

# ***REFLEKS***

***med karismatisk kristendom i fokus***

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<p><b>MANUS:</b> Redaktør vil bistå med ferdig dokumentmal i Word format. Manus leveres på diskett. Noter skrives som fotnoter.</p> <p>Signerte artikler gir ikke nødvendigvis uttrykk for redaksjonens syn.</p>	

## Forord

Et nytt nummer av *Refleks* er klar for utgivelse. Selv om dette er et åpent nummer, vil to artikler, tilsvarende flere av artiklene i forrige nummer, sette søkelyset på personer og miljøer med delvis røtter i plymouthbrødrebevegelsen. Gene Edwards og hans menighetsforståelse er gjenstand for mine betraktninger i innledningsartikkelen. Denne etterfølges av David Matthews innenfra-skildring av den britiske Restorationistbevegelsen. (Lengre tids fokus på plymouthbrødrene vil for øvrig kunne ut i en større artikkel i  *neste* nummer vedrørende Restorationistbevegelsens innflytelse i Norge).


Artikkel nummer 3, av Darrin Rodgers, er i sannhet pionerforskning. Forfatteren dokumenterer karismatiske åndserfaringer (tungetale inklusiv) forutfor Azusa Street (1906) blant norsk- og svenskamerikanere som ikke hadde vært i kontakt med eller kjente til Charles F. Parham og kretsen rundt ham. Både enkeltpersoner og menigheter lot seg tilslutte pinsebevegelsen etter hvert som de fikk kontakt med denne. Rodgers artikkel representerer et solid oppgjør med tidligere forskning, som ensidig har identifisert pinsebevegelsens tilblivelse med Parham (og eventuelt med William J. Seymour).

Tim Welch fokuserer i sin artikkel på britiske Joseph Smale og hans katalysatorrolle for Azusa Street-vekkelsen. Tony Richie tar deretter, med utgangspunkt i Jürgen Moltmanns identifikasjon av pinsekristendom og en naiv amerikanisert overoptimisme, et kritisk blick på sin egen pinsetradisjon.

Siste artikkel, av Steven Barabas, er ingen fagartikkel i streng forstand, men gir en forholdsvis detaljert biografisk presentasjon av viktige lederskikkelser innen den britiske Keswicktradisjonen. Denne har vært berørt i tidligere presentasjoner av amerikansk og britisk hellighetsbevegelse, som igjen er direkte forløpere for pinsebevegelsen. Mange har skildret enkeltpersoner innen amerikansk hellighetsbevegelse. De britiske Keswicklederne er imidlertid langt mindre kjente og løftes derfor fram i siste artikkel, som for øvrig i sin helhet er sakset fra Barabas bok *So Great Salvation. The History and Message of the Keswick Convention* (1952, 1957).

God lesning!

Gers Lie



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## THE FOUNDATION FOR PENTECOSTAL SCHOLARSHIP

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Title: 2006 Awards of Excellence Announced by The Foundation for Pentecostal Scholarship

Contact: Robert Graves, President, The Foundation for Pentecostal Scholarship, (770) 516-7300, [RGraves@TFFPS.org](mailto:RGraves@TFFPS.org), Website: [www.tffps.org](http://www.tffps.org)

(LOS ANGELES, CA) The Foundation for Pentecostal Scholarship (TFFPS) has conferred its first annual “Awards of Excellence” for Pentecostal scholarship. TFFPS co-founder and president, Robert W. Graves, announced the awards during the 2006 Conference of the Society for Pentecostal Studies convening at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. One book award and three article awards were given.

Rick Nañez, an Assemblies of God missionary in Quito, Ecuador, received the 2006 book award for the Zondervan-published *Full Gospel, Fractured Minds?: A Call to Use God’s Gift of the Intellect*. Reverend Nañez examines biblical teachings directing Christians to use their God-given mental abilities and contrasts this with deep-rooted anti-intellectualism still found within some Pentecostal/Charismatic circles.

Receiving the 2006 article awards were Blaine Charette, Professor of New Testament and Chair of the Department of Biblical and Theological Studies at Northwest University, Kirkland, Washington, for “‘Tongues as of Fire’: Judgment as a Function of Glossolalia in Luke’s Thought,” published in *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*; Paul Elbert, adjunct Professor of Theology and Science at

the Church of God Theological Seminary and of New Testament Theology at Lee University, Cleveland, Tennessee, for “Acts of the Holy Spirit: Hermeneutical and Historiographical Reflections,” published in the Norwegian journal *Refleks: med karismatisk kristendom i fokus*; and John Christopher Thomas, Professor of Biblical Studies at the Church of God Theological Seminary, Cleveland, Tennessee, for “Healing in the Atonement: A Johannine Perspective,” published in *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*.

The Foundation for Pentecostal Scholarship was formed in 2005 with the singular goal of advancing biblical scholarship within the global Pentecostal family. “In supporting the convergence of the flame of Spirit and the flame of knowledge,” commented Graves, “we hope to help advance today’s move of the Holy Spirit throughout the world.

“We also encourage the publishing of Pentecostal scholarship by recognizing the best works of Pentecostal biblical or academic scholarship through annual Declaration of Excellence Awards, by seeking out essays, theses, dissertations, conference papers, foreign publications, and out-of-print works worthy of wider circulation and assisting their authors in procuring it, and by subsidizing the publication, promotion, or dissemination of academic works that advance the Pentecostal faith.”

More information about the foundation is available at its Web site: [www.tffps.org](http://www.tffps.org).

**Gene Edwards og hans menighetsforståelse**

**Geir Lie** er lektorutdannet med kristendomskunnskap hovedfag fra Det teologiske Menighetsfakultet i Oslo.



Flere av tidsskriftets tidligere artikler har beskjeftiget seg med kristne lederskikkelser i skjæringspunktet mellom hellighetsbevegelsen og plymouthbrødrene. Amerikaneren Gene Edwards (f. 1933) er intet unntak hva dette angår, til tross for hans påstand at

Christians outside of the organized church run in two very definite strands. One of them is a Pentecostal (i.e., the successor of the Holiness movement) strand. The other one is very much a Plymouth Brethren type strand. I know of no other major lines of thinking outside the organized church. *I would like for you to very definitely know that I follow neither one of those categories.*<sup>1</sup>

Edwards er født og oppvokst i Texas og har opprinnelig bakgrunn blant sørstatsbaptistene: “My grandmothers on both sides, my mother and my father all were Southern Baptists.[...] I became a Baptist when I was 6 or 7 at First Baptist Church in Bay City, Texas.”<sup>2</sup>

Sin kristne omvendelse opplevde han like fullt ikke før 1950, mens han studerte ved East Texas State University i Commerce, hvor han hevdet å ha blitt innvilget opptak allerede som 15-åring.<sup>3</sup> Dette er i sannhet oppsiktsvekkende, all den stund Edwards i en annen sammenheng hevder å være “handicapped with a severe case of dyslexia.”<sup>4</sup> Etter å ha blitt uteksaminert fra ‘college’ 18 år gammel,<sup>5</sup> tok Edwards fatt på teologistudiene ved Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary i Fort Worth; det vil si, første året tilbrakte han som utvekslingsstudent ved Rüschi-lion Zürich Baptist Theological Seminary i Sveits. 22 år gammel fikk han sin “Master’s Degree in Theology.” Parallelt med dette betjente han England Grove Baptist Church i Commerce (1954-56) og Tabernacle Baptist Church i Pickton

<sup>1</sup> Gene Edwards, brev til artikkelforfatteren, datert 28.04.1997. Min kursivering.

<sup>2</sup> Gene Edwards, “Minister to Minister (1).” Kassettopptak fra Atlanta, Georgia, 1986 (Auburne, Maine: Message Ministry).

<sup>3</sup> Gene Edwards og Tom Brandon, *Preventing a Church Split* (Scarborough, Maine: Christian Books, 1987) s. 3.

<sup>4</sup> “An Interview with Gene Edwards.” <http://www.geneedwards.com/autobiography.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Gene Edwards, *How We Began* (Santa Barbara, California, n.d.) s. v.

(1957-58).<sup>6</sup> Senere referanser til ovennevnte periode omtales hovedsaklig i iro-  
niske vendinger:

Both of these churches received awards (won by competition, of course!) from the Texas Baptist Convention for being "outstanding rural churches in Texas." (Which only proved we were good at winning contests.)<sup>7</sup>

Etter 5 år som pastor begynte nå en 4-5 års omflakkende evangelistperiode. Edwards var ingen vekkelsesforkynner, men ledet derimot "campaigns in personal evangelism on a large scale - sometimes city-wide":

For the next few years my ministry got larger and larger. A group of churches in a city would band together and invite me to their town. The Christians from those churches, generally the most dedicated from each church, would then meet me in a central place for one week. I would then train those believers in winning people to Christ. The second week of this "campaign," these Christians would go out all over the city, door to door, winning folks to Christ in their homes. The number of believers who went out may have been as many as 1,000.<sup>8</sup>

Edwards hadde i mellomtiden flyttet til Tyler, Texas. Når han en sjelden gang var hjemme, samlet han sammen en gruppe på omlag 10 personer som studerte Watchman Nees bok *The Normal Christian Life*. Som en direkte følge av boken besluttet han å avbryte forkynnertjenesten. Etter flere års sykdom flyttet han til California hvor han senere skulle få kontakt med et tjuetalls ungdommer i Isla Vista, restene av evangeliseringsorganisasjonen Campus Crusades arbeid i området. Disse tok han nærmest et 'apostolisk' ansvar for:

The students from Isla Vista were looking for direction. They finally invited Gene to come up from L.A. once a month speaking to them. That was the beginning of the Church in I.V.<sup>9</sup>

For bedre å forstå blant annet hva som skjedde i Isla Vista, vil jeg ta et foreløpig avbrekk fra den videre historiske fremstillingen og heller se nærmere på Edwards teologi - især hans ekklesiologi. Det vil også være naturlig å hente opp løse tråder fra den hittil skisserte biografiske fremstillingen i den grad disse kan bidra til å kaste lys over *hvorfor* Edwards trekker de læremessige slutninger han faktisk gjør.

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<sup>6</sup> Bill Sumners (Director ved Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives i Memphis, Tennessee), brev til artikkelforfatteren, datert 17.02.1995.

<sup>7</sup> Edwards, *How We Began* s. vi.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* s. vii.

<sup>9</sup> Chuck Snekvik, brev til artikkelforfatteren, datert 08.03.1996.

*Teologisk basis for Edwards ekklesiologi*

Om amerikanerens ekklesiologiske vyer vil fokuseres mest på, er det likefullt umulig å forstå disse om de ikke plasseres innenfor en større helhetsramme.

**Det religiøse system versus organisk menighetsliv**

På linje med forutgående oppbyggelsesforfattere, som Watchman Nee, T. Austin-Sparks og Witness Lee, hevder Edwards at konseptet 'Guds evige hensikt' må sees adskilt fra både syndefall og frelse.

Om denne 'hensikt' transcenderer både syndefall og frelse, har den likefullt menneskeslekten som mål. Watchman Nee taler på vegne av alle sine 'etterkommere': "God intended man to wield power, to reign and rule, to control other created things."<sup>10</sup> Han konkretiserer: "God's plan is concerned with man's dominion, and it is well to note the special sphere of this, namely, 'all the earth.'"<sup>11</sup> Adam ble skapt til herskerposisjon, han skulle råde over alt det skapte, samt vokte Edens hage - hvilket impliserer en fiendes eksistens.

Konseptet 'Guds evige hensikt' vedrørende menneskets herskerstilling må også sees i sammenheng med Nees forståelse av *verden* - kosmos. Med utgangspunkt i Grimms nytestamentlige greske leksikon sammenligner Nee klassisk gresk forståelse med den nytestamentlige koinégreskens definisjoner. Sistnevnte opererer med følgende undergrupper: (1) det fysiske universum,<sup>12</sup> (2) (a) menneskene som befolker denne verden,<sup>13</sup> (b) hele menneskeslekten som fremmedgjort overfor Gud og følgelig fiendtlig innstilt til Kristi sak,<sup>14</sup> og (3) "worldly affairs", nærmere presisert som "the whole circle of worldly goods, endowments, riches, advantages, pleasures, which though hollow and fleeting, stir our desire and seduce us from God, so that they are obstacles to the cause of Christ."<sup>15</sup> Det er sistnevnte undergruppe som i vår kontekst oppleves interessant. Nee opererer med en kos-

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<sup>10</sup> Watchman Nee, *Love Not the World* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale Publishing House Publishers Inc., 2nd. Printing, 1979) s. 109.

<sup>11</sup> Nee, *ibid.* s. 110.

<sup>12</sup> Matt 13:35; Mark 16:15; Joh. 1:10; Apgj 17:14.

<sup>13</sup> Joh 3:16, 12:19, 17:21.

<sup>14</sup> Joh 14:27, 15:18; Heb 11:38.

<sup>15</sup> Matt 16:26; 1 Kor 2:12, 3:19, 7:31; Tit 2:12; Jak 1:27; 2 Pet 1:4, 2:20; 1 Joh 2:16-17, 3:17. Nee, *Love Not the World* s. 12.



mosforståelse identifisert med et *ordnet system* hvor djevelen selv styrer, om dog “from behind the scenes.”<sup>16</sup>

“Verden” - eller *kosmos* - innenfor denne avgrensede forståelse blir følgelig en antitese til det Gudsriket Kristus har innvarslet gjennom sitt komme og sin gjer-ning:

Politics, education, literature, science, art, law, commerce, music - such are the things that constitute the cosmos. [...] Subtract them and the world as a coherent system ceases to be. [...] Satan is utilizing the material world, the things that are in the world, to head everything up eventually in the kingdom of antichrist.<sup>17</sup>

Motsatsen til Satans organiserte kosmosvelde er altså selve Gudsriket, substansen av Guds evige hensikt “to have on earth an order of which mankind would be the pinnacle and which should freely display the character of [God’s] Son.”<sup>18</sup> Satans kosmosvelde, derimot, er sentrert i og reflekterer hans eget vesen. Frelse i nytetamentlig forstand blir følgelig å unnsnippe et *system*. Nee proklamerer: “I am saved *now* out of that whole organized realm which Satan has constructed in defiance of the purpose of God.”<sup>19</sup>

Dette altgjennomtrengende kosmosveldet kommer til uttrykk på en rekke måter: synd, verdens lyst, kultur, filosofi og religion. Innenfor sistnevnte kategori tilhører “worldly Christianity,” ikke minst dens praktiske utøvelse: “Wherever the power of natural man dominates, there you have an element in that [worldly] system which is under the direct inspiration of Satan.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Nee, *ibid.* s. 13.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* s. 16-17. Nees pietistiske kulturskepsis kommer også til uttrykk gjennom hans forsøk på å skjelne mellom legitim og ikke-legitim omgang med ‘verden’. All kunnskap, innbefattet vitenskapelig forskning, har røtter tilbake til det ‘kunnskapens tre’ som de første mennesker spiste av i Edens Hage og hvor de derigjennom pådro seg Guds vrede. Nee har ambivalente følelser. “Up to what point is the pursuit of scientific research and discovery legitimate? Where is the line of demarcation between what is helpful and what is hurtful in the realm of knowledge? How can we pursue after knowledge and yet avoid being caught in Satan’s meshes?” (*Ibid.* s. 18.) En foreløpig konklusjon synes å bestå i det følgende: “Ultimately, when we touch the things of the world, the question we must ask ourselves is: ‘How is this thing affecting my relationship with the Father?’” (*Ibid.* s. 19.)

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* s. 37.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* s. 38.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* s. 38.

Edwards synes å dele Nees kosmologiske forståelse. Med referanse til Jesu konfrontasjon med fristeren i ørkenen etter å ha blitt døpt av Johannes i Jordanelven, hevder Edwards - på linje med Nee - at Jesus anerkjente Satans legitime herskerposisjon på jorden.<sup>21</sup> En særegen aksentuering i Edwards forkynnelse, i motsetning til hos Nee, er dog "the religious system":

But of *this* you can be sure: In every city to which we may journey, no matter what country or what continent, whether near or far, there you will face a religious system. There is *some* kind of a religious system to be faced in every city on earth. We are bound to bump into it. In Nepal, it may be the religious system formulated by Buddhists; in Afghanistan, one constructed by Moslems; in Rome, a religious system built by Catholics; in East Texas, one built by Baptists; and in Isla Vista, one erected by inter-denominational organizations.<sup>22</sup>

Teologisk synes Nee å være den mest sentrale premissleverandøren gjennom undervisningen om Satans kosmosvelde. Edwards identifiserer konseptet 'det religiøse system' med 'organisert religion'. Organisasjon er Gudgitt, men var aldri tiltenkt menneskene, men englene i himmelen:

God invented organization for angels and not for man. *Angels*, if you please, turned around and super-imposed *their* civilization - their systematization, their angelic organizational life, their culture - on *man*. Angels have imposed their own innate way of functioning on that creature who was intended to be the freest creature in the universe!<sup>23</sup>

Englene synes å representere en lavere livsform enn oss og ble skapt med det formål å tjene både Gud og mennesket. Denne himmelske hærske synes å ha blitt inndelt i tre like store divisjoner, som hver ble ledet av en erkeengel. Edwards kommenterer:

God had set up the original *chain-of-command!* This is a system of "order from the top" that permeates down to the lower levels.<sup>24</sup>

Lucifer, en av de tre erkeenglene, gjorde opprør og ble som et resultat kastet ut av himmelen sammen med sine legioner. I sin søken etter et nytt hjem kom de til "the regions around earth." Gjennom Lucifer kom altså organisasjon og system til vår planet:

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<sup>21</sup> Gene Edwards, *The Divine Romance* (Augusta, Maine: Christian Books Publishing House, 1984) s. 96.

