in its Protestant forms. Their encounter with the Spirit thus led them to envision that the Pentecostal outpouring would be central to re-experiencing Christian unity. Such unity cannot emerge from structural or organizational efforts, but only through the healing presence of the Spirit of God.¹⁵

In short, early Pentecostals did understand the ecumenical significance of the Pentecostal experience of the Spirit. Thus, the founding of classical Pentecostal denominations like the Assemblies of God brought together individuals from a variety of backgrounds: Keswick Reformed, Wesleyan Holiness, revivalist, Baptist, African American, and so on. Their motivation was common mission in the power of the Spirit, whether such be with regard to the taking of the gospel to foreign lands, social, publication or educational projects, and the cultivation of Pentecostal faith. This also explains why the Assemblies of God as well as other early Pentecostal groups saw themselves as movements rather than denominations. The latter were stigmatized as dead and lifeless organizations, whereas the former were inherently more dynamic entities conducive to the Spirit's guidance and invigoration. Inevitably, however, institutionalization processes set in, leaving groups like the Assemblies of God practically indistinguishable from established churches and mainline denominations in terms of organizational structure.

The ecumenism of neo-Pentecostalism This may explain, in part, the flowering of the charismatic renewal—also called "neo-Pentecostalism"—in the mainline churches in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, what I call the second stage of ecumenical Pentecostalism. The fact is that by this time, the Pentecostal experience of the Spirit had ceased to be a unifying force for Christians. Rather, denominational lines had hardened, and the power of the Spirit to bring people together from diverse branches of Christendom was being resisted by the various human-made boundaries that had emerged in Pentecostal churches over the course of a generation. Ironically, those who participated in the renewal movements in the mainline churches also began to see the ecumenical potential of the experience of the Spirit. These neo-Pentecostals or charismatics recognized that the vitality imparted to Christian faith by the pentecostal outpouring was a common experience that cut across creedal, denominational, liturgical, traditional, and theological/doctrinal lines.

Of course, classical Pentecostals were initially—and for quite a while, actually—rather suspicious of the authenticity of the charismatic renewal movement. These misgivings were especially intensified upon the outbreak of charismatic revival in the Roman Catholic Church in the latter half of the 1960s. Pentecostals were incredulous that followers of the antichrist—following Luther's initial labeling of the Pope—could have anything to do with the distinctive Pentecostal experience! Yet for many of these churches, ecumenical activities were sustained and furthered precisely because of the acknowledged commonality of experiencing the Spirit's presence and activity. For many Christians, the pentecostal experience of the Spirit meant a revitalized spiritual life, increased Bible reading,

intensified devotional piety, the manifestation of the *charismata* including speaking in other tongues, renewed appreciation for liturgical and sacramental worship, deeper motivation toward social action, and, most important for our purposes, stronger ties with all those who call upon the name of the Lord.

Over the past few decades, however, Pentecostal fears regarding the charismatic renewal in the established churches have been calmed. This has been enabled in part by the development of Pentecostal relationships with more evangelical type denominations and groups. Models of Christian unity centered around common mission such as Billy Graham crusades, World Vision famine relief endeavors, and parachurch ministries like InterVarsity, Women's Aglow and the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International have mollified Pentecostal apprehensions and actually encouraged Pentecostal participation and *koinonia* with non-Pentecostals. As Pentecostals have come to know non-Pentecostals in a deeper way in these joint efforts, they have come to appreciate the diversity present in the body of Christ. And, of course, they have also begun to open themselves up to the power that a biblical ecumenism affords the Church's witness.

What was lost, however, was the opportunity to influence the mainline denominations in more intentional ways. As previously noted, the onset of the charismatic renewal movement in the 50s and 60s raised many questions for the established churches. These initially turned to Pentecostals for assistance in understanding their newly-found experiences. Outside of discerning and capable individuals like David DuPlessis, however, few classical Pentecostals responded. At that time, this served only to confirm mainline stereotypes of Pentecostals as fundamentalistic and sectarian. Since then, Pentecostal relationships with the mainline churches have come a long way. What remains, however, is the long-standing reluctance among Pentecostals to be associated with structural efforts at church unity, especially those derived from organized ecumenical activities such as those of the National Council of Churches (NCC) and the WCC.

Before turning more specifically to "organized ecumenism," however, one more word must be said concerning the kind of ecumenical Pentecostalism that now permeates the movement in its global forms. The remarkable power of the Pentecostal experience to bridge not only denominational differences but also to speak to the hearts of people that come from divergent institutional, geographic, cultural, political, and religious backgrounds has recently been dawning on those perceptive to recent trends and developments. Revivals like those at Toronto, Brownsville, and Pensacola, for example, have reached staggering numbers, many of whom would never have been found together under the same roof or have broken the same bread apart from their life-transforming encounter with the Spirit of God. The masses have come from every continent to experience the power of God, and have returned to their places of origin full of the Holy Spirit. This is not to affirm all that goes on at these prolonged evangelistic campaigns. It is, however, to testify to the unitive power of what I call ecumenical Pentecostalism.

Global ecumenism and global Pentecostalism And this unique ecumenical Pentecostalism is by no means confined to revivalist phenomena either. In fact, Pentecostalism in its global forms has now reached such proportions that recent estimates believe the number of Pentecostals and charismatics of all stripes to exceed 500 million. The startling fact is that a very small percentage of these are of the classical type of Pentecostalism found in North America. In fact, the Pentecostal boom is taking place in such faraway places as Latin and South America, sub-Saharan Africa, and even inland China. These have not been indoctrinated into the Assemblies of God sixteen Fundamental Truths, or any like statement. Rather what makes people embrace the Pentecostal message is their experience of the power of the Spirit of God. Common faith, in the global Pentecostal context, is not predicated upon the unity of doctrinal or theological beliefs, but rather on the unity of the Spirit's presence and activity.