<sup>22</sup> Edwards, *Our Mission* (Augusta, Me: Christian Books, 1984) s. 81.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* s. 83.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* s. 84.

Organization was never intended for planet earth. It is an alien thing. It is foreign to earth and to man.<sup>25</sup>

Mennesket var skapt i Guds bilde til å *råde*, ikke til å bli kontrollert - eller - organisert.

I sin søken etter de historiske røtter for menneskets organisering går Edwards til profan historieforskning. Det gamle assyrerriket erklæres som verdens første stormakt og tituleres “the granddaddy of human systematization”: “They were military people and imposed their military organizational pattern on every country, city and person they captured.”<sup>26</sup> Assyrierriket ble imidlertid avløst av et nytt imperium – babylonerriket: “Now Babylon was also a military dictatorship, so every facet of human life was set up like the army itself . . . chain-of-command. This was man in angelic order!”<sup>27</sup>

Heller ikke babylonerriket skulle imidlertid vise seg å bestå. Neste imperium var det medo-persiske, ledet av Darius den store (521-486 f.Kr.). For å påvise perserrikets innflytelse på de omkringliggende nasjoner, hva angår organisering og struktur, støtter Edwards seg til historiker D.C. Trueman:

The Persians made two outstanding contributions to the ancient world: The organization of their empire, and their religion. Both of these contributions have had considerable influence on our western world. The system of imperial administration was inherited by Alexander the Great, adopted by the Roman Empire, and eventually bequeathed to modern Europe.<sup>28</sup>

Ikke bare hele den moderne sekulære sivilisasjon, men også det religiøse system har vi arvet fra Darius og det gamle perserriket, som igjen var influert av babylonerne. I sin søken etter organiserings videre historiske utvikling støtter Edwards seg igjen til Trueman. Denne gang gjelder det romerrikets angivelige knefall for Lucifers organisasjonsstruktur:

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* s. 85.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* s. 86.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* s. 86.

<sup>28</sup> D.C. Trueman, *The Pageant of the Past* s. 105. Sitat fra Edwards, *ibid.* s. 87. På bakgrunn av sitatet fra Trueman trekker Edwards følgende konklusjon: “Now you know how your government got its structure; your school, your university, the medical profession, politics, automobile manufacturers, retail stores, the police, the army, the company you work for, the civilization you live in. Darius I gave it to you.” (Edwards, *ibid.*)

Finally, from the Romans came a magnificent organization: the Empire. The church modeled its administration units [!] on Roman political subdivisions, and in time the successors of St. Peter, the bishop of Rome, came to exercise a certain authority so that the church, like the Empire, had its chain of command and carefully linked administrations. No other religion could boast such a complete and efficient organization.<sup>29</sup>

Akkurat slik det messianske Gudsriket anføres som selve antitesen til Satans kosmosvelde i Nees undervisning, fremhever Edwards menigheten – ‘Kristi legeme’ - som motsatsen til vår organiserte sivilisasjon:

The church was, and is, anti-world system. The church is *not* an organization. The church is anti-establishment. She does not operate by chain-of-command. The church is the one thing Lucifer doesn't head. Jesus Christ is *direct* Head of His Church, His Body.<sup>30</sup>

De første to hundre år av menighetens historie var i samsvar med Guds plan. Som ‘hode’ for hvert eneste ‘lem’ i ‘Kristi legeme’ forholdt Gud seg til hvert enkelt menighetsmedlem. På samme måte som en familie er også menigheten “a living entity” hvor “every person reports to the head” uten å måtte kontakte Gud ad ‘tjenestevei’ – ‘chain-of-command’. Menighetens gullalder skulle imidlertid bli kortvarig. Under keiser Konstantin ble den kristne tro en av romerrikets offentlig godkjente religioner som mottok økonomisk støtte: “As these events evolved the church gradually took on the organizational structure of all other departments in the Roman system.”<sup>31</sup> Den hierarkiske strukturen med prest nederst, dernest biskop, erkebiskop, kardinal og keiser var ifølge Edwards “purely Babylonian.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> D.C. Trueman, *The Pageant of the Past* s. 311. Sitat fra Edwards, *ibid.* s. 88.

<sup>30</sup> Edwards, *ibid.* s. 90.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* s. 93.

<sup>32</sup> Edwards utbroderer: “The early church vanished. Only her name remained. The name “church” was pasted on a religious organization. Words such as “deacon” and “elder” remained. (Some new words came along - new to Christians - such as “cardinal” and “clergy”. . . both taken right out of paganism.) (*Ibid.*)

Edwards siterer forøvrig Will Durant, *The Story of Civilization*, volume III, *Caesar and Christ. A History of Roman Civilization and of Christianity from their beginnings to A.D. 325* (New York: Simon and Schuster, Seventeenth Printing, 1944): “When Christianity conquered Rome, the ecclesiastical structure of [paganism], the title and vestments of the pontifex maximus, the worship of Great Mother... passed like maternal blood into the new religion, and captive Rome captured her conqueror” (s. 671-72). [Edwards referanse til s. 670-71 er ikke korrekt.]

(footnote continued)

Ved romerrikets undergang og opprettelsen av europeiske nasjonalstater ble hver av disse organisert som en miniatyr av det tidligere romerske imperium. Inntil reformasjonen var den katolske tro eneste offentlige religion i de ulike nasjonalstatene. Selv om reformasjonen endret radikalt på dette faktum, skulle 'chain-of-command'-konseptet forbli uendret: "The structure of all great denominations today are exact replicas of the organizational structure of the Catholic Church, of the Roman Empire - of Greece, Persia, Babylon, and angels!"<sup>33</sup> Tilsvarende dom rammer både pinsemenigheter, karismatiske forsamlinger og de mange "non-profit, non-denominational religious organization[s]." "My dear brother," formaner Edwards, "denominations and tax exempt religious movements are all organizations. That is *all* they are...no more. *Religious* organizations. Those things are *not* the Bride of Christ."<sup>34</sup> Dagens 'kristendom' betegnes forøvrig som 99% organisasjon og 1% 'church life'.<sup>35</sup>

Organisk menighetsliv - antitesen til det religiøse system - har ifølge Edwards ingen overlevelsesmuligheter innenfor en organisatorisk ramme. Han opplever det derfor som sitt livskall å gjenopprette det genuine menighetsliv som utfoldet seg i løpet av de første to hundre år av menighetens historie. Hovedhindringen er imidlertid selve systemet. Edwards hevder at det ligger i enhver organisasjons struktur å bekjempe kristne som nekter å underlegge seg Lucifers hierarkiske struktur:

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"It was not merely that the Church took over some religious customs...the stole and other vestments of pagan priests, the use of incense and holy water...the burning of candles...the worship of saints, the architecture...the law of Rome as a basis for [Church law], the title...Supreme Pontiff...The Roman Church followed in the footsteps of the Roman state... As Judea had given Christianity ethics... so now Rome gave it organization" (s. 618-619). Edwards, *ibid.* s. 102-03.

<sup>33</sup> Edwards, *ibid.* s. 88. Edwards fortsetter: "If you wish to be part of that [historical succession of the practice of chain-of-command from Lucifer down to the post-Reformation denominations], wade in. Please forgive me if I pass up such a golden opportunity. I prefer to spend an exciting evening in the laundry room watching my clothes tumble dry."

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* s. 96.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* s. 99.

The religious system has consistently given a hard time to those groups of Christians *outside* the system. This has been true in all countries and in all ages where Christian groups outside the system have existed. Be it Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, organized Judaism or organized Christianity . . . at the very least, it is the tendency of religious organizations to oppose Christians who refuse to organize.<sup>36</sup>

Edwards er likevel så pass realistisk at han innser umuligheten av helt og holdent å unnslippe 'verdenssystemet'. Også hans etterfølgere er kalt til et liv i denne verden. Han tilføyer dog: "But there is one system inside the world system we should stay as far away from as we can get: we should stay out of the *religious system*. Not help it, not feed it, not encourage it - yet not fight it, either. Just ignore it."<sup>37</sup>

### *Ikke-teologisk basis for Edwards ekklesiologi*

Med utgangspunkt i Edwards kirkehistoriske 'granskninger' hevder han (så firkantet som kanskje få andre enn Edwards selv er i stand til) at til tross for offisielle utsagn, er skisma i kristenheten *aldri* teologisk motivert.<sup>38</sup> Om Edwards skulle ha hatt rett, blir konsekvensen (som i dette tilfelle nok faktisk *er* riktig) at også *hans egen* avvisning av organisert religionsutøvelse mangler opprinnelig basis i teologiske overveielser. Tjener Nees 'plymouth-inspirerte' ekklesiologi som en legitimering i etterhånd av Edwards utmeldelse av 'the religious system'?

Det viser seg nemlig at Edwards har hatt en rekke negative erfaringer med organisert kristendom, noe som utvilsomt har preget hans nåværende ekklesiologi. Ni år gammel, mens han fremdeles bodde i Bay City, opplevde unggutten blant annet en opprivende splittelse i byens lokale baptistforsamling:

Seared in my mind forever is the scene of a Wednesday night business session. All I knew is that there was some sort of dispute, and Christians were going at one another tongue and lip. My mother, Gladys by name, tried to stand and say something but instead managed only to break into tears. That night, before the eyes of a nine year old kid, the church split. Over what I do not know. I only know that the pastor left. Shortly thereafter another church was formed.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* s. 104.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* s. 105.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* s. i: "The *true* reason for division and the *stated* reason for division are never the same. The heart of man is too deceitful for any of us to trust anyone causing division."

<sup>39</sup> Edwards og Brandon, *Preventing a Church Split* s. 1-2.

Sin baptistiske forankring til tross, Gladys “led her two boys over to the First Christian Church, there to continue the family’s religious life.”<sup>40</sup> Grunnet menighetssplittelse kort tid deretter fikk Gladys et nervøst sammenbrudd og satte heretter aldri sine ben i et kristent lokale. Tretten år gammel flyttet Edwards sammen med familien til Cleveland, Texas hvor han angivelig opplevde sin tredje menighetssplittelse, også denne gang i byens baptistmenighet. To år senere flyttet Edwards til Commerce, hvor menigheten akkurat hadde avskjediget den forrige pastoren. To nye år senere, sytten år gammel, opplevde Edwards sin kristne omvendelse - sammen med flere hundre som ble rekruttert til menigheten. De positive evangelistiske resultatene var imidlertid ikke nok til å kvele den stadig voksende misnøyen. Pastoren sa opp, og Edwards ble vitne til nok en opprivende splittelse.<sup>41</sup> Vi vil se nærmere på denne.

Edwards omvendelse synes å ha skjedd i forlengelse av en vekkelse blant skole- og studenter:

I was converted to Christ during my junior year in college. At that very time a revival was sweeping America. It is sometimes referred to as the post-war revival. [...] Perhaps the major outcome of that revival was the beginning of acceptance of the interdenominational Christian organizations. The Navigators, Campus Crusades for Christ, Youth for Christ, Young Life - all came into prominence and acceptance at that time.<sup>42</sup>

Edwards meldte seg inn ikke bare inn i den lokale baptistmenigheten, men ble også tilsluttet “The Baptist student fellowship near campus.”<sup>43</sup> Etter at “the Baptist Student Director married a Baptist minister” og “The Baptist Union was suddenly left without a Director”, begynte et tjuetalls ungdommer i 18-19 års alderen å samles på egen hånd. Eller, som Edwards uttrykker det: “We were having a spontaneous experience of church life”<sup>44</sup> :

The summer after my conversion the Lord came and visited that group of about 20 college kids; it was a time so glorious that even now - 30 years later - the remembrance of it still brings chills and tears. That visitation lasted three months, with an afterglow that lasted about a year. As a group we were drawn very close to one another and consequently, as much as possible, did everything together.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 2-7.

<sup>42</sup> Edwards, *Our Mission* s. ii-iii.

<sup>43</sup> Gene Edwards, *The Inward Journey* (Goleta, California: Christian Books, 1982) s. 5.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

Den naturlige spontaniteten forsvant imidlertid i samme stund som den nye studentlederen ble ansatt. Hvor viktig var den emosjonelle skuffelsen som bidrag til det som senere skulle få navnet 'det religiøse systemet'?

And it was at that time that I met the system for the first time. Two or three of us went over to talk to this lady and told her, "you know, this is how we have been doing it, and could we..?" They chose me to be the spokesman to talk with her. It is really interesting. A few weeks later they chose offices for the Baptist students for the coming school year. And there must be a hundred offices and there were only 25 people. And some of us had one, two, three, four, and five offices. And there was one who didn't get a single office. I bet you can't guess who it was! 17 years old and that was my first encounter with IT ["the religious system"].<sup>46</sup>

Senere, i løpet av studieåret i Sveits, tok Edwards "courses on Anabaptist history" med det angivelige resultat at han, sin dysleksi til tross, "came out of [the Seminary] knowing it about as well as a human could know it."<sup>47</sup> Tenåringen følte umiddelbart et åndelig slektskap med reformasjonens radikalere og opplevde at disse - som han selv - "didn't belong in the religious system."<sup>48</sup>

Skepsisen til etablert kristendom avtok neppe etter at han etter å ha vendt tilbake til "Southwestern" etter ett år fikk avslag på søknaden om å bli misjonær.

Edwards avvisning av organisert kristendom kommer kanskje sterkest til uttrykk i romanen *The Early Church*.<sup>49</sup> Formålet med denne er å føre leseren fram til en avgjørelse vedrørende to handlingsalternativer: (1) fortsatt praktisering av vår nåværende kristendom eller (2) fullstendig avvisning av denne og istedet søke Gud hvor man sammen med Ham starter fra 'scratch' av.<sup>50</sup> Edwards gjør oppmerksom på at det ikke så mye er moderne kristnes *tro* som deres *praksis* han finner frastøtende: "What Christians today believe about the Lord, the Scripture, salvation, etc. is correct and beautiful. But what present day Christians have been led to practice is an abomination!"<sup>51</sup>

Etterhvert som Edwards anseelse som evangelist vokste, fikk han invitasjoner til "the inner machinery of several religious organizations and denominational head-

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Edwards, "Minister to Minister (1)."

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Goleta, California: Christian Books, 1974.

<sup>50</sup> Edwards, *The Early Church* (Goleta, California: Christian Books, 1974) s. 1.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* s. 2.



quarters” for å hjelpe disse “work out a program in personal evangelism.”<sup>52</sup> Det gikk gradvis opp for ham at noe var fundamentalt galt med vår moderne kristendomsform:

I used to come home to Tyler.<sup>53</sup> Texas and go to church on a rare free Sunday. I sat in the balcony and watched the choir, the pastor and the bored young people who also sat in the balcony. *This* was Christianity. This was the expression of the living Lord on earth. I was torn to pieces. I finally arrived at a point that I could no longer bear it. I got to the point that I just couldn't go to church any more. [...] I simply could not stand the death and the sheer boredom of church any longer.<sup>54</sup>

At first I thought only the Christians in my circle were dead. Eventually, by the time I had been almost everywhere, I saw that *everything* was dead! Gradually one thing became clear to me, and how it took so long to get clear on such a simple thing. I don't understand. It was this: there is no hope for that thing I understood to be the church - not as it exists today.<sup>55</sup>

I 1960 ble Edwards bedt om å reise på kryss og tvers av USA for å intervju kristne ledere som hadde politiske eller religiøse posisjoner i samfunnet.<sup>56</sup> Han påtok seg oppdraget – “sandwiching it in between personal evangelism campaigns.”<sup>57</sup> De nye oppdragsgiverne hadde en visjon om å ‘frelse nasjonen’ ved å få kristne ledere inn i politiske nøkkelposisjoner. Edwards, derimot, som mente å ha sett hva vår moderne kristendom innebar, fryktet imidlertid at en slik løsning kun ville “accelerate the disaster.”<sup>58</sup>

En presbyterianer ved navn Howard Pue kalte samme år sammen 20-30 av nasjonens “key Christian leaders” i Philadelphia for å diskutere mulige tiltak for å ‘frelse Amerika’ fra moralsk og åndelig forfall. Hver enkelt av de inviterte ble bedt om å komme med et 15 minutters innlegg om hva kristne kunne gjøre for å ‘frelse Amerika’. Møtet beskrives som “a real Christian’s ‘Who’s Who.’”<sup>59</sup> Edwards hadde Billy Grahams svigerfar (Lemuel Nelson Bell) på den ene siden og grunnleggeren av National Association of Evangelicals på den andre. Edwards

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* s. viii.

<sup>53</sup> Edwards hadde åpenbart flyttet enda en gang, denne gang til Tyler, Texas.

<sup>54</sup> Edwards, *How We Began* s. ix-x.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* s. viii.

<sup>56</sup> Edwards, “Minister to Minister (1).”

<sup>57</sup> Edwards, *How We Began* s. x.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* s. xi.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

var rystet over de løsningsforslag som kom fram: for eksempel oppfordringen om mer bibellesning blant kristenfolket, et omkvad Edwards hadde hørt siden han var 17 år gammel.<sup>60</sup>

Billy Grahams svigerfar, som mer eller mindre representerte svigersønnen, ble bedt om å innlede, hvilket betydde at Edwards var sistemann:

By afternoon, when they got to me, I was out of the religious system. I knew that if what I was seeing and hearing was the best that Christians had to offer this earth, if these were *the* giants, and these were their answers, then there wasn't any hope for the church as we understand it in this age.<sup>61</sup>

Edwards reiste seg likefullt og skisserte *sin* plan for hvordan 'frelse Amerika' "from top to bottom." Desverre oppgav han planen allerede mens han holdt innlegget, "because at that moment [he] didn't think [America] worth saving."<sup>62</sup>

### *Mer om Edwards ekklesiologi*

Vel så nødvendig som *basis* (teologisk eller ikke-teologisk sådan) for Edwards ekklesiologi, er selve *læren* om det nye testamentes *ekklesia*. Jeg vil i det følgende se nærmere på Edwards forståelse av den genuine menighets kall og funksjon overfor samtid og ettertid, samt gi en beskrivelse av hva som angivelig må til for at troende skal ha en legitim grunn til å titulere det felleskapet de sogner til som 'menighet'. Jeg vil fortsatt trekke inn relevante hendelser fra Edwards liv og virke for, om ikke annet, iallfall å *antydde* på hvilket grunnlag Edwards trekker de slutninger han faktisk gjør.

Mens kirkehistorikere tradisjonelt sett inndeler kristenheten i protestanter, katolikker og ortodokse, identifiserer Edwards seg med en *fjerde linje*, som primært omtales i kirkehistorikernes *footnoter*: Kristne som har valgt å stå utenfor 'organized religion' har eksistert innenfor hvert eneste århundre siden 325 e. Kr., hevder han. Det er ikke tale om én enkelt gruppering, heller ingen ubrutt apostolisk suksessjonslinje hva angår organisk menighetsliv.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Edwards, "Minister to Minister (1)."

<sup>61</sup> Edwards, *How We Began* s. xi.

<sup>62</sup> Edwards, "Minister to Minister (1)."

<sup>63</sup> Edwards, *Our Mission* s. 3-4.

These little groups have been there in *every* age of Church history. They have been called by dozens of different names. They stand as a witness to the simplicity of faith in Jesus Christ. And what was God doing with each of these peoples? Simply this: He was keeping His testimony alive. A testimony of the centrality of Christ in the universe - His preeminence.<sup>64</sup>

Iallfall indirekte inspirert av plymouthbrødrene<sup>65</sup> synes Edwards å forfekte det syn at Gud hadde et arbeid på jorden gjennom et *lite* Gudsfolk, som igjen var håndplukket fra Guds opprinnelige folk:

[God's] work was usually small, His people usually nameless. His work with each group, you might say, was short-lived. [...] God would use that group for forty to eighty years, perhaps a hundred. During *that* time *He* had His people ... and as the light faded in that group, God moved on to work again, somewhere else.<sup>66</sup>

I perioden fra 315 til 1517 e.Kr. leser vi kun om små grupperinger som spredte små *lysglimt* i en mørk verden. Fra og med reformasjonstiden av har det lille Gudsfolket blitt kalt til ikke kun å være lysbærere, men også å *gjenreise* Guds standard: "Restoring the experience of the first century; that is, rediscovering the full experience of knowing Christ and restoring the experience of the church."<sup>67</sup> Denne Gudgitte oppgave er blitt gitt til alle de små grupperingene Gud hevdes å ha jobbet innenfor siden 1517. Edwards hevder også at hver ny gruppe Gud har pekt seg ut, synes å ha vært seg bevisst hvorfra Gud har 'fjernet lysestaken' for at de selv skulle videreføre det autentiske arbeidet Gud påbegynte i sitt tidligere Gudsfolk:

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<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* s. 4

<sup>65</sup> Edwards ikke bare berømmer plymouthbrødrenes fokus på "simple meeting with no clergy present" de første årene før Darby lyktes i å omgjøre bevegelsen til "a Bible teaching movement." Til tross for at det genuine menighetslivet dermed ble kvalt, karakteriseres Darby og de øvrige bibellærerne blant plymouthbrødrene som "among the greatest teachers in church history. They have virtually no peers." "What those lay-people listened to as they sat out there on those chairs was some of the greatest stuff since the Apostles." (*Ibid.* s. 150-51.)

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.* s. 4. Se også Edwards, *The Early Church* s. 99: "God's desire has always been to have a people who would bear His image and His authority; so over and over again throughout history, God has had to find a people, separate them from the world, and make them *His* people. God could then begin to work among those people. But with the passing of time, those very people, the very vessel which God had chosen, would begin to turn from Him and even to reject Him. Then God would decide to move afresh. At that point His former work would actually rise up to resist His *new* work."

<sup>67</sup> Edwards, *Our Mission* s. 4.

Turn around and look back. Who do you see first? The ones who stand out the most in the recent past are the Little Flock. But a line can be traced. The Little Flock took the banner from the Brethren. Prior to them we know the Moravians seized the banner from a people called the United Brethren. They in turn got it from the Hussites and the Waldensians.<sup>68</sup>

Etter at 'lysestaken' angivelig har blitt fjernet fra Watchman Nees Little Flock-forsamlinger, konkluderer Edwards:

What [God] desires now is what He desired in the first century: the church ... practical, locatable and rich in its daily outworking. Yet the very thing God wants does not exist today! It has been lost. You have never experienced true church life.<sup>69</sup>

Parallelt med at Edwards brøt av hele forkynnergjerningen grunnet innsikten fra Watchman Nees bok *The Normal Christian Life*, brøt han også ut av det 'religiøse systemet': "I am out of it, and I will be out forever by the mercy of God," hevder han.<sup>70</sup>

Han visste imidlertid ikke at det fantes kristne som stod utenfor 'organisert religionsutøvelse'. Desperat forsøkte han å oppspore kristne som 'knew the Lord'. I Louisville, Kentucky møtte han en tidligere misjonær i Kina, Beta Sheirich (1893-1967)<sup>71</sup> som var i begynnelsen av 70-årene. Hun var aktivt med i et kristent felleskap som hadde åndelige røtter tilbake til T. Austin-Sparks i England.<sup>72</sup> Ed-

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<sup>68</sup> Edwards, *Our Mission* s. 18.

<sup>69</sup> Edwards, *The Early Church* s. 4.

<sup>70</sup> Edwards, *How We Began* s. xii.

<sup>71</sup> Beta var datter av Franz Scheirich, som utvandret fra Nagy Becskerck, Ungarn i 1873. Han slo seg ned i New York City og giftet seg to år senere med Anna Windelf. Familien flyttet etterhvert til Louisville, Kentucky og gikk inn i the Market Street United Methodist Church. Menigheten var "a Methodist Episcopal Church in the Louisville Conference without being connected to organized Methodism in Kentucky." Båndene var primært rettet mot menigheter i Ohio, som lik den selv, var av tysk avstamning. Franz var en av grunnleggerne av menighetens Deaconess Hospital. I september 1920 ble Beta utnevnt til 'superintendent' over sykehuset. I slutten av 1920-årene ble Beta og søsteren Margaret utsendt som misjonærer til Kina. Beta ble tatt til fange av japanerne og "remained behind barb wire fences for some time before being released to sail back to America and to Market Street United Methodist Church." (Nancy Mays Price, *On the Cutting Edge. A history of the Louisville Conference United Methodist Women 1878-1984*. [Published by the author, 1984] s. 103.) Se også *Thy Hand Hath Provided. A Historical Rhapsody in Five Movements* (Franklin, Tennessee: Providence House Publishers, 1996) s. 83.

<sup>72</sup> Gene Edwards, telefonsamtale med artikkelforfatteren, 31.01.1996.

wards følte umiddelbart samhörighet med den eldre kvinnen, som etter å ha meldt seg ut av metodistkirken skrev hjem til sine økonomiske støttepartnere i USA og bad dem stanse det økonomiske underholdet. Hun dro så til Shanghai og knyttet seg opp til kvinner som Elisabeth Fischbacher og Mary Jones. Etter at hun vendte tilbake til USA, begynte hun å be om at Gud skulle reise opp en tilsvarende bevegelse der som Han hadde gjort under Watchman Nees virke i Kina. Sheirich bad kontinuerlig om at Gud skulle “send workers to America to raise up the life of the church.”<sup>73</sup> Edwards selv, var en av tre personer hun uopphørlig bar fram for Gud i bønn.

Kort tid deretter deltok Edwards på en kristen konferanse hvor han “consecrated himself to the Lord and to His church.” I løpet av disse dagene ble han syk og reiste hjem. Etter noen dager følte han seg frisk og deltok på en ny konferanse hvor han imidlertid igjen ble slått ut av sykdommen og sendt hjem med fly til Tyler hvor han ble sengeliggende et helt år.<sup>74</sup>

### *Gene Edwards versus Witness Lee*

Alle nyetablerte menigheter vi leser om i det nye testamente, inklusiv menigheten i Antiokia, ble til ved at grupper av kristne fra en allerede eksisterende menighet brøt opp fra sitt hjemsted og flyttet til en ny by.<sup>75</sup> Til tross for at Edwards bestri-der berettigelsen av å ha menighetsledere som ikke opprinnelig hører hjemme innenfor menighetens geografiske område, synes ikke dette å ha forårsaket noe problem i den første menighets tid. Med unntak av menigheten i Antiokia, var de øvrige menighetene først og fremst jødiske. Rekrutteringen til disse kom eksklusivt fra Jerusalemmenigheten, som kun bestod av jødekristne.<sup>76</sup>

Muligens som en fordekt kritikk av Watchman Nees radikale etterfølger Witness Lees for dennes oppbrudd fra det fjerne Østen hvor han flyttet til Los Angeles i 1961 og etablerte sin ‘Local church’ bevegelse, erklærer Edwards: “[...] the apostles are a very dominating factor; therefore they *must* be from the local area, or the church turns out peculiar, not fitting the nation it is in.”<sup>77</sup> Om de tolv apostlene skulle ha vært indere eller japanere, fortsetter Edwards, ville de nyetablerte

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<sup>73</sup> Edwards, “Minister to Minister (1).”

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Edwards, *The Early Church* s. 193.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* s. 139.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* s. 139.

menighetene i Judea etter at Jerusalemmenigheten ble spredt i år 38 e. Kr, aldri ha kunnet 'matche' sitt omkringliggende lokalmiljø.

I 1963, mens Edwards var sammen med "Bill" Bright ved Campus Crusades for Christs hovedkvarter i Arrowhead Springs, fikk han høre at en av Watchman Nees medarbeidere var i USA. Edwards overvar et møte med Witness Lee som gjorde positivt inntrykk. Edwards bodde fremdeles i Tyler, men sykdommen gjorde at han trengte klimaforandring. I løpet av august 1965 tok han familien med seg og flyttet til California. Han oppsøkte raskt Witness Lees gruppe som på dette tidspunkt talte mellom 30 og 40 personer. 1. september samme år dro en gruppe på seks personer -Edwards inklusiv - til det fjerne Østen. Møtet med The Little Flock-menighetene, blant annet på Taiwan, ble en skuffelse. Kvinner og menn satt på hver sin side i møtelokalet, kvinnene hadde 'pinserull' og lederne styrte menigheten med uinnskrenket kontroll. Det tidligere idylliske bildet han hadde hatt for sitt indre vedrørende The Little Flocks vedvarende troskap mot sant menighetsliv, måtte justeres kraftig: "I saw Plymouth Brethrenism with a Chinese face on it."<sup>78</sup> Edwards betrodde seg til en av mennene i reisefølget: Med unntak av kinesernes kjærlighet, ville han ikke ha noe av det øvrige reproduert i USA.<sup>79</sup> Samtalen forble åpenbart ikke mellom de to, for da Edwards vendte tilbake til USA ble han nærmest ekskommunisert fra Lees gruppe, hvor han hadde begynt å gå 5-6 uker før reisen til Østen.

### *Apostelembedet versus det almenne prestedømme*

En gjenopprettelse av autentisk 'church life' er påkrevet. Første skritt på veien, ifølge Edwards, er en gjenopprettelse av apostelembedet.<sup>80</sup> I motsetning til våre dagers bibelskoler eller teologiske læresteder, ble det første århundrets kristne 'utdannet' gjennom årelang deltakelse i genuint menighetsliv, gjennom daglig interaksjon med og observasjon av apostlene<sup>81</sup>: "Men of God were prepared just by being in church life [...] In the church those men got more training, and better training, than *anyone* in the twentieth century has ever received."<sup>82</sup> "Apostles,"

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<sup>78</sup> Edwards, "Minister to Minister (2)." Kassettopptak fra Atlanta, Georgia, 1986 (Auburne, Maine: Message Ministry).

<sup>79</sup> Edwards, telefonsamtale med artikkelforfatteren, 30.01.1996.

<sup>80</sup> Edwards, *The Early Church* s. 14.

<sup>81</sup> Dette gjaldt primært Jerusalemmenigheten. De paulinske menighetene nøt kun godt av apostelens nærvær en kort periode.

<sup>82</sup> Edwards, *The Early Church* s. 44.

presiserer Edwards, “not seminary professors, are who young men called of God are supposed to sit under.”<sup>83</sup>

Til tross for at Gud utrunder enkelte i menigheten til særskilte lederoppgaver – for eksempel som apostel, profet, evangelist, eller eldste, er Edwards samtidig tydelig på at Bibelen ikke skjeler mellom ‘legfolk’ og ‘geistlighet’. Spesielt den moderne pastorfunksjonen faller ham tungt for brystet: “[...] there is not so much as one passage of Scripture in all the New Testament to justify the modern-day pastoral practice.”<sup>84</sup>

### *Struktur versus ikke-forutsigbarhet*

Tilsvarende det ‘religiøse system’ synes også struktur - eller ‘predictability’ - å utgjøre selve antitesen til organisk menighetsliv. Edwards selv hevder å tilhøre “a wholly unstructured fellowship of believers.” “We have absolutely no idea,” fortsetter han, “what we will be doing a month from now, where we will meet, what we will do when we meet, how many meetings there will be next week, what those meetings are for.”<sup>85</sup> Slike spørsmål tas stilling til fra uke til uke, og finner man ut at man er slitne, lar man simpelthen være å komme sammen inntil videre.<sup>86</sup> Når menigheten i faktisk forstand *er* menighet, et lokalt uttrykk for Kristus,

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* s. 45. Edwards har gjerne moderert sine synspunkter noe siden 1974 da boken ble utgitt. I en senere publisasjon, *The Divine Romance* (Augusta, Maine: Christian Books Publishing House, 1984) skriver han under ‘acknowledgement’ s. xi: “While a student at Southwestern Seminary I sat under some of the finest theological minds of our time [...] While a student at the Baptist Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, my favorite teacher was Dr. John Allen Moore - our professor of church history. It was my privilege to keep a friendship with Dr. Moore and his wife Pauline through the ensuing thirty years. I find myself now doubly in debt to him, first for igniting a still-burning fire in me for a love of church history, and now for the time he gave in reading this manuscript and advising me.”

<sup>84</sup> Edwards, *Preventing a Church Split* s. 44. Se også *The Early Church* s. 38: “Finally, no one need point out to you that there are no steeples, pews, pulpits, stained glass windows or the like, to be found in all this [first century church life]. There is no property, no headquarters, no pastors, no salaried staff workers.”

<sup>85</sup> Edwards, *Preventing a Church Split* s. 123.