Before being triumphalistic about the incredible growth of Pentecostal movements worldwide,

however, the potential difficulties associated with such developments should be frankly acknowledged. Pentecostals are just as guilty of schisms as any other Protestant group. Such belong to the infancy of Pentecostalism as seen in the debates over the oneness or trinitarian character of God or Spirit-baptism as a second or third blessing. The problematic caused by Oneness denominations remains to the present since Oneness adherents number up to one-fourth of Pentecostals worldwide. More recently, the emergence of new religious movements on the North American scene have included groups like The Way, International, and Christian Identity Movement that have been founded and endorsed by isolated and sectarian individuals nurtured within (among other groups) Pentecostalism.

Multiplied to a global scale, however, the phenomenon of religious syncretism is now what poses the greatest threat to worldwide Pentecostalism. Some have charged the African independent, charismatic or Spirit-churches with being a bridge back toward native or tribal religious practices instead. The claim is that charismatic movements in Africa have so interpreted Christian beliefs and practices within the context of African indigenous religious that they have compromised distinctive faith in Christ. Such charges are far from absent in other parts of the world as well. In South American Brazil, the religious folk people go to the Catholic priest for births, marriages and burials, to Afro-Brazilian shamans for relief from nightmares, and to Pentecostal churches when they are sick and desire healing. Most notably, in Korea, skeptics have accused Korean Pentecostal ministers of practicing a form of Korean shamanism in Christian guise. My intention here is neither to confirm or deny these allegations, but solely to bring up the importance of discernment, even of anything that might fly under the banner of "Pentecostalism." Historically, revival movements have always been accompanied by the genuine and the spurious. The contemporary global Pentecostal explosion is no different. We should rejoice in the things that God is doing upon discerning that. We should also exercise caution and discernment with regard to distinguishing the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit from that of other spirits.

The same goes for our relationship to and participation with the ecumenical movement. The point is not to avoid the ecumenical movement since, in a very real sense, Pentecostals have always been ecumenical even though most of us have not realized this before. Rather, ecumenical Pentecostalism should emphasize discerning participation. As a global movement, it has no other choice. There is no place left to withdraw to. Pentecostal mission, whether we like it or not, includes the ecumenical dimension.

IV. Pentecostal Ecumenism: A Survey If it is true to say that Pentecostalism has always been ecumenical, it is also true to say that in certain respects, the ecumenical movement has always been "pentecostal." In what follows, I want to tease out three elements of what I call "pentecostal ecumenism" wherein central features of Pentecostalism are highlighted. These include the missionary thrust of the modern ecumenical movement, its concern for charismatic unity, and its emphasis on what I call the "diversities of the Spirit." Let me comment on each in order.

Missionary Pentecostal ecumenism

Few Pentecostals today realize that the ecumenical movement was initially launched as a missionary movement, and in many respects retains that focus today. As missiologists and historians have noted, while the twentieth was the century of Pentecostal missions, the nineteenth was that of the Protestant missionary enterprise. It was during the nineteenth century that what we now call the mainline churches established themselves on every continent. It was also during this same time that problems were identified, many of which were far too large for the mission agencies of these individual churches and denominations to resolve on their own. The heart of the modern ecumenical movement was thus birthed at a global mission conference which convened at Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1910, and

from which the International Missionary Fellowship (IMF) was established in 1921. Meanwhile, it was realized that missionary work could not proceed apart from confronting both the social and political injustices prevalent during the inter-war years and the doctrinal differences that separated the churches. Thus emerged the Life and Work world conference (1925) and the Faith and Order world conference (1927). These combined to form the WCC in 1948.¹⁶ In 1961, the IMF officially joined forces with the WCC, thus re-affirming the WCC's commitment to the missionary witness of the churches.

I am getting ahead of the story without having made my point which is this: the early twentieth century was a time during which churches in the West awoke to the power of ecumenical unity for carrying out the task of the Great Commission. As the various churches began to assess the daunting project of world evangelization, they realized that such could be accomplished much more efficiently if they worked together rather than separately. In short, it was the missionary endeavor that brought hitherto self-sufficient groups, movements, and denominations together. I should not need to point out that the central impetus toward Pentecostal organization was also the collaborative power of common mission. Fulfilling the missionary mandate has done more to bring the Church together since the Reformation than anything else.

And this task has not been lost on the ecumenical movement today. Certainly, the world at the beginning of the twenty-first century is quite different from when the IMF was founded. Yet missions remains the *raison d'être* of the WCC, this being clearly reasserted in the WCC's *Ecumenical Affirmation on Missions and Evangelism* published in 1982. These *Affirmations* emphasize the importance conversion, the application of the gospel to every realm of life, the centrality of the churches to God's mission, mission as the way of Christ, the mandate of taking the good news to the poor, the mandate regarding global witness (to all six continents), and the challenge to witness among people of other faith and religious traditions.

Yet it goes without saying that the missionary focus of the ecumenical movement has changed over the course of a century. Clearly, the evangelistic edge has been blurred and, in some cases, been replaced among some denominations almost completely by socio-economic and political projects. Yet it is also the case that many of these projects, especially those that target the transformation of socio-economic and political structures, will never be accomplished by individual churches or single denominations working alone. Instead, the resources and cumulative power of the entire Church of Jesus Christ will need to be mobilized toward action if these kinds of changes are to be realized.

Now, although these kinds of organized activities are not central to Pentecostal missions, they are certainly not completely absent either. Certainly, no Pentecostal would deny that they are important features of missions and that they should remain part of the Church's task. And, if Pentecostals do not take up these tasks, they can and should thank God for their missions minded ecumenical brothers and sisters who are doing so. What I am saying is that missions is as pivotal to modern ecumenism as it is to modern Pentecostalism. And, insofar as missions is an indispensable feature of Pentecostalism, in that regard, it is appropriate to speak of a "Pentecostal ecumenism."

But, more importantly, I am convinced that both sides can provide that which is lacking in the missions efforts of the other should they come together. In fact, it is well known among ecumenical circles that there is a vitality and enthusiasm among Pentecostal missionaries that is contagious. Our ecumenical brothers and sisters have been looking to us for inspiration and would welcome joining our efforts. There lies before us another golden opportunity. Will we continue only criticizing the ecumenical movement or will we join to our much-needed criticism loving and Spirit-empowered action for the benefit of the lost in the world and for the increase of the Kingdom of God? And who knows, perhaps in the process our own missionary aspirations will also be fulfilled as we commune

with other members of the body of Christ and glean from their depth and the richness of their traditions.

Charismatic-Pentecostal ecumenism

The ecumenical movement is also “pentecostal” in a second way: with regard to its valuing the charismatic impulses to Christian unity. The onset of the charismatic renewal in the mainline churches brought about an awareness of its unitive power for Christianity in much the same way as such dawned on early twentieth century Pentecostals. In fact, this common experience of the Spirit has not only served to bring mainline Protestants together, but also catalyzed their relationships with conservative evangelicals and Pentecostals. It is not unusual for home Bible study and prayer groups to include representatives from all the established denominations as well as independent Pentecostal and charismatically oriented individuals. Certainly, organized groups like the Women’s Aglow and the Full Gospel Businessmen’s mentioned earlier¹⁷ are powerful and concrete examples of such grassroots ecumenism. These times of Bible reading and prayer have brought out the essential unity that Christians experience in Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit. They have also enabled the realization of the things that are trivial versus those which are important. Thus, Christians have been mobilized in these contexts to stand united on a greater front than ever before on social issues such as civil rights, abortion, and other matters. In fact, in the process, Pentecostals have even begun to realize the common convictions that they have with their Roman Catholic brothers and sisters on some of these issues.

It is also evident that the charismatic explosion in the mainline churches opened the door for Pentecostal participation in formal ecumenical activities. Beginning in 1961 when the Iglesia Pentecostal de Chile and the Misión Iglesia Pentecostal (also of Chile) joined as member churches of the WCC, there has been a slow trickle of Pentecostal churches into the ecumenical movement. Today, Pentecostal churches from Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Argentina, and various sub-Saharan churches have taken out WCC memberships. In addition to WCC involvement, various Pentecostal churches have established long-term relationships with mainline denominations, and individual Pentecostals have been active at national, regional, and other levels of ecumenical activity. Some have even served on the staffs of the WCC, the National Council of Churches (NCC), and other regional ecumenical organizations like the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI).¹⁸

It is undeniable that the charismatic renewal in the mainline churches has served to raise the consciousness of its members to the centrality of the Spirit’s presence and activity both in the Church and in the world. This was nowhere more evident than in the seventh WCC convocation held in Canberra, Australia, in February 1991. The theme of this gathering was “Come Holy Spirit, Renew the Whole Creation” (cf. Ps. 104:30). Work sections were formed under the headings “Giver of Life—Sustain Your Creation!,” “Spirit of Truth—Set Us Free!,” “Spirit of Unity—Reconcile Your People!,” and “Holy Spirit—Transform and Sanctify Us!” Reports from those who attended testified of the powerful spirit of unity present as Christians from all over the world gathered to worship, pray, sing, dance, and rejoice together in Jesus’ name. Clearly, such an event would not have been possible apart from the charismatic renewal and the Pentecostal presence in the WCC. It is further arguable that events exactly like these—recall Toronto, Brownsville, Pensacola, etc.—are what transform the lives of delegates and, by extension, the congregations to which they belong.

Certainly, however, not all that has flown under the banner of charismatic renewal in the ecumenical movement can or should be endorsed by Pentecostals. Even as Pentecostals have “dropped the ball” with regard to specific issues in their own history, so have ecumenists as well. Thus, it was clear that when one of the plenary speakers of the Canberra conference invoked the spirits of war-torn and destitute Korean people and prayed for healing, that went too far for most participants and delegates.¹⁸

Again, however, discerning participation rather than sectarian withdrawal is in order. Pentecostal revivals have by no means been free and clear of disruptive and unholy manifestations themselves. The proper response is not to ban revivals but to sift the wheat from the chaff. In the same way, one can and should expect that all genuine movements of the Spirit in the ecumenical world will be accompanied by manifestations that will require discernment. This makes Pentecostal participation all the more important, given that we, of all persons, are those most sensitive to the need for discernment of spirits and to openness to that particular gift of the Holy Spirit. In any case, in all of these respects—the openness to the movements of the Spirit, the embracing of the operations of the *charismata*, and the need for discernment at every turn—“pentecostal” elements are prevailing among mainline churches to the point that in some circles, they have become a staple. To that extent, it is also appropriate to recognize the emergence of a “pentecostal ecumenism.”