<sup>86</sup> Se også Edwards, *The Early Church* s. 40: “The early church had a very distinct *tendency* to have two completely different places to meet. (Tendency is the correct word. There was nothing about the early church that was dogmatic. It defied neat categories and rules; it had only *tendencies*.”)

hevder Edwards, er den “too alive, elastic and on-going to follow a locked-in schedule week after week.”<sup>87</sup>

Det korte oppholdet i Asia hvor man primært besøkte menigheter som indirekte var en frukt av Watchman Nees virksomhet,<sup>88</sup> skulle imidlertid for alltid prege Edwards. Selv påstår han: “I may have seen the only genuine organic expression of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ on this planet.”<sup>89</sup>

Dette lokale uttrykk for sant menighetsliv fant angivelig sted i Toyama, Japan. En rekke universitetsungdommer hadde blitt vunnet for Kristus gjennom hvite misjonærers vitnesbyrd. Misjonærene hadde imidlertid kun vært sammen med ungdommene et par ukers tid før de igjen vendte tilbake til USA.

Ad omveier fant ungdommene ut at det skulle holdes en konferanse et eller annet sted i det fjerne Østen. De greide å skrape sammen nok penger til å sende to ungdommer av gårde til en konferanse som skulle vise seg å vare 6 måneder. Man kom sammen tre ganger om dagen seks dager i uken. Etter et halvt års tid vendte de to ungdommene tilbake til de resterende 35-40 vennene. Siden hadde de japanske ungdommene kommet sammen i sju år “without any human direction.”

Japanerne hadde så skrevet til Witness Lees gruppe i California, og Edwards reisefølge bestod følgelig av en del ‘åndelige sightseere’, samt noen fra ‘The Local Church’, deriblant en kineser som kunne japansk. Edwards ankom Toyama og “stepped off in heaven.”

Japanerne hadde spart penger i flere måneder for å ta imot de utenlandske gjestene. Edwards var fullstendig fascinert av det faktum at de hadde maktet å bevare det japanske særpreget i sin kristendomsform: “Japanese Christianity, pure undiluted Japanese Christianity expressed in an organic fashion uninfluenced by the Western mind!”<sup>90</sup> De hadde skrevet sine egne sanger og sang dem til japanske melodier. De begynte å synge og be, og tårene rant hos flere mens de i hengivenhet gav uttrykk for sin kjærlighet til Gud. Kort tid deretter ble imidlertid menigheten en del av ‘The Local Church’ idet de etablerte kontakt med Lees tilhengere

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* s. 143.

<sup>88</sup> Edwards, *How We Began* s. xv.

<sup>89</sup> Edwards, “Minister to Minister (2).”

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*



i Taiwan.<sup>91</sup> Ifølge Edwards ble derigjennom det autentiske Guds verk i Toyama tilintetgjort. Edwards tordentale munner ut i et øredøvende crescendo:

And today in Toyama, Japan, they worship in a building and they sit on pews and they sing Western songs! And they've got a pastor who's still preaching to them! What a shame!<sup>92</sup>

I Jerusalemmenigheten var det kun apostlene som forkynte. Og selv ikke apostlene forlot Jerusalem de første åtte årene etter menighetens begynnelse på pinsedag. Daglig kom imidlertid menigheten sammen i Salomos buegang for å høre aposlene forkynde *Kristus*, ingen systematisk presentasjon av den kristne tro eller utlegning av det gamle testaments bøker<sup>93</sup>:

Sometimes one Apostle spoke, sometimes several, and sometimes all of them shared the riches of Christ. Frequently the message would be adressed to the whole throng. At other times they probably broke up into twelve groups and one Apostle met with each group. All day long the scene at Solomon's Porch was that of saints coming and going. Those who had jobs would join the meeting briefly and return to work; others stayed for the whole day!<sup>94</sup>

Den *andre* måten menigheten møttes på, i tillegg til i Salomos buegang, var uformell omgang med hverandre da man bodde sammen i kollektiv. Kun et fåtall av de tre tusen nyomvendte på pinsedag var fra Jerusalem, de øvrige var diasporajøder som kom fra hele det daværende romerriket. Både disse og de få dager deretter *enda* fem tusen nyomvendte diasporajøder, besluttet sammen med de fra før av Jesu hundre og tjue etterfølgere, de tolv galiléiske apostlene inklusive, å forbli i Jerusalem. De få som opprinnelig hørte hjemme i Jerusalem, åpnet hjemmene for de øvrige,<sup>95</sup> og Jerusalem-menighetens kollektivmodell var herved et faktum fra år 30 til 38 e.Kr. da man på grunn av forfølgelser flyktet til Judea og opprettet nye menigheter etter samme mønster.<sup>96</sup> Denne gang var det imidlertid ikke apostlene, men ordinære menighetsmedlemmer som var menighetsplantere.

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<sup>91</sup> Edwards, telefonsamtale med artikkelforfatteren, 30.01.1996.

<sup>92</sup> Edwards, "Minister to Minister (2)."

<sup>93</sup> Edwards, *The Early Church* s. 45-48.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.* s. 42.

<sup>95</sup> Edwards anslår at omlag femti av de første tre tusen nyomvendte hørte hjemme i Jerusalem fra begynnelsen av. I så fall bestod hvert kollektiv av gjennomsnittlig seksti medlemmer. (*Ibid.* s. 34.)

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* s. 119-23.

Menigheten i Antiokia, derimot, synes å ha brutt med både Jerusalemmenigheten og de judéiske menigheters kollektivtradisjon. Istedet hevder Edwards at man valgte å flytte nærmere andre troende. Dermed ble menigheten representert gjennom “clusters scattered here and there all over the city.”<sup>97</sup> Diskontinuiteten med ‘Jerusalemtradisjonen’ skyldtes at behovet for å bo i kollektiv var ikke-eksisterende fra begynnelsen av. Alle de nyomvendte var bosatte i Antiokia og ingen trengte å åpne hjemmet for diasporajøder lik situasjonen hadde vært i Jerusalem.

Om apostelembedet er en forutsetning for etableringen av organisk menighetsliv,<sup>98</sup> er det kun gjennom “daily experienc[ing] the life of Christ with [one's] brothers and sisters”<sup>99</sup> at de øvrige embedsgavene gradvis kan komme i funksjon. Om Edwards avvisning av ikke-lokale apostler virkelig er ment som en avvisning av Witness Lee, den direkte arvtageren etter Watchman Nees ‘Little Flock’-forsamlinger - en gruppe Edwards karakteriserer som en ‘skuffelse’ - synes kun hans eget menighetsbyggende arbeid å være tilnærmet lik hva som holder mål i USA idag. Også hva angår oppblomstringen av embedsgaver innen sin egen virksomhet, er han imidlertid negativ:

The early church grew up gradually out of a deep experience of Christ. Prophets and teachers did not appear overnight, they emerged in the church after many, many years. When a church was born in the first century, it had no gifted men. It was only as the years passed that men of spiritual stature began to function. Today men try to force the exercise of such gifts and such offices, but they will appear today only as they did in the first century: slowly, after *many* years of experience with Christ and many years of experience in church life!<sup>100</sup>

Sannsynligvis (delvis) som en avvisning av ordinære trossamfunns legitimitet, påstår Edwards: “To see what a real elder or a real evangelist is, we must first see

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<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* s. 195.

<sup>98</sup> “Without the full restoration of this office, all other discussion, all other hopes, all other dreams and plans of seeing the church again as it ought to be are meaningless,” skriver Edwards i *ibid.* s. 14.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.* s. 44.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.* s. 4. Se også s. 78: “It will take a long, long time for any man today to see *the church* raise up and organically produce such things as elders, prophets, etc. The situation in Christendom today is so far behind in the ingredients necessary to properly produce true elders, etc., that we are every bit as much at the starting gate as Jerusalem was. The point is this: church life first produces the man; the man creates the office; the office does not create the man.”

a full restoration of true church life.”<sup>101</sup> “What is an evangelist anyway?” spør han: “Who knows? Only by seeing church life restored do we find out!”<sup>102</sup> Hemmeligheten til det første århundrets organiske menighetsliv er ifølge Edwards det som skjedde som et resultat av apostlenes virke på pinsedag: “3,000 people sat down for eight years and did nothing; they sat under the Apostles; they were in a practical, visible, attendable church.”<sup>103</sup> Skal vi nyte godt av deres suksess, må vi etterfølge deres eksempel: “Yes, we need the experience of Pentecost today ... desperately. Men need to sit down in church life and doing nothing for eight years.”<sup>104</sup>

Edwards ironiserer også over uttrykket “going to church”: “There was no such thing in the first century as going to church. Church was not a place, but a way of life.”<sup>105</sup> Kirke var ikke noe de første kristne gikk til, de var og utgjorde kirken / menigheten!

### *Gene Edwards versus Jon Braun*

Et spennende kapittel i Edwards virksomhet er relatert til hans menighetsbyggende arbeid i Isla Vista, California. Vi har allerede sett at Edwards ekklesiologi er influert av Watchman Nees tenkning. Edwards er dog ikke den eneste som har latt seg positivt prege av kineserens litteratur.

Ikke minst innen evangeliseringsorganisasjonen Campus Crusades for Christ, grunnlagt av “Bill” Bright i 1951, ble en rekke av topplederne fascinert av Nee. På slutten av 1960-tallet opplevde man imidlertid en markant lederavskalling

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<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* s. 79.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* s. 83. Se også s. 130: “What is an evangelist? We really do not know. We will know what an evangelist *really* is when - once more upon this earth - true church life has produced one!”

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.* s. 88.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* s. 107.

innen organisasjonen.<sup>106</sup> En av utbryterne, Jon Braun, ønsket å omgjøre organisasjonen til menighet. Ifølge Bright begynte Braun i samme tidsperiode å forfekte en ytterliggående 'antinomisme':

The pendulum swung so far that actually some of the young people interpreted Jon's teaching with the exclamation, 'Look, I can do anything I want.' In fact, *whatever* smacked of legalism - like having standards, or training people in a certain structure - was resisted.<sup>107</sup>

En annen av 'utbryterne', Peter Gillquist, kommenterer bruddet med Campus Crusades slik:

Our particular group was built around the spiritual gift of evangelism, and it's a great gift. But, you see, the only thing Jesus ever established as an expression of Himself to the world was His body of believers called the church. Instead of being centered around Christ we were centered around the evangelization of mankind.<sup>108</sup>

I en annen sammenheng skriver han:

I had to leave. The hard part was that I intensely loved and still do love the people I left, but to be free to be one with all believers I had to first step outside of the structure of a few. Let me hasten to say that just because a person is identified with structured Christianity does not at all imply he has a weak love for Jesus Christ. Huge numbers of people within the gates love Him to death!<sup>109</sup>

Nærmere undersøkelser viser at bruddet ikke skyldtes at Campus Crusades ikke ville bli en *ny* menighet i betydningen en *til* i rekken av allerede eksisterende menigheter. Gillquist gir sin tilslutning til følgende negative karakteristikker av et tradisjonelt kristent trossamfunn:

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<sup>106</sup> Richard Quebedeaux, *I Found It! The Story of Bill Bright and Campus Crusades* (San Francisco, California: Harper & Row Publishers, 1979) s. 24. Hal Lindsey, som hadde ledet Campus Crusades arbeid ved UCLA, sa opp og etablerte Jesus Christ Light and Power Company – primært et virkefelt for Lindseys fortsatte, og herved uavhengive, bibelundervisning. Andre markante ledere, som Jon Braun, Peter Gillquist, Gordon Walker og Richard Ballew, forlot Campus Crusades i samme tidsperiode – rundt 1968.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.* s. 26.

<sup>108</sup> Peter Gillquist, *Farewell to the fake I.D. An extraordinary handbook for spiritual survival in our pressurized society* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, 1971) s. 110.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.* s. 111.

One man I know defines a denomination as a group of people meeting together under a common denominator other than Jesus Christ.<sup>110</sup>

Gillquist kritiserer i ettertid organisasjonens individualistiske forståelse av det å være en kristen som “inviting Jesus Christ into your life and endeavoring to serve him.”<sup>111</sup> Lesning av Watchman Nees bøker tjente som en senere påminnelse om at “the Church has got to play a prominent role in the whole matter of being a Christian.”<sup>112</sup>

Hver sommer kom alle stabsmedarbeiderne til hovedkvarteret Arrowhead Springs i nærheten av San Bernardino, California. Samlingen tjente som en kjærkommen anledning for ‘area and regional directors’, som vanligvis jobbet på hver sin kant resten av året, å treffes, utdype erfaringer og styrke eksisterende vennskapsbånd. “We ate together, played handball together, preached together, swam and steam-bathed together, and studied the Scriptures together,” skriver Gillquist mer enn 30 år senere:

It seemed as we would open the Scriptures together, the Holy Spirit would speak to us as one man, constantly drawing us to the mercy of God - *and back to the Church*. “Why aren’t we the Church?” we would ask. “Here in the New Testament, the only thing Jesus ever started was the Church.” We loved what we were doing, but in the Book of Acts it was the Church, not the parachurch.<sup>113</sup>

Sommeren 1966 ble et vendepunkt da Braun sammen med blant annet Ballew og Gillquist, og til tider Gordon Walker, møttes hver morgen for å spise frokost og studere Bibelen sammen. “That summer,” skriver Gillquist, “we became convinced that whatever form it would take, ultimately we would have to be

<sup>110</sup> Peter Gillquist, *Love is now* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, Fifth Printing, 1971) s. 109.

<sup>111</sup> Peter Gillquist, brev til artikkelforfatteren, datert 07.01.1997.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* Nees innflytelse blant fremfor alt mange innenfor Jesusbevegelsen er udiskutabel. Journalist og ‘editor-in-chief’ for *Christianity Today* gjennom en årrekke, C.F.H. Henry, skriver: “Any leader who directly or indirectly founds 700 churches inevitably invites attention, and many persons were understandably curious about this remote Chinese personality and his “little flock” principles. The worsening political climate - Nee spent the last decade and a half before his death in June, 1972, in Communist work camps - spurred interest in his writings. His many small works, particularly those in applied soteriology, or salvation in practice, quickly gained for him an international following.” (“Footnotes. Sharper Focus on Watchman Nee,” *Christianity Today*, 9. mai 1975 s. 31.)

<sup>113</sup> Peter Gillquist, *Becoming Orthodox. A Journey to the Ancient Christian Faith* (Ben Lomond, California: Conciliar Press, Revised Edition, 1992) s. 15.

Church.”<sup>114</sup> Både Gillquist og Braun leverte inn sine oppsigelser i februar 1968. Samme sommer samlet de et voksende antall desertører fra Campus Crusades, fikk leid en luthersk kirkebygning i La Jolla, California og forkynte sin daværende forståelse av “the New Testament church.”<sup>115</sup>

Gillquist flyttet til Memphis, Tennessee på vårparten 1969 hvor han fikk jobb ved Memphis State University. Umiddelbart kom han i kontakt med femten-tjue “non-aligned Christian students” som ikke fant seg tilrette i noen av de allerede eksisterende kristne studentorganisasjonene. Da man så ble seg bevisst en mer eller mindre felles visjon for en gjenreisning av ‘nytestamentlig menighetsliv’, ble det besluttet å samles hver søndag kveld til møter i Gillquists hjem.<sup>116</sup>

På linje med Watchman Nee kritiserte Gillquist på dette tidspunkt oppsplittingen av kristenfolket i ulike menighetsdannelser på bakgrunn av divergerende lærefor-  
tolkninger:

We were never meant to be little islands in ourselves, struggling on our own to “get to know the Lord better.” God wants us to draw together and be one. Along these lines, something beautiful is taking place on the college campuses of this land. Students are starting to see and experience the reality of the body of Christ. On many campuses that I know about (and I’m sure many more that I don’t know about), students who know Jesus Christ are spontaneously gravitating together into small cells with Christ. Often they have the Lord’s Supper together; some are even baptizing their own converts. They are seeing themselves as an expression of the church. No man is organizing this thing, and nobody is promoting it; it’s just happening.<sup>117</sup>

Gordon Walker delte Gillquists idyllisering av en *ren* kristendomsform: “I decided when I left Campus Crusades I would serve the Lord in the simplest way I knew how.”<sup>118</sup> Han flyttet til Mansfield, Ohio hvor han etablerte Grace Haven Farm, et kristent kollektiv med rekrutteringsgrunnlag i “ex-addicts, depressed preachers, reformed revolutionaries, and deserters of the Crusades’s army.”<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* s. 16.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.* s. 18.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* s. 20.

<sup>117</sup> Gillquist, *Love is now* s. 113.

<sup>118</sup> Ronald M. Enroth, Edward E. Ericson og C. Breckinridge Peters, *The Story of the Jesus People. A Factual Survey* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1972) s. 137.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.* s. 141.