“Diversities of the Spirit” ecumenism

As is always the case, however, there are two sides to every story. That which allowed the invocation of Korean *han* spirits to the WCC conference is also that which has allowed Pentecostal presence and participation in the WCC to flourish. But what is “it” that has allowed these very contrasting phenomena to “co-exist”? My hypothesis is that such can be attributed to the real presence of a genuinely Pentecostal conviction: what I call the “diversities of the Spirit.” This is the commitment to seeing the full expression of the “different kinds of gifts,...different kinds of service,...different kinds of working” but all of the same Spirit, Lord, and God (cf. 1 Cor. 12:4-6). Paul envisioned such diversification of giftings, of course, through the metaphor of the body of Christ having many parts, many members, many functions, and many components (1 Cor. 12:12-31). This same diversification is intrinsic to the Church itself, as its founding narrative in Acts 2 discussed earlier clearly exemplifies. The sending of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost resulted in establishment of one living organism, the body of Christ, with many members. The many find their wholeness in the one, and the one’s effectiveness and beauty is to be found in the diversities of its members, including not only those from around the world (Acts 2:9-11), but also all of its sons and daughters, men and women, young and old (Acts 2:17-18).

Now this emphasis on the “diversities of the Spirit” is a central value of the contemporary ecumenical movement. I need to be clear at this juncture about not approving whatever happens in the WCC—such as the controversial circumstances at Canberra—as being a genuine manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Even Paul strongly cautions the Corinthian believers that charismatic phenomena inevitably comes mixed with human and, at times, demonic influences, and requires—as has been repeatedly emphasized—discernment and judgment. No, my point is that the ecumenical movement is not about imposing a like-mindedness or uniformity of belief or practices on its constituency. Rather, its goal is to lift up the name of Jesus Christ through common witness and common mission. And, its conviction is that such common witness and common mission sustains (or, should sustain) rather than destroy national, regional, local and indigenous manifestations and expressions of the gospel. In other words, the ecclesiology of the ecumenical movement is profoundly pluralistic rather than hegemonic, representing, ecumenists believe, the biblical emphasis on the “diversities of the Spirit.”²⁰

On the practical level, then, the ecumenical movement is more about affirming differences than it is about making churches the world over fit into one mold. In fact, the plurality of churches, liturgies, pieties, traditions, and expressions are affirmed. Each church is understood to play a vital role in the overall mission of the Church; each contributes to the symphony that declares God’s saving presence and activity in the world by the power of Spirit; each provides distinct witness to the world, and brings their own gifts to the head of the Church, Jesus Christ. In fact, as the contingent of churches from the non-Western world has consistently increased in the WCC, it is becoming increasingly clear that the

traditional (read: Western) norms for discernment—whether at the level of the manifestation of the *charismata* or even at the more fundamental level of ecclesiologies as a whole—will continue to be challenged, resulting in a re-emphasis on Scriptural criteria.²¹

Of course, embracing the “diversities of the Spirit” includes with it potential problems as well. Apart from issues discussed previously, there is the important matter of an extreme tolerance that might set in such that truth is compromised. Ecumenists certainly have been charged with being pluralistic relativists, refusing to offend others who might believe or practice differently than they do. On this score, the ecumenical movement needs the Pentecostal movement, but only insofar as the latter does not mute the prophetic voice of the Spirit of God. An ecumenism without truth is simply an empty, outward unity. Pentecostals who are fearful on this point should be critically engaged on this front. Our obligation should be a discerning participation and engagement, not sectarian withdrawal and unqualified condemnation. Ecumenism needs Pentecostalism in order for it to be genuinely biblical. Who among us will respond to this call?

V. Pentecostalism and Ecumenism: Future Prospects and Tasks

My conclusion is that Pentecostals need the larger Church even as the larger Church needs Pentecostalism. Thus, the quest for a biblically based and Spirit inspired Christian unity must include both movements. In this last section of my five-part article, I want to briefly discuss the various levels of ecumenical activity and make some practical suggestions with regard to how Pentecostals can become more ecumenically conscious and involved.

Levels of ecumenism

There is no one correct way to either be ecumenical or to do ecumenism. In fact, although I present four levels of ecumenical activity here, it is difficult to say where one stops and the other starts. I would surmise that wherever genuine ecumenism occurs, it will include theological and doctrinal discussion (academic ecumenism), the development of interpersonal relationships between clergy across denominational lines (church leadership ecumenism) and between the laity at large (neighborhood ecumenism), and social action of some type (institutional-denominational ecumenism).²² If we keep in mind the artificial boundaries between each level, the following is designed to provide an overview of what ecumenism-in-action looks like.

Academic ecumenism usually involves teachers, professors, and those with advanced training in biblical and theological studies. At this level, the goals of ecumenical discussion include the clearing away of stereotypes, the development of mutual understanding, and, the clarification of actual problems confronting Christian unity (as opposed to problems that are simply the result of misunderstanding or stereotype). Pentecostal academics who have been involved in these dialogues generally are not denominationally funded since most Pentecostal churches and groups do not place such activity high on their priority list. Thus, along two fronts—financially and with regard to one’s personal reputation—Pentecostals who participate at this level of ecumenism do so at some personal risk. It is therefore not unusual to hear many of them attest that their ecumenical involvement proceeds from a sense of divine calling.

Even so, a growing contingent of individuals from academic organizations such as the international Society for Pentecostal Studies, the European Pentecostal Theological Association, the European Pentecostal and Charismatic Research Association, the Pentecostal Theological Association of Southern Africa, the Asian Pentecostal Society, the Asia Pentecostal Theological Association, the Indian Conference of Pentecostal Theologians, the Korean Pentecostal Society, and a host of other

such groups in Latin America and Oceania are now engaging in theological, doctrinal, and praxis oriented discussions with scholars from the mainline churches.²³ Many of these are taking place in formal conference settings, such as at the annual meetings of the Evangelical Theological Society, the Wesleyan Theological Society, and the American Academy of Religion. Two of the most theologically and doctrinally sophisticated conversations with churches are the Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue (five sessions from 1972 to the present) and the Pentecostal-World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) dialogue (1996-).²⁴

But it is misleading to think that only academics engage in theological and doctrinal conversations across ecumenical lines. One certainly does not need a graduate degree in these disciplines to do so. In fact, Pentecostal ministers and laity are frequently a part of these type of conversations. Insofar as two persons representing different Christian communities have theological and doctrinal interests, they can and do strike up such conversations. And, insofar as both come away having learned something they were not aware of before, such dialogues have to be rated as successful!

Church leadership ecumenism frequently includes theological and doctrinal discussions. Pentecostal ministers have, in recent decades, become much more involved in ministerial associations, especially in urban areas. Most pastors usually attend monthly meetings with their colleagues in Pentecostal ministry. In addition to this, many also attend minister's meetings organized by evangelical pastors. While the benefits of these meetings are difficult to assess in isolation, cumulatively, a miracle of perception and association has taken place. When pastors from many evangelical denominations come together, they not only have discussions on theological and doctrinal topics. More importantly, they share their testimonies, their triumphs and struggles in ministry; they sing together; and they pray for each other and bear each other's burdens. These meetings build trust and solidarity. They clear away misunderstandings. They provide a safe and secure platform for differences to be recognized and even appreciated. They are often the inspiration and impetus for common mission.

And, of course, neighborhood ecumenism also includes many of these same features. On this level, the lines between Pentecostalism and the mainline churches have all but disintegrated. Many Pentecostals now feel right at home—in fact, they are, in these situations, at home, in their back or front yards—not only talking with their evangelical, Baptist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and even Catholic and Orthodox neighbors, but also without questioning the status of their relationship with Jesus, the latter being self-evident. Not infrequently, these conversations turn toward specifically religious matters, sometimes including theological and doctrinal themes. And, insofar as neighbors often work together in neighborhood projects, these grassroots kind of relationships demonstrate the ecumenical fellowship in the body of Christ rather unintentionally!

This raises the question of what institutional or denominational ecumenism looks like. I have previously mentioned Billy Graham and other kinds of evangelistic crusades. Christian musicians and performers also hold concerts that attract members of very different churches. More recently, events like Promise Keepers have filled stadiums with tens of thousands of people. These kinds of activities are valuable in and of themselves. But the kind of planning that is needed to pull them off is necessarily of the ecumenical type. What usually happens is that persons from various denominations have to not only pledge their support, but also be actively involved in organizing, administering, financing, praying for—both individually and together—and following-up such events. I would argue that the relationships forged in these background activities—stuff that goes on behind the main stage, so to speak—is equally powerful in transforming lives and bringing the body of Christ together.

These kinds of overtly ministerial events, however, by no means represent the only kinds of

institutional and denominational ecumenism. Other events focused on social issues are equally ecumenical. March for Jesus rallies against abortion, for example, are powerful demonstrations of the unity of the Church. And, other kinds of societal changes necessarily require Christians to put aside their differences regarding inessentials in order to work together. Individual groups or churches are, by themselves, generally ineffective in bringing about large-scale transformations of socio-economic and political structures. These can only be accomplished by prolonged engagement and strategically organized efforts motivated by Christian faith.

It is at this level that one sees academic, church leadership and neighborhood ecumenism come together. To take just one example, the continued fight for civil rights for ethnic minorities requires, among other things, racial reconciliation. True reconciliation cannot be legislated. It has to come about from the hearts of people in society at large and be demonstrated by concrete actions. This means that racial reconciliation cannot be the task of just a few individuals or groups. Academics have to bring to light the social, historical, and religious factors behind racial tensions. Church leaders have to explore how such tensions can be eased—perhaps by holding more interracial events, implementing a series of pulpit and choir exchanges, or even merging smaller congregations. Neighbors have to find ways to demonstrate solidarity across racial lines. And, all of this has to proceed in tandem. Neighbors cannot wait for pastors who cannot wait on academics and vice versa. My point is that racial tension as a societal problem calls for the Church to awaken from its slumber and take concrete action at various levels. Such action can be nothing but ecumenical in the best sense of the word.

What then can and should we do?

I have written far more than I intended when I first accepted the invitation of the editors of this journal to address this topic. What was initially projected to be a brief summary of the topic has developed into a five-part article. This represents both the passion I feel regarding the importance of this matter and the burden we all carry in light of the immensity of this task. I would be remiss, however, if I did not conclude with some very practical suggestions about how we as Pentecostals can and should proceed ecumenically at this time, the dawn of the second Pentecostal century.