Ballews hadde søkt å etablere en 'nytestamentlig menighet' i Atlanta, Georgia, men hadde lyktes dårligere enn sine våpendragere i Mansfield og Memphis og flyttet til Santa Barbara-området for å være en del av det som en gang hadde vært Campus Crusades arbeid ved University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB).<sup>120</sup>

I løpet av 1969 var igjen flere av 'utbryterne' samlet ved Lake Arrowhead. En av ex-lederne i Campus Crusades, Ray Nethery, kjente Gene Edwards, som - tilsvarende dem selv - ivret for en gjenreisning av 'nytestamentlig menighetsliv'. Edwards ble invitert opp til Lake Arrowhead for å forkynne for de av 'utbryterne' som var samlet. En av studentlederne ved UCLA, Lance Thollander, var tilstede og inviterte Edwards med på en weekendkonferanse, hvor denne spontant ble bedt om å forkynne under ett av møtene.<sup>121</sup> Edwards forkynnelse ble tatt opp på kassett ('the UCLA tape'), ble mangfoldiggjort og spredt vidt omkring.

En rekke studentungdommer fra Isla Vista ved Santa Barbara kontaktet snart Edwards for at han skulle ta et lederansvar for dem. Dette ble begynnelsen til et menighetsfellesskap som skulle bestå i nærmere ti år. En rekke ungdommer fra Eugene (Oregon), Mansfield (Ohio), Memphis (Tennessee) og Atlanta (Georgia) valgte å flytte til Isla Vista for å være med i fellesskapet. Jon Braun og Richard Ballew ankom allerede i 1970. Etter om lag ett års tid ble det et brudd mellom Braun/Ballew og Edwards, og mer enn halvparten av de om lag 220 troende i menighetsfellesskapet forsvant. Ifølge Braun skyldtes bruddet at han og Ballew ikke ville anerkjenne Edwards angivelig modalistiske treenighetslære. Braun stopper imidlertid ikke der:

Further, his doctrine of Christ was clearly a form of extreme monophysitism, i.e., he taught that in the incarnation the humanity and deity we[re] co-mingled, each losing its distinctiveness: There were other problems as well, particularly with regard to salvation.<sup>122</sup>

Edwards har, selvsagt, en annen versjon og karikerer Brauns 'nådebudskap' som noe som produserte "swearing, cursing, drunkenness and immorality."<sup>123</sup> Problemene oppstod etter ett års tid, da Edwards tok ett års avbrekk fra menigheten:

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<sup>120</sup> Gillquist, *Becoming Orthodox* s. 22.

<sup>121</sup> Chuck Snekvik, brev til artikkelforfatteren, datert 08.03.1996.

<sup>122</sup> Jon Braun, brev til artikkelforfatteren, datert 25.02.1997.

<sup>123</sup> Edwards, *Our mission* s. xiv-xv.

Things went smoothly for the first part of that year I was away. But as more and more of these Christians arrived, there was a definite shift in attitude. Some of them were highly gifted and nationally known leaders. Many were very strong willed. All were hurt. And in it all was still that divisive nature, that bent toward controversy, that boast in past dare-doings ... and, still, under the surface – a predilection to violence, moral license, and, in some, an incredibly vulgar language.<sup>124</sup>

Gillquist hevder at Edwards sannsynligvis overdimensjonerer sin egen betydning i Santa Barbara området, hva angår etableringen av 'nytestamentlig menighetsliv'. Edwards var nemlig kun én av mange som ivret for 'the church'. Etterhvert som kretsen rundt Braun fant at (1) Watchman Nee og Witness Lee "departed from Biblical Christianity" både i sin kristologiske og antropologiske forståelse,<sup>125</sup> og at (2) Edwards "shared many of the same theological errors of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee,"<sup>126</sup> var det mange som brøt samarbeidet med ham.

Gillquist hevder dessuten at det nettopp var på grunn av Nee, Lee og Edwards misforståtte teologi,<sup>127</sup> at man ble dratt mot et studium av "the original documents of the early Christian writers."<sup>128</sup> Flere kom sammen i 1973, og det ble besluttet at man skulle foreta et inngående studium av menighetens historie fra år 95 e. Kr. til reformasjonen. To år senere kom man igjen sammen for å dele resultatene med hverandre. Det enstemmige resultatet var for dem sjokkerende: (1) den nytestamentlige menighet var *liturgisk*, (2) *nattverden* var et *sakrament* som utgjorde "the centerpiece of the entire service," (3) tilsynsemdet som *biskop* var i funk-

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<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Gillquist skriver i brev til artikkelforfatteren, datert 07.01.1997: "For instance, both men tend to mingle the two natures of Christ. So instead of the eternal Son of God who became man in the womb of the Virgin Mary, One who is 100 percent God and 100 percent man, you have in Nee's and Lee's understanding one who is God-man, 50 percent God and 50 percent man with the natures mingled. This is an ancient error which was always rejected by true Christians. A second error in their writings is when one becomes a Christian, the Holy Spirit co-mingles with the human spirit and thus we become God-men. A third area under the category of anthropology would be Nee's doctrine of the crushing of the soul. King David wrote, "He restores my soul," but Watchman Nee wants to crush it."

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Interessant i denne sammenheng er blant annet Jon Brauns upubliserte manuskript "My soul was wounded at Watchman's Knee."

<sup>128</sup> Gillquist, brev til artikkelforfatteren, datert 07.01.1997.



sjon allerede i aposteltiden og representerte menighetens historiske kontinuitet fra apostlene til idag.<sup>129</sup>

Et studium av de sju økumeniske konsil i perioden 325-787 e. Kr. bevirket en aksentforskyvning fra Kristi *gjerning* for den troende til Kristi *person*. "The Nicene Creed," skriver Gillquist, "became for us, as it always has been for Orthodox Christendom, that doctrinal fence outside of which we dare not wander in our understanding of Christ."<sup>130</sup>

Ytterligere studier skulle åpenbare at Den Ortodokse Kirke representerte den historisk ubrutte suksessjonslinje fra og med de første apostlene til idag. Uten å gå mer detaljert til verks, er det nok i denne sammenheng å røpe at kretsen rundt Braun og Gillquist ble innlemmet i Den Ortodokse Kirke i 1987.<sup>131</sup>

Rundt 1981-82 avviklet Edwards menigheten og flyttet en kort periode til Quebec (Canada), deretter til Portland, Maine (USA). De mest trofaste fulgte med ham, men de fleste var etterhvert kommet opp i 30-årene og ville ikke lenger. Edwards har siden flyttet til Jacksonville, Florida hvor han trener håndplukkede personer til å bli menighetsplantere.

### *Edwards innflytelse i Norge*

Gene Edwards har utøvd en viss innflytelse også i Norge. Den første innflytelsen var helst indirekte - via Edin Løvås og Jørgen Aass som besøkte USA i 1972. I

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<sup>129</sup> Gillquist, *Becoming Orthodox* s. 22-40. Edwards tilnærming til kirkehistorien er absolutt motsatt av den dreiningen kretsen rundt Gillquist og Braun skulle foreta rundt 1973: "Instead of having to build new foundations in each generation or each century, we were struggling to see if it were possible to stay with the original apostolic foundation, with that faith once for all delivered to the saints and, in turn, to build a new floor on it for our time, to house the people of our day. We grew less and less comfortable asking, "Are the Christians in the second and third century in our Church?" The issue was the reverse: "Are we in theirs?" (Gillquist, *Becoming Orthodox* s. 27.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* s. 42.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* s. 165-77.

Isla Vista traff de norskamerikaneren Edvin Snekvik,<sup>132</sup> som hadde flyttet nedover sammen med kona Alice. Da så Løvås/Aass vendte tilbake til Norge, tok det ikke lang tid før sistnevnte fikk brev fra Snekvik med skriftlig invitasjon til en konferanse i Isla Vista. Aass var ikke nevneverdig begeistret, men valgte likevel å ta saken opp i det nyetablerte Guds Freds noe ungdommelige ‘eldsteråd’. Resultatet ble at Gregers Lundh ble valgt som ungdommenes ‘utsending’. Han vendte imidlertid tilbake med stort sett bare negative inntrykk. Han var synlig irritert over den ‘uverdige’ måten ‘sakramentene’ ble forvaltet på. Han reagerte både på at folk snakket sammen under nattverden og at man foretok troende dåp i Stillehavet. Det ble for lite høytid over det. Og skulle man først praktisere dåp med full neddykkelse, reagerte han på at denne ofte foregikk ved at både døper og baptisand bare sto og ventet på å bli ‘begravet’ av den første kjempebølgen som nærmet seg.

Mens Gregers var negativ, appellerte historiene positivt til broren Øivind. Sammen med kone og to barn dro han over til USA i 1975 hvor han tilbrakte 6 uker i menighetsfellesskapet i Isla Vista. Året etter var Lundh, sammen med familien, tilbake i Isla Vista hvor han ble fram til 1980.<sup>133</sup>

Vel så influert av Edwards ble ekteparet Lars og Eirin Bjerke, begge med tidligere Guds Fred-bakgrunn, senere primus motorer for menigheten Kristne i Askim. Gjennom Øivind Lundh fikk de høre om Edwards og menighetsfellesskapet i Isla Vista. Lundh gav dem dessuten et eksemplar av Edwards bok *Our mission*, som gjorde et uutslettelig inntrykk. I 1977 reiste familien Bjerke over til USA for en tre måneders periode for å besøke Lundh m/ familie. Edwards hadde på dette tidspunkt allerede flyttet til Quebec, men var innom Isla Vista noen få dager i

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<sup>132</sup> Snekviks foreldre kom begge fra Nordvestlandet. De kjente hverandre fra Norge, men ble gift i Seattle. (Ed Snekvik, brev til artikkelforfatteren, datert 25.09.1995.) Ed Snekvik reiste en tur til Norge i 1974 og besøkte blant annet Fredens Bolig (drevet av Guds Fred), samt Bernard Dahls bønnegruppe i Bergen og forkynneren Olav Ryland. Andre personer han møtte, var Gregers og Øivind Lund, Tore Lende og Kåre Kristing. (Ed Snekvik, kassettopptak til artikkelforfatteren, datert 20.10.1995.) Kristing oppsøkte forøvrig Edwards menighetsfellesskap i Isla Vista i 1974, men uten å ha mottatt skjellsettende inntrykk derfra. (Kåre Kristing, intervju, datert 16.11.1994.)

<sup>133</sup> Øivind Lundh, intervju, datert 17.03.1995.

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forbindelse med en ledersamling<sup>134</sup> Bjerke utgav siden to av Edwards menighetsrelaterte bøker til norsk (*Menighetens første år* og *Gud vil menighet*) på sitt eget Tusenfryd forlag.<sup>135</sup>



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<sup>134</sup> Bjerke rakk også en tur innom 'The Local Church' i Anaheim, samt var på besøk hjemme hos Witness Lee og John Ingalls. Han fikk en tydelig fornemmelse av en dårlig skjult pågåenhet for å få en fot inn i Skandinavia. (Lars og Eirin Bjerke, intervju, datert 24.03.1998.)

<sup>135</sup> Allerede i 1967 utkom Edwards første norske oversettelse, *Personlig evangelisering fra dør til dør* (Kvinesdal: Troens Bevis). Senere oversettelser inkluderer *Julegaven* (Hovet: Hermon, 1994), *Silas' dagbok* (Oslo: Lunde, 2000), *Titus' dagbok* (Oslo: Lunde, 2001) og *Tre konger* (Ottestad: Prokla-Media, 2001).

## Restorationism in British Church Life from 1970

### An Insider's View

**David Matthew** is part of the eldership team at Five Towns Christian Fellowship in Castleford, England.



### *Background: two streams*

British evangelicalism in the early 1970s was, as I remember it, in a sorry state. At one extreme of a polarised church were the Reformed churches, strong on doctrine and the systematic exposition of Scripture, and revitalised by the re-publishing over the previous fifteen years of many standard Puritan works by the Banner of Truth Trust. These churches took a strong anti-Pentecostal, cessationist stand. At the other end of the spectrum were the three Pentecostal denominations: Elim, the Assemblies of God and the much smaller Apostolic Church. All three traced their roots to the Welsh Revival and the Pentecostal Revival at the beginning of the twentieth century and the isolation forced on them by their rejection at that time by the existing denominations. In the middle stood a more lukewarm type of evangelical church, sceptical of extreme forms of both Calvinism and Pentecostalism, yet strongly opposed in principle to neither. Such churches were allied to a variety of existing denominations: the Church of England, The Baptist Church, the Brethren and many more.

### The Charismatic Renewal

The Charismatic Renewal began to shake this scene in the early sixties and continued to increase in influence as the seventies began. Christians from evangelical churches of every colour, touched by the baptism in the Spirit, found the barriers between them coming down. Amid great excitement, they saw new prospects for the years ahead, in which God's people, rejoicing in 'the unity of the Spirit', could move forward together without hindrance from denominational loyalties.

The Fountain Trust, established by Anglican minister Michael Harper in 1964, provided a channel to contain and direct much of the growing charismatic vitality, and it channelled it in a clear direction: towards the renewal of the so-called 'historic denominations'. A statement by Cardinal Suenens, often quoted at the time, described the church as a crown on the head of King Jesus, with each of the multi-coloured gems in the crown representing a renewed denomination. The crown itself symbolised a unified church, while the various gems emphasised the diversity within that unity.

As the seventies unfolded, my observation was that most charismatics seemed comfortable pursuing that goal, though it was hard work: many continued to find their local churches frustrating—especially if the leaders were opposed to the renewal—but they stayed in them with the aim of seeing them, and the whole denomination, ultimately renewed. To counter their frustration they would attend cross-denominational Fountain Trust conferences and praise meetings where they could use spiritual gifts without criticism and enjoy the fellowship of like-minded Christians from a variety of backgrounds. I attended and spoke at many such meetings; they were charged with joy, enthusiasm and hope.

But in time the excitement waned. This seems to have been chiefly because of the continued refusal by many local church leaders to allow renewal activities and attitudes to leave the fringes and enter the mainstream of their programmes and traditions. Many charismatic Christians were beginning to realise that the change they sought in their local churches and denominations would be a long-term project, not an instant one, and as they braced themselves for the task, some of the fallen inter-denominational walls were rebuilt.

## Restorationism

Some British Christians, however, had questioned the idea of denominational renewal from the very start. Another idea had existed alongside it with an altogether different focus. This was—to use the terminology of the time—the ‘Restoration’ viewpoint, a term usually seen as based on the phrase the ‘restoration of all things’ in Acts 3:21 NASB.

Its adherents took the view that denominations had never been God’s long-term desire for his church, so why waste time and energy renewing something that was, from an eternal perspective, undesirable? If in the age to come denominations would disappear and the church be truly one, why not begin here and now to work to that end, with the help of the unifying Holy Spirit? It was into this stream of thought and conviction that I was introduced in 1973, when I first met Bryn Jones (1940-2003), who became the primary spokesman for the Restorationist conviction.

### *Bryn Jones*

Born and brought up in South Wales, Bryn became a Christian at 16 and then attended the Bible College of Wales in Swansea (1958-61). After brief periods

doing evangelism in Methodist chapels in Cornwall<sup>1</sup> (1962), in France<sup>2</sup> (1963) and in Germany (1964), he went as a missionary to Guyana for two and a half years (1964-66). On his return to the UK he pursued a further period of evangelisation in Cornwall (1967-8), then in 1969 moved to West Yorkshire, in the north of England, settling near my home city of Bradford.<sup>3</sup> He became a laundry van driver to support his family and later told how he would sometimes stop his van on the surrounding hills to pray for the city below.

## Formative influences

From Bryn himself, and from others who knew him before I did, I learned the background to the spiritual and relational situation in which I met him in 1973.

As a widely-travelled man, Bryn had inevitably found himself in contact with other travelling preachers and teachers. Among these, Arthur Wallis (1922-88)<sup>4</sup> had quickly become a father-figure. Always consumed by a desire to see revival in the nation, Wallis had also begun, chiefly through contact with David Lillie, to realise the importance of a New Testament local church life in helping bring it about. Wallis and Lillie (both ex-Open Brethren and both living in Devon) arranged a series of three influential conferences between 1958 and 1962,<sup>5</sup> whose titles indicate their emphasis. The first was entitled 'The Church of Jesus Christ: Its Purity, Pattern and Programme in the Context of Today'; the second 'The Divine Purpose in the Institution of the Church'; and the third, influenced by an awareness of the Charismatic Renewal by then touching Episcopalians in the USA, 'The Present Ministry of the Holy Spirit.' Attendance was by invitation only and drew leaders of wide influence.

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<sup>1</sup> Cornwall is the extreme south-west of England, noted for its strong occult leanings.