First, Pentecostals have not been entirely truthful in their anti-intellectualism. Jesus' admonished us to love God not only with our heart, our strength and our soul, but also with our mind (Matt. 22:37; Mk. 12:30; Lk 10:27). For those of us who are hesitant to launch out into the uncharted (for us) waters of ecumenism, the first thing we can do is to educate ourselves. In reading the Bible, look for motifs that demonstrate God's inclusive love, the universal reign of the Kingdom of God, and the celebration of difference and plurality in the created order. And, of course, strive to be more knowledgeable about ecumenism in general and the ecumenical movement more specifically. Toward that end, I have appended a reading list that includes articles and books written by both Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals.

It is at this level that one sees academic, church leadership and neighborhood ecumenism come together. To take just one example, the continued fight for civil rights for ethnic minorities requires, among other things, racial reconciliation. True reconciliation cannot be legislated. It has to come about from the hearts of people in society at large and be demonstrated by concrete actions. This means that racial reconciliation cannot be the task of just a few individuals or groups. Academics have to bring to light the social, historical, and religious factors behind racial tensions. Church leaders have to explore how such tensions can be eased—perhaps by holding more interracial events, implementing a series of pulpit and choir exchanges, or even merging smaller congregations. Neighbors have to find ways to demonstrate solidarity across racial lines. And, all of this has to proceed in tandem. Neighbors cannot wait for pastors who cannot wait on academics and vice versa. My point is that racial tension as a

societal problem calls for the Church to awaken from its slumber and take concrete action at various levels. Such action can be nothing but ecumenical in the best sense of the word.

What then can and should we do?

I have written far more than I intended when I first accepted the invitation of the editors of this journal to address this topic. What was initially projected to be a brief summary of the topic has developed into a five-part article. This represents both the passion I feel regarding the importance of this matter and the burden we all carry in light of the immensity of this task. I would be remiss, however, if I did not conclude with some very practical suggestions about how we as Pentecostals can and should proceed ecumenically at this time, the dawn of the second Pentecostal century.

First, Pentecostals have not been entirely truthful in their anti-intellectualism. Jesus' admonished us to love God not only with our heart, our strength and our soul, but also with our mind (Matt. 22:37; Mk. 12:30; Lk 10:27). For those of us who are hesitant to launch out into the uncharted (for us) waters of ecumenism, the first thing we can do is to educate ourselves. In reading the Bible, look for motifs that demonstrate God's inclusive love, the universal reign of the Kingdom of God, and the celebration of difference and plurality in the created order. And, of course, strive to be more knowledgeable about ecumenism in general and the ecumenical movement more specifically. Toward that end, I have appended a reading list that includes articles and books written by both Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals.

Second, be intentional about meeting with other Christians. In fact, as pastors and church leaders of Pentecostal churches, we should lead our congregations by example, seeking out opportunities to take our Pentecostal witness to ecumenical circles, especially those involving leadership.²⁵ Of course, we have to earn the right to have our testimonies heard, and this is usually accomplished by listening to what others have to say. Times of mutual worship and prayer should be frequent and central to our meetings with others. And, in this process, genuine koinonia emerges, friendships are established, dialogue is sustained, relationships are solidified, misunderstandings and stereotypes are identified, and trust is built. The personal benefit such will have on our lives cannot be measured. From a pastoral perspective, such experience will enable us to better direct members of our congregation in building their own lay and neighborhood ecumenical networks.

Last but by no means least, the interdenominational relationships that we establish as church leaders will also allow us to plan inter-congregational activities centered around worship, prayer, and the reading and exploration of Scripture. As important will be the opportunities afforded these congregations to take on community or social projects. Relief agencies such as rescue missions, alcoholic and drug rehabilitation programs, and soup kitchens are already centers of ecumenical activity. The Church's presence in local communities and neighborhoods need to be more pronounced. And, rather than simply touting one congregation or denomination as "superior"—such attitudes are often communicated by Christians without intending to do so—why not convey to the world the truth that Christians love each other and those without the faith in the same way as they are loved by God and in the same way as the Father loves the Son? This comes about by concrete acts of love—the feeding of the hungry, the housing of the homeless, the clothing of the naked, the visiting of those sick and in prison, and so on (Matt. 25:31-46). Churches that comprise the one body of Jesus Christ can do much more together than they can do by themselves.

As Pentecostals, we need to ask ourselves what the Holy Spirit is doing in the world (Rev. 2-3, *passim*). As people led by the Spirit, how can we discern what God is doing in the Church and how that work affects the Church's witness to the world? The world has seen enough denominational strife, abstract theological speculation, futile doctrinal disputes, and Christian polemics. What the world

needs is the love of God. Pentecostals, more than others, should know what it means to have been touched by the love of God in ways that while not marginalizing theology and doctrine, certainly do not exalt its place either. And, far beyond intellectual activity, Pentecostals emphasize the empowerment of the Holy Spirit for mission. As David Bundy puts it in the closing sentences of his paper on ecumenical Pentecostalism, “there is less of a concern among Pentecostals for a unity of theological opinion...than for common activity for the Kingdom of God. In other words, ecumenism for mission has precedence over ecumenism for koinonia.”²⁶ So, the question that remains is this: what is the Holy Spirit doing to break down the barriers between Christians, and how can we as Pentecostals be involved in this essential task of taking the love of God to the world?

Endnotes

¹ The WCC Basis is functionally equivalent to denominational statements of faith. However, the WCC is also careful to insist that the Basis “is not a ‘confession of faith’ in the formal theological sense. But as a brief expression of the foundation of what the Council is and for what it does, it offers some important clues for understanding the WCC” (Marlin Van Elderen, *Introducing the World Council of Churches*, rev. ed. (Geneva: Risk Book Series/WCC Publications, 1992), 4.