<sup>2</sup> He was in France under the auspices of Operation Mobilisation.

<sup>3</sup> Bradford was known in Christian circles chiefly for its connection with Smith Wigglesworth (d.1947). It was also the location of Dean House Christian Fellowship, established by Cecil Cousen in 1953, and of Pastor G.W. (Wally) North's Calvary Holiness Church, formed in 1952.

<sup>4</sup> For an outline of Wallis's life and ministry see T. Larsen (ed.), *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, IVP, 2003, p. 692.

<sup>5</sup> For details see P. Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain*, Exeter, Paternoster, 1986, chapter 3.

Bryn Jones, then in his early twenties, attended the third conference and caught something of the vision of the two convenors. Only churches constituted on New Testament lines, directed by the Holy Spirit and unbound by traditions that lacked a clear biblical mandate, he came to see, could be adequate receptacles to contain the 'rain from heaven' when it came and thus stop revival power from dissipating. He and some of his contemporaries lent their youthful enthusiasm to the church-building cause but, with this background, while they rejoiced in the spiritual boost that the Charismatic Renewal was bringing to the church at large, they agreed that it was certainly not the longed-for revival.

When I first met Bryn Jones in Bradford I found him openly propounding the Wallis-Lillie views. His travels around the UK as a popular speaker had led him to believe that the only realistic way to get such churches was to build them on the desired basis from scratch. Dismantling churches in their existing form and rebuilding them on New Testament lines was already beginning to prove too painful for some of their members and too much hassle for the builders.

Jones's vision was crystal clear. He knew the kind of churches he wanted to see. They would not be modelled on some allegedly perfect primitive church—he was quick to point out that the early church as portrayed in the New Testament was far from perfect. No, he wanted churches 'restored' to a point far further back: to all that had been in God's heart from the beginning for his church and that he had caused to be recorded in Holy Scripture for our instruction. This vision was far removed from the main thrust of the growing Charismatic Renewal, typified in the Fountain Trust and its magazine, *Renewal* (launched in 1965), which was to encourage not just individual experience of the Holy Spirit but also the renewal of existing local churches.<sup>6</sup> Hocken suggests a reason for the ecclesiological differences between the two streams:

The difference of vision for the future of the church, between the Lillie-Wallis circle (summed up in the term *Restoration*), and those primarily looking to Harper and the Fountain Trust for leadership (finding their aims expressed in the term *Renewal*), was fundamentally a difference in received ecclesiology.<sup>7</sup>

Harper was an Anglican; Lillie and Wallis both had Brethren backgrounds, and Brethrenism's very foundations in the nineteenth century lay in the rejection of the traditional ecclesiology of the Church of England and the Church of Ireland. It was inevitable, perhaps, that both would bring their ecclesiological convictions

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<sup>6</sup> For a statement of the Fountain Trust's aims see Hocken p. 125. The Trust was closed down in 1980.

<sup>7</sup> Hocken p. 174

to their perception of the move of the Holy Spirit. And perhaps it was inevitable, too, that once the initial uniting euphoria of baptism in the Spirit died down, those convictions would surface again and, in so doing, highlight the differences between the two streams more than their unity.<sup>8</sup>

## Apostolic teams

For the Restorationists, with no traditional church framework to rely on, the question now was how the type of local churches they sought could be established and serviced.

Again, Bryn Jones became the chief spokesman for new insights which would eventually have enormous influence. He had been deeply stirred by reading Roland Allen's *Missionary Methods—St Paul's or Ours?*, which describes the expansion of the early church through the ministry of apostles and prophets.<sup>9</sup> At a significant meeting of a group of church leaders and itinerant preachers, including Bryn, at the home of Arthur Wallis in February 1972<sup>10</sup> the Holy Spirit broke in on the men in a dramatic way, releasing a flow of prophesying. A key theme of the prophecies was the need for the men to stop working as isolated individuals and, recognising each other's gifts, increasingly work together as a team. This way they would be in the best possible position to utilise their varied, complementary abilities and so be able to build local churches matching the Restoration vision.

The recognition of each other's gifts soon began to clarify under the categories listed by Paul in Ephesians 4:11, namely, apostles, prophets, evangelists pastors

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<sup>8</sup> Hocken notes in his conclusions: 'While there was a genuine communion in the Spirit between the Spirit-baptized, there was not a common understanding of the movement and of its purpose in God's sight.' (p. 178).

<sup>9</sup> See W.K. Kay, *Apostolic Networks in Britain*, Carlisle, Paternoster, 2007. (Chapter on Bryn Jones; page numbers not available, the book being still in its pre-publication stage)

<sup>10</sup> Further details of this meeting are noted by A. Walker, *Restoring the Kingdom: The Radical Christianity of the House Church Movement* (Revised and Expanded Edition), Guildford, Eagle Publishing, 1998, p. 76ff. The six present were Arthur Wallis, Bryn Jones, Peter Lyne, David Mansell, Hugh Thompson and Graham Perrins. Subsequent meetings were also attended by John Noble—who came from a Salvation Army background—to make up what was in jest called 'the magnificent seven'.



and teachers.<sup>11</sup> The group, quickly seeing Bryn Jones as endowed with what they viewed as an apostolic gift, confirmed him in the leadership role among them that they had previously recognised instinctively. When I first met Bryn in 1973, the expression ‘apostles today’ was beginning to be used openly. Reaction to the notion was polarised, the enthusiasm of its proponents matched only by the vitriolic opposition of seemingly all Christian leaders in the non-charismatic churches and of some charismatic and Pentecostal leaders too.

### *The Bradford base*

Church-building and team-building proceeded in parallel. On the church front, by 1974 Bryn had established relations separately with three distinct groups in his home city of Bradford. One consisted largely of believers squeezed out of the Baptist and other denominations because of their charismatic beliefs and practices. Bryn had put his younger brother Keri<sup>12</sup> in charge of this group. The second was the remnant of Pastor G.W. (Wally) North’s Calvary Holiness Church in Bradford.<sup>13</sup> This had fallen apart after North’s departure from Bradford, and he had later commissioned Peter Parris, a printing lecturer from London<sup>14</sup> to pick up the pieces. This Parris had done, bringing the remnant together to meet in his own home. The third group was my own ex-Brethren assembly.

During 1973 and 1974 Bryn gradually drew the three groups together until their formal union took place, with the hearty agreement of all involved, in October 1975. The new entity was called The Bradford Church. It met in Bradford Central Library Theatre on Sunday mornings and in regionally-based housegroups all over the city during the week. Bryn was accepted by all as having apostolic oversight to the 150-member church and he installed an initial eldership team of three: Keri Jones as the ‘first among equals’, Peter Parris and myself.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Most evangelicals, of course, considered that only the last three of these were permanent gifts to the church, the first two being temporary roles for the establishment of the church in the first generation.

<sup>12</sup> Keri had previously been a schoolteacher in Dewsbury.

<sup>13</sup> Kay describes North as ‘a kind of proto-apostle, who had established a congregation of believers in Bradford as part of his own proto-apostolic network.’ (Kay, chapter on Bryn Jones)

<sup>14</sup> For several years Parris had sat under the ministry of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

<sup>15</sup> Keri and Peter had already been in full-time leadership for some time; I was still schoolteaching, not coming into full-time ministry until Easter 1976.

Over the next few years the church grew and prospered<sup>16</sup> under intense opposition from virtually every existing church in the city, including the Pentecostals. Tithing was taught vigorously, securing a steady income for the expansion of the church, which eventually peaked at around 650 committed members in the mid-1980s—though it must be remembered that there was a constant drain on its numbers as many churches were planted across the north of England using people who, under apostolic guidance, happily moved from the Bradford area to other towns to be part of the new churches.

### *Projects to spread the message*

Meanwhile, Bryn, in his apostolic role, was developing a relationship with a variety of leaders and churches around the country. All these leaders were men who had broken free from their previous denominational ties; Bryn was adamant that he could expect no meaningful relationship of men with divided loyalties.<sup>17</sup> Bryn arranged regular conferences to bring them together for prayer, waiting on God and the sharing of insights into the New Testament, particularly on issues of ecclesiology.

Their eschatology, too, came under scrutiny and the increasing trend was to reject the premillennialism on which most of them, including myself, had been raised, in favour of a what I could best describe as amillennialism with postmillennialist leanings. Certainly they believed that the new breed of local church that they were pioneering across the UK would be at least one factor in triggering a revival that would spread around the world and bring a substantially new order of gospel light, justice and joy prior to Christ's return.<sup>18</sup>

It was seen as important to make known more widely the implications of these eschatological and ecclesiological convictions, and I found myself quickly drawn away from eldership in the Bradford church to engage in several projects aimed at achieving this for the team—a team which, after carrying the informal label

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<sup>16</sup> In 1977 the church bought a redundant premises, The Church House, from the local diocese and refurbished it as a multi-purpose meeting-place. The church was then renamed the Church House Fellowship.

<sup>17</sup> Later, by contrast, Terry Virgo would prove quite happy to adopt an apostolic role towards a church that remained in, for example, the Baptist Union.

<sup>18</sup> 'Bryn...did not see restorationism as a theological luxury or an interpretive quirk but rather as the divine response to a dark and threatening world situation.' (Kay, chapter on Bryn Jones).

‘the Harvestime team’ for a while<sup>19</sup>, became formally known as Covenant Ministries (later Covenant Ministries International: CMI). In 1980 I set up a Bible college for Bryn and served as Principal for several years. Initially called the International Christian Leadership Programme, the one-year course began in The Church House in Bradford and later moved to new premises in the village of Riddlesden, near Keighley, when it was renamed Riddlesden College. I continued to teach at the college until the end of 1995.

Then, when in 1982 Arthur Wallis moved to the south of England to be closer to Tony Morton and his Cornerstone team,<sup>20</sup> I took over from him the editorship of *Restoration*, the bi-monthly magazine that propagated the Covenant Ministries emphases to a wide readership, exerting a significant influence on Christian thinking in many countries.<sup>21</sup> I was privileged to edit it for eight years. These emphases included openness to the Spirit in praise and worship; the importance of relationships in the family and the church; the conviction that the kingdom of God had been established with Christ’s ascension and Pentecost and would grow until his return to consummate it; the value of ‘lateral covenant’ between leaders working together; the need for all of the ‘Ephesians 4 ministries’ if the church was ever to reach maturity, especially apostles and prophets; the authority of local church elders; and the importance of personal discipling in the ways of the Lord. All of these, it was believed, were clear teachings of the New Testament that had become neglected and were now being restored to the church by the Holy Spirit under the direction of the risen Christ who had promised, ‘I will build my church.’

### *Move to the Midlands*

Bryn moved the team base from Bradford in 1989 to Nettle Hill, a complex of buildings near Coventry, with a view to planting churches across the Midlands in the way that they had been planted across the north of England from the Bradford base. The college, now known as Covenant College, also moved down. I was based there from 1991 and spent five years editing and writing nine volumes of

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<sup>19</sup> A retail side had developed to help support the team’s ministry, producing items like Bible cases and decorative plaques carrying Bible texts. This, along with the team administration, magazine planning and distribution, and Bible Week planning, was based in premises in Bradford named Harvestime House.

<sup>20</sup> Wallis remained based there until his sudden death in 1988.

<sup>21</sup> In that year the magazine had a circulation of 12,000.

theological material—the *Modular Training Programme*—for the college’s distance-learning service.<sup>22</sup>

### The north-south divide

By this time the circle of leaders around Bryn had undergone many changes. The original seven leaders who met at Wallis’s home in 1972 had soon been joined by a further seven.<sup>23</sup> In time, a gradual polarisation developed between ‘the London brothers’ (with John Noble most prominent) and those based in the north of the country (led by Bryn Jones), ending in a major split in 1976.

This was partly due to a clash of strong personalities, but it also reflected emerging differences in both doctrine and practice between the two parties, in particular the issue of law and grace. The southern men were more liberal in their views on drinking alcohol, for instance, and were wary of labelling masturbation a sin. Also, the southern men, notably Gerald Coates, George Tarleton, Maurice Smith, Graham Perrins and John Noble, felt that they had been the true pioneers of apostleship, discipling and a charismatically-led church, and that Bryn Jones had to some extent taken over. When Jones announced plans to publish *Restoration* magazine in 1976, the southern men felt threatened as they were already publishing the magazine *Fulness*, whose first issue had appeared in 1970. The split eventually took place in spite of arbitration attempts by a group of American leaders known as ‘the Fort Lauderdale Five’.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> My service with CMI came to a natural end when, in January 1996, I went to live in South Africa to establish and run a Bible college for a network of churches there. The MTP theological material has been translated into several Eastern European languages at the instigation of Dutchman Goos Vedder, who was part of Bryn’s team for many years. It is also now enjoying a wider circulation in English through distribution in electronic form by the Together network led by Gareth Duffy. Together is the natural successor to CMI following Bryn Jones’s death in 2003 and is still based at Nettle Hill (see [www.togetherweb.net](http://www.togetherweb.net)).

<sup>23</sup> Gerald Coates, George Tarleton, Barney Coombs, Maurice Smith, John MacLauchlan, Campbell McAlpine and Ian McCulloch.

<sup>24</sup> See Walker p. 96ff. The five were Derek Prince, Bob Mumford, Ern Baxter, Charles Simpson and Don Basham. They had formed a working relationship not unlike that of the British men in many respects, but independently of them and with a stronger emphasis on hierarchical leadership and ‘shepherding’ that was later to be exposed as ‘heavy shepherding’. Baxter and Mumford were both speakers at early Dales Bible Weeks.

After this time the southern arm of Restorationism represented by Gerald Coates and John Noble moved out of my personal field of vision. My occasional contacts with some of its leaders gave me the impression that their team and church setup was a good deal looser than our own, more relaxed and less structured, with spiritual authority relegated to a lower place in the list of priorities.<sup>25</sup>

### **A flexible team**

The make-up of Bryn's own Covenant Ministries team, too, was constantly changing—as he had always insisted it would, in line with the apostle Paul's practice, recorded in the New Testament, of apparently using certain men for a period only, according to their gifts and the ministry's changing needs. By 1989 he had a 'core team' of eight, but worked also with a further, larger stratum of less consistently involved leaders. While I worked full-time at Nettle Hill, taught regularly in the college and travelled to teach, often at Bryn's specific direction, in most of the churches in the network, I wasn't always clear whether I was 'in the team' or not. And that was no problem to me; the whole enterprise was a living, organic entity and I was happy to play my part in it without any concerns about official status.

Under the team's direction the CMI network had been expanding across the UK, with links also into other countries. Numbers of related churches fluctuated as several groupings hived off. A CMI directory of 1995 in my possession lists 44 well-established churches in the UK—many of them at the time in process of planting out new ones—and links into the USA, Norway, Germany, Sri Lanka, India, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

Terry Virgo (based in Hove), Tony Morton (Southampton) and David Tomlinson (Middlesbrough) had all earlier cemented a working relationship with the northern group. In 1985 Bryn Jones released Virgo and Morton to develop their own teams.<sup>26</sup> Of these, by far the most successful was Terry Virgo's and the New Frontiers International network that it serviced. The network grew rapidly, helped by the popularity of the Downs Bible Weeks in the south of England, and later

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<sup>25</sup> Andrew Walker has designated the two streams of Restorationism as R(estoration)1 and R2, with R1 the more conservative branch remaining more true to the original vision, and R2 the more liberal movement. See Walker p. 38ff.

<sup>26</sup> After a disagreement with Bryn, David Tomlinson had defected, along with his churches, in 1982 and had aligned himself with the 'southern brothers'. He left, he said, 'on issues of authority, hierarchy and that sort of thing' (Walker p. 345).

the Stoneleigh Bible Weeks in the Midlands, and it continues to grow and prosper today.<sup>27</sup>

### *Bible Weeks*

Terry's annual conventions were modelled on Bryn Jones's earlier Dales Bible Weeks, the first of which took place in the summer of 1976 in Harrogate, Yorkshire, building on smaller summer conventions in other locations during the few previous years.<sup>28</sup> The Dales Week, attended by thousands,<sup>29</sup> became an annual showcase for the Restoration churches and a powerful instrument for the propagation of their message. Christians from denominational backgrounds who attended were openly challenged to come out of their churches and be part of the movement—and many did. From 1983 the Dales Week was supplemented by a second event, the Wales Week, held at Builth Wells in mid-Wales, where the same message was put out.

While the call to come out of 'the denominations' was clear, it was not a call to come into a new one. Bryn always insisted that the network he had pioneered was not a denomination. He saw a denomination as a group of churches defined not only by its history and its system of beliefs and practices but also by its organisational structure. If a leader died, he left a post to be filled. The church by biblical definition, Bryn always maintained, is not primarily an organisation but an organism, not a skeleton but a living body. Its gifts and leadership are sovereignly assigned by the Holy Spirit. It was inevitable, therefore, that the CMI network, built on this basis, would be fluid in its structure. True to this pattern, in time apostleship was recognised in Bryn's younger brother Keri, and in Alan Scotland and, equally inevitably, both men eventually took the churches in their care in the di-

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<sup>27</sup> The 2004 Stoneleigh Bible Week drew 10,000 people to each of its two consecutive week-long conferences. See [www.newfrontiers.xtn.org](http://www.newfrontiers.xtn.org). This website currently lists over 200 NFI churches in England alone (excluding Scotland, Ireland and Wales).

<sup>28</sup> Held first in Wales, then at Capel in Surrey and finally, in 1975, in the Lake District.

<sup>29</sup> 4,000 in 1979, of whom half were newcomers to Restorationist thinking and three quarters were under 30 years of age (report in *Restoration* magazine Nov/Dec 1979). Numbers peaked at around 8,000 in 1980-81.

rection of their own choosing.<sup>30</sup> The same was to happen later with Paul Scanlon, Andrew Owen and Tony Howson.<sup>31</sup>

### *Reasons for decline*

Andrew Walker states: 'After 1985, Restorationism ceased to be a runaway success as far as growth is concerned.'<sup>32</sup> He reckons that numbers of 'hard core Restorationists' peaked at around 40,000 in 1984-5.

He attributes the slowdown chiefly to the ending of large-scale defection from other churches and the increasing reliance on new converts. This was prompted by the emergence of many new independent churches who took on board many of the emphases of Restorationism but shied away from its authoritarian aspects and, in so doing, drew many away from mainline Restorationism.

Another factor in the decline, in Walker's view, was the start of the annual Spring Harvest summer conferences in 1979. Unlike the Dales and Wales Bible Weeks, Spring Harvest was launched from a broad evangelical base with no particular Restorationist, or even charismatic, axe to grind. It was a teaching and training event aimed chiefly at young people and drew from a far wider Christian constituency. By 1990 it was attracting 80,000 people to its week-long conventions.<sup>33</sup> Also, the visits to Britain of John Wimber in the early 1980s provoked a huge wave of interest in his brand of Christianity, especially the healing ministry, some aspects of which did not sit comfortably inside a Restorationist framework<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Keri Jones now heads up a network called Ministries Without Borders, probably stronger in Norway than in the UK (see [www.ministrieswithoutborders.com](http://www.ministrieswithoutborders.com)); Alan Scotland leads LifeLink International (see [www.lifelink-international.org](http://www.lifelink-international.org)).

<sup>31</sup> Paul Scanlon leads the Hillsongs-style Bradford mega-church, the Abundant Life Church (see [www.alm.org.uk](http://www.alm.org.uk)); Andrew Owen leads Destiny Church in Glasgow, Scotland (see [www.destiny-church.com](http://www.destiny-church.com)); Tony Howson leads the smaller New Day International network based in Wrexham, Wales (see [www.newdayinternational.org](http://www.newdayinternational.org)). It was clear at the time Bryn released them that he hoped they would continue to work under the broad Covenant Ministries umbrella, under his overall leadership, but he quickly came to terms with their need to plough their own furrow.

<sup>32</sup> Walker p. 301.

<sup>33</sup> Walker p. 307.

<sup>34</sup> Wimber believed, for instance, that one could have the gifts of the Spirit without the baptism in the Spirit, whereas Bryn and the CMI men believed that baptism in the Spirit was an essential element of Christian initiation and not negotiable.

and led many to believe that you could be a dynamic, cutting-edge Christian without embracing Restorationism.<sup>35</sup>

### *Reaching out*

#### **In social concern...**

From the late 1980s some new trends were beginning to show within CMI. Bryn had secured a university degree in Peace Studies (and so had Keri) and began to encourage his churches to become more involved in social concern and action. *Restoration* magazine, for instance, began to feature regular items criticising the apartheid regime in South Africa, and Bryn established the Institute of World Concerns at Nettle Hill to encourage justice and Christian attitudes in every aspect of social life. He also set up the charity Help International to channel aid to needy nations, and I was involved in seeing some of that put to work in Zambia.

At the same time, visits by American Buddy Harrison (son-in-law to Kenneth Hagin) introduced a note of 'faith' and prosperity teaching, though this never became mainstream, to the relief of many in the CMI network.

#### **...but not to other leaders**

Bryn was a warm and outgoing man. He was always quick to reach out to the needy and this found expression in the new element of social concern. His warmth, however, did not extend to active 'bridge-building' towards other groups of Christians. On the contrary, he was always reluctant to get too involved with such activities, which he saw as a potential blunting of his prophetic cutting-edge. For many years he refused to attend the annual Charismatic Leaders' Conference organised by John Noble, arguing that spending time with Christian leaders, including Anglicans and Catholics, who did not share his own vision was for him a low priority; instead, he sent me to represent him!

As a result, some accused him of a proud exclusivity, but as he himself declared on more than one occasion in my hearing, 'I'm not exclusive; I'm just clear.' His

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<sup>35</sup> Kay sees the numerical decline as dating from around 1990 and suggests four contributory factors: 'The corrosive effect of continual criticism of Bryn Jones as well as a series of problems with his health; the closure of the big Bible weeks in the Dales; the financial effort and structural disruption brought about by the move from Bradford to Nettle Hill; the splitting up of the apostolic team into several sub-groups with the consequent creation of separate mini-networks.' (Kay, chapter on Bryn Jones).



brother Keri was, if anything, even less inclined to build bridges. He maintained a tighter grip than Bryn on the churches under his care and was perceived by some as legalistic in the demands he made on them. His present network is probably closer to the original Restoration vision than any other manifestation that has grown out of it, but it remains relatively small.

### *Assessment*

I look back on my own years at the heart of the Restoration movement with gratitude for the warm fellowship I enjoyed with its leaders, for the long-neglected biblical emphases that it brought back to a more central place in my personal view of things, and for the excitement it afforded those of us privileged to ‘live on the edge’ as part of it for many years. In its time it was, I believe, an instrument of God to help shape the church at large into something approximating more to God’s ideal.

### **Weaknesses**

As for the movement’s main weaknesses, in retrospect I see these as two in number. First, it became so used to the alienation from mainstream church life that its pioneer role thrust upon it that, when many of its emphases were eventually embraced by a wide variety of churches, instead of rejoicing and reaching out to those churches in fellowship, it tried to remain distinctive and, in so doing, was perceived as exclusive.<sup>36</sup> I recall Keri stating forcibly in one leaders’ meeting, ‘We must maintain our distinctives.’ I pointed out—to deaf ears, I fear—that our distinctives would of necessity always be less important than our non-distinctives—those doctrines and practices that we shared with Christians of many varieties.<sup>37</sup>

The other weakness concerns the nature of the authority of present-day apostles. Both Bryn and Keri tended to see the churches in their networks as *their* churches. Their function towards a local church’s elders was, in their view, not advisory but executive. I would say that this approach has in some cases produced an unhealthy dependency and stifled the proper development of governmental stature in those elders.

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<sup>36</sup> Bryn was fond of saying, ‘We are called to change things not by infiltration but by provocation.’

<sup>37</sup> Having said that, I still have a very high regard for Keri at a personal level.

As recently as the late 1990s Bryn was giving an unorthodox interpretation to Acts 14:23, where Paul and Barnabas, when visiting churches they had founded earlier, ‘appointed elders *for them* in each church’. According to Bryn, ‘for them’ meant ‘for themselves’, that is, for the apostles Paul and Barnabas. He took it to mean that they appointed men who would serve the apostolic vision and provide both personnel and funds for the apostolic projects. Several leaders, including Terry Virgo, pointed out to Bryn that such an interpretation was without warrant, and he stopped propounding it, though he gave no indication of shifting in the view of apostolic authority that he had used it to support.

Terry Virgo was quick to adopt a more ‘hands off’ approach to apostolic ministry which has proved highly successful. It sees the apostle’s role as a fatherly one,<sup>38</sup> a role which may well start as executive but which, as a child matures, becomes increasingly advisory, and which is intent on producing the next generation of mature leaders capable of making their own decisions with only occasional reference to apostles. Alan Scotland and Gareth Duffty—who now exercises an apostolic role to most of the churches formerly with Bryn—have both adopted a similar approach. Keri, by contrast, seems to be maintaining a strong controlling role towards his churches.

Interestingly, in R2—the southern style of Restorationism—things had started moving in this ‘softer’ direction from as early as 1985, when Walker discerns ‘a considerable and noticeable softening of shepherding practices...[and]...a shift in understanding apostolic ministries—away from a governmental model and towards a servant ministry model.’<sup>39</sup> Maybe the southern leaders went too far in this direction; certainly that stream is barely visible today as a recognisable Restorationist entity. Many of the original leaders, of course, like the ones in R1, are now past retirement age and lacking the vigour they once enjoyed. Other, younger leaders have quietly stepped into positions of influence and seem to be doing their job in a far less radical and flamboyant way.

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<sup>38</sup> Note Paul’s description of his own apostolic role in fatherly terms in 1 Corinthians 4:15.

<sup>39</sup> Walker p. 344.

*Restoration's legacy*

Having been out of mainstream Restorationism since the end of 1995<sup>40</sup> I am now able to look at what the CMI branch has left as its legacy, and it is almost all good.

Bryn Jones's sudden death in 2003 marked the end of the movement's pioneering era. But the reins are in capable hands and the local churches linked with apostles Keri Jones, Alan Scotland and others who have resisted the mega-church pull seem in good shape. I still visit some of them to teach the Word. I also visit NFI churches, classical Pentecostal churches and independent charismatic 'new churches' without any apostolic team link and rejoice to see an embracing there of many of the values and practices introduced by Bryn and the other pioneers.

Terry Virgo has commented that, in his view, the restoration of apostles is the most important and distinctive feature of Restorationism.<sup>41</sup> In this connection I recently talked with Alan Vincent, who had loose ties with Bryn for some years and is now based in the USA. He told me about a book he is shortly to publish. In it he likens the rediscovery of apostolic ministry to the invention of the jet engine. The early jet prototypes were flawed; there were explosions and crashes. But the underlying principle was sound, and second-generation jet engines, modified in the light of previous mistakes, proved their worth, to give us what is an essential means of propulsion in today's world. So it is, Vincent maintains, with apostles. The pioneers like Bryn were shaping something new and untested. Mistakes were made and some people got hurt. But the underlying principle has solid New Testament backing and he believes that, with appropriate modifications, we will soon see the apostolic ministry come into its own as a key shaper of the church leading up to Christ's return. Let us hope he is right.




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<sup>40</sup> But still totally committed to the basic Restorationist principles, with some mellowing adjustments.

<sup>41</sup> Walker p. 158.

**Rediscovering Pentecostalism's Diverse Roots**

Origins in Scandinavian Pietism in Minnesota and the Dakotas

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Revivals at Topeka and Azusa Street may have been the focal point of early twentieth-century Pentecostalism, but prior revivals, including those among Scandinavian settlers in the northern Great Plains, provided precedents and leaders for the emerging movement. The first chroniclers of modern Pentecostalism documented these Scandinavian enthusiasts in Minnesota and the Dakotas, but later histories often minimized or omitted these revivals, discounting their significance or deeming it unverifiable oral history. However, recently-discovered evidence verifies these early accounts and suggests that these approximately two dozen pre-Azusa Scandinavian congregations that practiced tongues-speech and healing may have made a greater impact on the Pentecostal movement than previously thought.<sup>1</sup> This article aims: 1) to document pre-Azusa Scandinavian evangelicals who practiced tongues-speech and healing in the northern Great Plains; and 2) to address related historiographical issues.

Scandinavian settlers in Minnesota and the Dakotas experienced a spiritual awakening in the late 1890s and early 1900s, spawning a number of congregations that practiced speaking in tongues and healing. While some of these revivals predated the Topeka and Azusa Street revivals, many of these Plains enthusiasts soon identified with the larger Pentecostal movement, including: Carl M. Hanson, an evangelist who witnessed glossolalia in a revival in Grafton, North Dakota in 1895, and John Thompson, pastor of the Moorhead (Minnesota) Swedish Free Mission, which experienced several protracted revivals in the late 1890s and early 1900s. The Moorhead congregation yielded Mary Johnson, the earliest-known Pentecostal missionary from America to venture overseas. Several regional networks of congregations that practiced tongues-speech and healing emerged, including the Scandinavian Mission Society (Sällskapet).<sup>2</sup>

Claims of an early Pentecost on the plains should be backed up by hard evidence. The earliest Pentecostal historians cataloged numerous oral histories of early

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<sup>1</sup> Portions of this paper were adapted from my *Northern Harvest: Pentecostalism in North Dakota* (Bismarck, ND: North Dakota District Council of the Assemblies of God, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Another pre-Azusa Scandinavian Pentecostal network, later known as the Assembly of God Missionary Fellowship (Guds forsamling in Norwegian), also existed. See: Rodgers, pp. 58-62, 177, 245-46.

glossolalic revivals.<sup>3</sup> Pentecostal journalist Stanley Frodsham, in his 1946 history, assembled a list of at least 11 claims of tongues-speech in the U.S. between 1850 and 1900, occurring in New England, Ohio, Minnesota, South Dakota, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Arkansas. Frodsham recounted stories of turn-of-the-century revivals told long after their occurrence, and did not cite any sources pre-dating the Azusa Street revival.<sup>4</sup> Carl Brumback and William Menzies, in their respective 1961 and 1971 histories of the Assemblies of God, repeated Frodsham's list, providing little additional evidence.<sup>5</sup> Menzies, minimizing the importance of the revivals recorded by Frodsham, remarked, "These were all isolated, however, and did not seem to have more than local significance."<sup>6</sup> Later histories entirely omitted these early revivals,<sup>7</sup> possibly discounting them as unverified oral history or wishful thinking by early enthusiasts who might have embellished stories or incorrectly recalled dates.

However, early published sources do verify that speaking in tongues was practiced prior to Azusa Street. The Azusa Street periodical, *Apostolic Faith*, printed a 1906 letter making this claim. A. O. Morken, a Norwegian from Audobon, MN, noted that Pentecost in Audobon predated Azusa by two years:

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<sup>3</sup> B. F. Lawrence, *Apostolic Faith Restored* (St. Louis, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1916), pp. 46-47; also published in serial form as "Apostolic Faith Restored" [Article V] *Weekly Evangel*, January 29 and February 5, 1916, p. 4; Henry H. Ness, *Demonstration of the Holy Spirit as Revealed by the Scriptures and Confirmed in Great Revivals of Wesley, Finney, Cartwright, Whitfield, Moody, etc.* (Seattle, WA: Hollywood Temple, 1940s?), pp. 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> Stanley H. Frodsham, *With Signs Following* [rev. ed.] (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1946), pp. 9-17.

<sup>5</sup> Carl Brumback, *Suddenly from Heaven: A History of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), pp. 12-17; William W. Menzies, *Anointed to Serve: The Story of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1971), pp. 29-33.

<sup>6</sup> Menzies, p. 29.

<sup>7</sup> For instance, Edith Blumhofer did not refer to the revivals recounted by Frodsham in her two recent histories of the AG: *The Assemblies of God: A Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1989) and *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Urbana, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

A copy of the Apostolic Faith has been sent to us, and were much blest when we read and saw that God baptized his children with the Holy Ghost exactly the same way as He has done here. It is two years ago since God began to baptize His children in this place and some are talking with tongues, some have the gift of prophecy, etc.<sup>8</sup>

Morken testified of this early instance of tongues-speech in a February 25, 1904 letter to a Norwegian-language evangelical newspaper, *Folke-Vennen*:

Praise our God – He has also blessed us abundantly with all spiritual blessings in Christ, as some did in the apostolic times, the gift of grace appeared among us when a portion received grace to speak in diverse tongues. It was perceived that it was not common speech, but rather angelic language; those under the Spirit's effect, gripped in a power that seized them completely in the endeavor. What they tell is incomprehensible for themselves and for the others, but the Spirit Himself has given [the interpreters] a share, so that all indicate an encouragement and admonition to the children of God who will be staying awake and imploring that Jesus comes soon.<sup>9</sup>

Morken proceeded to note the outpouring was not confined to Audobon: “but we hear that at the main places are the same blessings.”<sup>10</sup> Descendants of Morken date the revival as beginning in 1902 or 1903.<sup>11</sup>

According to later accounts, these early Pentecostals were located in west central Minnesota (Alexandria, Audobon, Detroit Lakes, Evansville, Fergus Falls, Lake Eunice, Moorhead, and Tordenskjold), northwest Minnesota (Argyle, Fosston, Hallock, Holt, Karlstad, Lake Bronson, Stephen, Thief River Falls, and Warren),<sup>12</sup> eastern North Dakota (Grafton and Hillsboro),<sup>13</sup> and southeast South Da-

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<sup>8</sup> *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), December 1906, p. 3. For additional information on the Audobon congregation, see: Gordon and Linda Bakken, *Bakkens in America* (Wichita, KS: the author, 1995), pp. 8, 16-17; Rodgers, pp. 5-6, 58-60.