² My use of the term “fundamentalism” follows George Marsden’s *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

³ I have previously developed this idea at greater length: “Between Two Extremes: Balancing Word-Christianity and Spirit-Christianity (A Review Article),” *The Pneuma Review* 3:1 (Winter 2000): 78-83.

⁴ See Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Postbiblical Miracles* (Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 3; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993); see my review of this book in *The Pneuma Review* 3:2 (2000): 64-65.

⁵ For a discussion of Pentecostal churches in the WCC, see Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 384-87.

⁶ The Assemblies of God, for example, “disapproves of ministers or churches participating in any of the modern ecumenical organizations on a local, national, or international level in such a manner as to promote the ecumenical movement [in part] because: ... (c) We believe that the combination of many religious organizations into a world superchurch will culminate in the religious Babylon of Revelation 17 and 18” (Assemblies of God Constitution and Bylaws, Article 9, §11). While this position is characteristic of many fundamentalist denominations, moderate evangelical churches have distanced themselves from this kind of rhetoric. And, insofar as classical Pentecostal denominations in North America like the Assemblies of God have recently come to align themselves more so with evangelicalism than fundamentalism, this kind of reasoning regarding the ecumenical movement may need to be revisited. The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, for example, does not have either a constitutional or position statement against ecumenical involvement. More important than mimicking one another, however, the truth is at stake. Classical Pentecostals of all types need to move beyond stereotypes they have inherited from those they have previously affiliated with and investigate the charges raised on their own terms.

⁷ See Marlin Van Elderen, *Introducing the World Council of Churches*, rev. ed. (Geneva: Risk Book Series/WCC Publications, 1992), 4-6.

1. ⁸ By this, I am thinking about the tendency to think of one’s doctrines simply in terms of “what the Bible says,” without recognizing that all biblical statements have to be interpreted—the latter resulting

in the rampant denominationalism, factionalism, and sectarianism among conservative Protestants.

⁹ Gerald T. Sheppard was one of the first—and by no means the last—to have raised this question: see his “Pentecostalism and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism: Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship,” *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 6 (1984): 5-33.

¹⁰ DuPlessis was defrocked of his Assemblies of God credentials in 1962 for his ecumenical involvement. These were restored to him much later (in 1980) after history had confirmed his Pentecostal commitment and the value of his service to the wider causes of Christ. For DuPlessis’ own account, see his *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970). More complete assessments can be found in Martin Robinson, “David du Plessis – A Promise Fulfilled,” in Jan A. B. Jongeneel, et al., eds. *Pentecost, Mission and Ecumenism: Essays on Intercultural Theology*, Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity 75 (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), 143-55, and idem, “To the Ends of the Earth: The Pilgrimage of an Ecumenical Pentecostal, David J. du Plessis (1905-1987)” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Birmingham, England, 1987) (this latter is usually available through the interlibrary loan services at your local library).

¹¹ So as not to bog down the reader, I will forego detailed documentation in these historical subsections in favor of a brief reading list at the end of this essay.

¹² Dale T. Irvin, “‘Drawing All Together into One Bond of Love’: The Ecumenical Vision of William J. Seymour and the Azusa Street Revival,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 6 (1995): 46.

¹³ Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street: The Roots of Modern-day Pentecost* (1925; reprint, Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1980), 54.

¹⁴ For details, see the “Roundtable: Racial Reconciliation” articles by Frank Macchia, Ithiel Clemmons, Leonard Lovett, Manuel Gaxiola-Gaxiola, Samuel Solivan, and Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., in the spring 1996 issue of *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*.

¹⁵ This vision was prominent in early Pentecostal literature such as William Seymour’s Azusa Street periodical, *The Apostolic Faith*.

¹⁶ The Faith and Order section of the WCC has been active up through to the present. Some Pentecostals who have been deeply involved in the interdenominational activities with the charismatic movement and many other large independent charismatic churches may have noticed that more often than not, such “ecumenism” has emphasized experience to the neglect of doctrine! This is ironic in light of the charge leveled against ecumenical organizations such as the WCC that it has abandoned the truth of the gospel for visible unity and social programs (see my earlier discussion in Part II, Obj. 2). However, the internal policies and vision of the WCC is motivated in part by the fact that its quest for unity, including the work done by Faith and Order, does not bypass serious doctrinal issues. Instead, the WCC wants to ensure that the fellowship of the churches “is not based on the illusion that differences can be overcome by ignoring them” (van Elderen, *Introducing the World Council of Churches*, 5).

¹⁷ See Part 3, Summer 2001 (Vol 4, No 3), page 21.

¹⁸ See, e.g., article on the “World Council of Churches” by J. L. Sandidge in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. Stanley M. Burgess, Gary B. McGee and Patrick H. Alexander (Grand Rapids: Regency Reference Library, 1988), 901-3.

¹⁹ Upon returning from Canberra, Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., an ordained Assemblies of God minister and

professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, penned these thoughts which may reflect the sentiments of many who witnessed that event: “The second [speaker] was a young Korean Presbyterian woman, Professor Chung Hyun Kyung, who made a stunning presentation as an introduction to the theological theme [of the conference]. She attempted to speak from the perspective of a *minjung* theology which she believed to be especially representative of Asian women. At points, I found her to be genuinely prophetic. At other times, I was very uncomfortable. I worried that she had passed outside the bounds of orthodoxy as, for example, when she ‘summoned’ various spirits of *Han*, spirits of those who had been touched by anger, resentment, bitterness and grief.... To be sure, there is much to be said for the communion of saints, even among evangelicals and Pentecostals. It is also the case that our understanding of the church allows us to see ourselves in relationship with those who have gone before us in the church. Furthermore, as one who comes from a tradition which rose first among the poor, the disenfranchised and marginalized in North American society, I could identify at points with her *minjung* concerns. But the summons of departed spirits to come to the assembly, if that is what was really intended, seemed to me to be more akin to the liturgies of Spiritism or was more rooted in ancestor worship than it was in the classical expressions of Christianity” (see Robeck, “A Pentecostal Reflects on Canberra,” in Bruce J. Nicholls and Bong Rin Ro, eds., *Beyond Canberra: Evangelical Responses to Contemporary Ecumenical Issues* [Oxford: Regnum Books, 1993], 108-20; quote from 111-12).

²⁰ This may explain, at least in part, why the Roman Catholic Church has never become a member of the WCC since it is rather a bit more convinced that Christian unity includes uniformity under one head, identified of course, under the papal symbol. Since Vatican II, however, Rome has certainly been involved in ecumenical activity.

²¹ And, of course, it is ironic that some in the ecumenical movement are threatened by the possibility that the WCC might some day be dominated by the presence of hundreds if not thousands of independent Pentecostal churches, the majority of which would derive from the two-thirds world! On this point, see Donald W. Dayton, “Yet Another Layer of the Onion, or, Opening the Ecumenical Door to Let the Riffraff In,” *The Ecumenical Review* 40 (1988): 87-110.

²² Here, I follow Raymond R. Pfister’s typology: “The Ecumenical Challenge of Pentecostal Missions: A European Pentecostal Perspective for the 21st Century,” unpublished paper presented at the 29th Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, Kirkland, Washington, 16-18 March 2000. Pfister is a French Pentecostal who directs the equivalence of a Teen Challenge center for recovering alcoholics and teaches at a Lutheran pastor’s training institution, both in Hamburg, Germany.

²³ Information about these groups is only a few clicks away: see the “Academic Societies” section of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Theological Inquiry International homepage: <http://www.pctii.org/>.

²⁴ The results of the Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue can be perused in the pages of *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*. The first three sessions (1972-1976, 1977-1982, and 1985-1989) are found in vol. 12:2 (1990); the fourth session (1990-1997) is reported in vol. 21:1 (1999); the fifth session has not yet concluded. For an overview of the Pentecostal-WARC dialogue, see Frank Macchia, “Reformed/Pentecostal Dialogue,” in Stanley M. Burgess, et al., eds., *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), forthcoming.

²⁵ In fact, even a denomination like the Assemblies of God includes a statement in its Constitution and Bylaws that leaves plenty of room for Pentecostals to engage in ecumenical activity. Concluding their denunciation of the ecumenical movement (see note 6) is a parenthetical clause: “This is not to be interpreted to mean that a limitation may be imposed upon any Assemblies of God minister regarding

his or her Pentecostal witness or participation on a local level with interdenominational activities” (Assemblies of God Bylaws, Article 9, §11).

1. ²⁶ David Bundy, “The Ecumenical Quest of Pentecostalism,” *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 5 (1999) [<http://pctii/cyberj/cyber5.html>].

Appendix: For Further Reading

Albrecht, Daniel E. “Pentecostal Spirituality: Ecumenical Potential and Challenge,” *Cyberjournal for Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* 2 (1997) [<http://www.pctii.org/cybertab.html>]

Albrecht is professor Church history and Christian spirituality at Bethany College of the Assemblies of God, Santa Cruz, CA.

Dempster, Murray, Byron Klaus and Douglas Petersen, eds. *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*. Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1999.

An excellent introduction to the phenomenon of global Pentecostalism; includes essays on Pentecostal theology, missions, and ecumenism.

Fackre, Gabriel. *Ecumenical Faith in Evangelical Perspective*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993.

Fackre is an evangelical theologian, and professor emeritus at Andover Newton Theological School in Newton Centre, Massachusetts.

Hollenweger, Walter. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.

A definitive work by respected European Pentecostal insider; argues that Pentecostalism emerged from Wesleyan-Holiness, Keswick Reformed, African-American, Catholic-Orthodox, and, ecumenical roots together!

Irvin, Dale T. “‘Drawing All Together into One Bond of Love’: The Ecumenical Vision of William J. Seymour and the Azusa Street Revival,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 6 (1995): 23-53.

Informative article on the racial reconciliation at Azusa Street under Seymour’s ministry.

Jongeneel, Jan A. B., et al., eds. *Pentecost, Mission and Ecumenism: Essays on Intercultural Theology*. Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity 75. New York: Peter Lang, 1992.

Collection of essays by Pentecostals on how missions and ecumenism require each other.

.....**Amos Yong** is J. Rodman Williams Professor of Theology and Dean at the Regent University School of Divinity in Virginia Beach, Virginia. His graduate education includes degrees in theology, history, and religious studies from Western Evangelical Seminary and Portland State University, Portland, Oregon, and Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts, and an undergraduate degree from Bethany University of the Assemblies of God. He is the author of numerous papers and books including *Afro-Pentecostalism: Black Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in History and Culture* (New York University Press, 2011), *Who is the Holy Spirit: The Acts of the Spirit, the Apostles, and Empire* (Paraclete Press, 2011), *The Spirit of Creation: Modern Science and Divine Action in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Imagination* (Eerdmans, 2011), and *The Bible, Disability, and the Church: A New Vision of the People of God* (Eerdmans, 2011).