<sup>9</sup> A. O. Morken, “Fra vor egen Loesekreds” [trans. Erik L. Williamson], *Folke-Vennen*, February 25, 1904, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> For a 1902 claim, see: M. Earl Johnson, “A Godly Heritage: The Family of Earl and Darlene Johnson,” *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Fall 2000): 26-27. For a 1903 claim, see: Gordon and Linda Bakken, p. 8.

<sup>12</sup> Ness, pp. 6-7; Anna Vagle, “When Pentecost Fell in Minnesota,” *Full Gospel Men's Voice*, September 1960, pp. 9-11. For a history of the early Pentecostal movement in northwest Minnesota, see: Rodgers, pp. 58-62, 181-82. For west central Minnesota, see: Rodgers, pp. 216-18.

<sup>13</sup> See: Rodgers, pp. 58-62, 154-55, 177.

kota (Greenfield).<sup>14</sup> This list included both organized churches and unorganized home meetings. The history of this network or networks is sketchy, and it is likely that additional, undocumented early Pentecostal groups existed. It is unknown where the Pentecostal fire first fell, but it seems that evangelist Carl M. Hanson, apparently spirit-baptized in 1899, had some influence among these groups.

Carl M. “Daddy” Hanson, a spiritual father to many early Pentecostals on the northern Great Plains, earned his Pentecostal stripes on both sides of Azusa Street. His brand of radical Scandinavian pietism prefigured the emerging Pentecostal movement, in which he became an early leader. Hanson traversed Minnesota and the eastern Dakotas during the late 1890s and early 1900s, spreading glossolalic revival even before the Topeka and Azusa Street revivals. Hanson, born in 1865 in Minnesota to Norwegian immigrants, converted to Christ as a student in the college preparatory program at Augsburg Seminary, a Lutheran school in Minneapolis.<sup>15</sup>

Shortly after being healed of blood poisoning in 1895, Hanson set out as an evangelist. Hanson recorded that he witnessed a small girl speak in tongues in one of his meetings during that first year of ministry:

In 1895, while holding meetings and preaching the full gospel, as I saw it, with a full consecration, sanctification and Baptism in the Holy Spirit, one came clear through and spoke in tongues, as in Acts 2.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ness, p. 7. Frodsham repeated Ness’ account in *With Signs Following*, p. 16. Ness wrote, “Another remarkable outpouring of the Spirit took place at Greenfield, S.D., in the First Methodist Church where Rasmus Kristensen was pastor. This was in 1896. As Brother Kristensen was preaching the power would fall, the people being filled with the Holy Ghost and speaking in other tongues; and many other wonderful manifestations of God being witnessed.” Rasmus Christiansen of Greenfield, SD (I assume this is the same person, despite spelling differences) wrote two pre-Azusa articles: “De aandelige Gaver” (spiritual gifts), *Folke-Vennen*, May 12, 1904, p. 1 (the article, which has not been translated, contains numerous references to 1 Cor. 12-14); *Folke-Vennen*, March 8, 1906, p. 5 (untitled, untranslated letter).

<sup>15</sup> Carl M. Hanson, 1900 MN census records, E.D. 105, sheet 16, line 97; Irene Hankin, phone conversation with author, October 1, 2002, notes from conversation; “Rev. C. M. Hanson at Home with the Lord,” *North Dakota District Echoes*, July-August 1954, pp. 2, 7.

<sup>16</sup> Carl M. Hanson, “My Personal Experiences of the Graces of Salvation, Healing and Baptism in the Holy Spirit,” tract, 1906.

Significantly, the tongues-speech witnessed by Hanson occurred a decade prior to the Azusa Street revival. The 1895 instance of tongues took place during services he held on a farm near Grafton, North Dakota. G. Raymond Carlson, former General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, traced the origins of his own family's Pentecostal faith to that meeting.<sup>17</sup>

Hanson also received this experience in 1899. Hanson continued to itinerate as an evangelist. In 1900, Hanson and his family moved from Lemond, Minnesota to Minneapolis, where Hanson attended Zion Tabernacle, a congregation pastored by Frederick A. Graves and affiliated with faith healer John Alexander Dowie.<sup>18</sup>

Hanson itinerated as a Free Mission evangelist in Minnesota, the Dakotas, Wisconsin, and Iowa, preaching his brand of radical evangelicalism, making converts, and seeking funds and workers for a rescue mission he had opened in St. Paul in late 1904. In late February and early March 1905, Hanson held meetings in the Gotland neighborhood near Fergus Falls, MN. Seizing upon local gossip, a reporter wrote:

Several young people have been attending these meetings and it is reported that they work themselves into a perfect frenzy, rolling on the floor, endeavoring to climb up the walls, tossing chairs about and talking oddly in what is supposed to be ancient or peculiar languages, imagining that they have the gift of tongues.<sup>19</sup>

The irate father of one of the young people at Hanson's meeting swore out a warrant for Hanson's arrest on charges of disorderly conduct.<sup>20</sup> At the hearing, several boys testified that Hanson seemed to hypnotize his converts. According to the reporter,

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<sup>17</sup> G. Raymond Carlson, "When Pentecost Came to the Upper Midwest," *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Spring 1984): 3. For additional information on the Grafton outpouring, see: Rodgers, pp. 154-55.

<sup>18</sup> Carlson, p. 3; "Anna C. Berg," in *Historical Sketches of the Minneapolis Gospel Tabernacle* (Minneapolis, MN: The Church, 1930), p. 13; Anna Hanson Berg, interview by Wayne Warner, September 23, 1980, audio recording. According to Anna, the Hansons attended Graves' mission for four years. Articles from Dowie's periodical placed Graves in Chicago in late 1902, where he served as an elder in Central Zion Tabernacle, then in Minneapolis as early as March 1903 through at least June 1905. *Leaves of Healing*, December 6, 1902, p. 223; *Leaves of Healing*, March 7, 1903, p. 635; *Leaves of Healing*, June 24, 1905, p. 349.

<sup>19</sup> "Too Much Excitement," *Fergus Falls Daily Journal*, March 10, 1905, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> "Fined \$35," *Fergus Falls Daily Journal*, March 11, 1905, p. 3.



[Hanson] claimed the testimony was somewhat exaggerated, although cheerfully admitting that he and his converts roll about on the floor whenever the spirit so moves them. He vehemently denied any insinuations as to hypnotic influence, and claims that the violent actions just described are the results of the working of spirits either of good or evil, and in some instances of the conflicts of the powers of light and darkness as described in the Scriptures. He also states that converts are frequently given the gift of tongues, as they were of old, and that they talk in whatever language the spirit directs. He claims further that he knew one lady who had no knowledge whatever of German who has able to talk this language when thus moved, and that the converts know exactly what they are doing at all times.<sup>21</sup>

In 1906, Hanson printed a tract, in which he testified to having already lived with the Pentecostal blessing for over seven years.<sup>22</sup> C. M. Hanson soon identified with the emerging Pentecostal movement in Chicago, which had roots in the Azusa Street revival.<sup>23</sup> On September 25, 1909, Chicago Pentecostal leader William Durham ordained Hanson as a minister with the Full Gospel Assembly.<sup>24</sup> Durham served as pastor of the North Avenue Mission, where F. A. Sandgren, editor of *Folke-Vennen*, was an elder.<sup>25</sup> Hanson transferred his ordination to the Assemblies of God (AG) on September 11, 1917. Participants at the 1922 organizational meeting of the North Central District Council (AG) unanimously elected “Daddy” Hanson, revered as one of the region’s Pentecostal pioneers, to serve as the District Council’s first Chairman (1922-23).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Carl M. Hanson, “My Personal Experiences.”

<sup>23</sup> It is unknown when Hanson identified with the Chicago Pentecostals. He may have been influenced by his close friend and former pastor, Frederick A. Graves, who had moved to Zion City, IL in 1905 or 1906 and became an early Pentecostal. In a 1908 letter, Hanson recounted a trip to Detroit Harbor, Wisconsin, during which he apparently met with Chicago Pentecostals. Carl M. Hanson, untranslated letter, *Folke-Vennen*, September 24, 1908, p. 5. For another account of Hanson’s trip, see: John Ommundsen, untranslated letter, *Folke-Vennen*, November 12, 1908, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Carl M. Hanson, ministerial file, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, Missouri.

<sup>25</sup> Richard M. Riss, “William H. Durham,” in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), pp. 594-95.

<sup>26</sup> “Minutes of meeting held at Brainerd, Minn., November 10, 1922 for the purpose of forming a District Council,” Minnesota District Council (AG) Archives, Minneapolis, MN.

The Swedish Free Mission in Moorhead, a leading congregation in the Scandinavian Mission Society (Sällskapet), a small association of Scandinavian free church congregations in Minnesota and the Dakotas, experienced a period of revival at the turn of the century, during which many people accepted Christ, received bodily healing, and spoke in tongues.<sup>27</sup> Throughout most of the 1890s, congregations in the Scandinavian Mission Society did not have permanent pastors. Instead, a plurality of elders, including Thompson, rotated between the various churches.<sup>28</sup>

The Moorhead congregation experienced one or more protracted periods of revival. At some point during this period of revival, believers began to manifest Pentecostal gifts. Thompson's son wrote:

God graciously poured out His Spirit with signs following. Many received the glorious Baptism in the Holy Ghost speaking in other tongues as the Spirit of God gave utterance. At that time we had not heard of any other places having received a like experience, but later we heard of people in California and Winnipeg, Canada, having received a like precious outpouring of the Holy Spirit . . . Praise God, the spirit of revival was manifested in every service.<sup>29</sup>

The chronology of this revival is uncertain. Henry H. Ness wrote that the revival began in 1892.<sup>30</sup> Several historians repeated Ness's account, which did not distinguish between the beginning of the protracted period of revival, which lasted years, and when Pentecostal gifts began to be manifested.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, Thompson's grandson believed the revivals started in the 1890s and was uncertain when people started speaking in tongues.<sup>32</sup> Some evidence suggests that the Pentecostal gifts, and speaking in tongues in particular, began occurring in about 1903.

<sup>27</sup> Ness, pp. 6-7; Brumback, p. 14; Menzies, p. 30.

<sup>28</sup> 1883-1958, *Diamond Jubilee, Evangelical Free Church, Moorhead, Minnesota* (Moorhead, MN: The Church, 1958); John Thompson, interview by author, June 1998, Springfield, MO, transcript of audio recording. For one critic's view of the Scandinavian Mission Society, see: Frank Theodor Lindberg, *Looking Back Fifty Years: Over the Rise and Progress of the Swedish Evangelical Free Church of America* (Minneapolis, MN: Franklin Printing Co., 1935), pp. 61-66.

<sup>29</sup> Peter B. Thompson, "Pentecostal Outpouring of Thirty-four Years Ago," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 27, 1937, p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> Ness, pp. 6-7.

<sup>31</sup> Brumback, p. 14; Menzies, p. 30.

<sup>32</sup> John Thompson, interview by author, June 1998.

Thompson's son wrote in 1937 that "the Latter Rain outpouring as on the day of Pentecost" in Moorhead occurred "thirty-four years ago," "in the beginning of this century."<sup>33</sup> If Pentecostal manifestations began occurring in Moorhead at about the same time as they did in other pre-Azusa revivals in Minnesota and the Dakotas, then it is unlikely the Moorhead manifestations began as early as 1892. In Minnesota and the Dakotas, scattered reports of tongues-speech exist from 1895 to 1899, followed by documentation of more than a dozen tongues-speaking congregations from 1899 to 1906.

Mary Johnson, the earliest-known Pentecostal missionary from North America to venture overseas, was raised in the Moorhead congregation. Johnson and Ida Andersson, who had been an evangelist in the Scandinavian Mission Society for thirteen years, traveled together as evangelists for several years, then felt a call to serve as missionaries to Africa. At the Society's annual meeting at Lake Eunice, Minnesota in November 1904, Johnson was spirit-baptized and spoke in tongues. Andersson had the experience several years later. From Lake Eunice, the two women set out in faith, without a definite budget, and arrived in Durban, Kwa-Zulu Natal on January 16, 1905.<sup>34</sup>

The Scandinavian Mission Society (Sällskapet) wielded some influence in the northern Great Plains. According to one pioneer, it was the "controlling power" among Scandinavian free churches in Minnesota at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>35</sup> August Davis, who served as an early Society Chairman, endorsed Fredrik Franson's training courses for women ministers.<sup>36</sup> One critic of female ministers lamented that the Society's "many groups and churches" had only four resident pastors, and that about fifty women were preaching in the pulpits. The critic derided the Society as not well-organized, charging that "the women evangelists and a few others" controlled the election of officers at the annual meetings. Davis was succeeded as Chairman by John Thompson, pastor of the Moorhead

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<sup>33</sup> Peter B. Thompson, "Pentecostal Outpouring," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 27, 1937, p. 8. Citing Thompson's article, historian Wayne Warner concluded the revival occurred in 1903. Wayne Warner, "Pentecostal revival stirs Swedish church," *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 21, 1996, p. 27.

<sup>34</sup> Naemi Reinholdz, "En Guds plöjerska: Mary Johnsons liv och verksamhet," *Trons Segrars*, undated clippings of a serialized biography. The clippings and a translation of the articles by Lyndon Johnson from Swedish to English are in the author's possession.

<sup>35</sup> Lindberg, p. 61.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

Swedish Free Mission.<sup>37</sup> It is not known how widespread Pentecostal gifts were among Scandinavian Mission Society congregations. However, the practice of rotating elders between the various congregations must have spread Pentecostal teachings across the fellowship, since some of the elders (including Thompson) practiced speaking in tongues and healing. Further research into the history of the Scandinavian Mission Society would be a valuable addition to the study of Pentecostal origins.

Importantly, the revivals in Minnesota and the Dakotas testify to Pentecostalism's roots in Scandinavian pietism. This genesis, separate from the Topeka and Azusa Street revivals, underscores the plural nature of the movement. Early Scandinavian Pentecostals hailed from pietist traditions, such as the Haugean movement in Norway<sup>38</sup> and the Awakened and Laestadian movements in

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-63.

<sup>38</sup> In Norway, Hans Nielsen Hauge pioneered a revival movement at the turn of the nineteenth century. Hauge's experience of a spiritual awakening in 1796, identified by several Lutheran historians to be a "baptism of the Spirit," led him to begin preaching. In Norway, Haugean believers attended the state church on Sunday and held evangelical home prayer meetings during the week. In America, some Haugean immigrants continued holding evangelical meetings separate from the Lutheran Sunday services, while others brought their fervent prayer and evangelical preaching into the regular services. Free from the supervision of church hierarchy, these Haugean believers sometimes developed their own theological beliefs as they sought to restore Biblical faith. Some of these new churches were explicitly Lutheran and formed organizations such as the Hauge Synod. Others affiliated with networks of free churches, some of which became Pentecostal. Magnus Nodtvedt, *Rebirth of Norway's Peasantry: Folk Leader Hans Nielsen Hauge* (Tacoma, WA: Pacific Lutheran University Press, 1965), pp. 105; Andreas Aarflot, *Hans Nielsen Hauge: His Life and Message* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1979), pp. 15-43; Robert Lee, President of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, phone interview by author, February 19, 1996, notes from conversation.

Finland<sup>39</sup> and Sweden.<sup>40</sup> Early Scandinavian Pentecostals often emphasized continuity with their pietist heritage, recalling instances of miracles, tongues, and other spiritual gifts that occurred in previous centuries in Scandinavia.<sup>41</sup>

By the 1870s and 1880s, a trans-Atlantic revival among Scandinavians in Europe and America resulted in the formation of networks of Scandinavian “free church” congregations, many of which later joined what became the Evangelical Free Church of America and the Evangelical Covenant Church of America. Many leaders in this revival, perhaps most notably Frederik Franson, drew heavily from American evangelicalism. However, historian Frederick Hale warned against regarding Scandinavian free churches “merely as an outgrowth of American Christianity.”<sup>42</sup> Scandinavian free churches were the product of a “complex tapestry” with “innumerable threads to the pattern,” including both Scandinavian

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<sup>39</sup> The pietistic “Awakened movement” in Finland, led by Paavo Ruotsalainen, paralleled the rise of the Haugean movement in Norway. Like Hauge, Ruotsalainen experienced an awakening in 1796. Unlike Hauge, historians record that Ruotsalainen spoke in tongues. Recent Finnish Pentecostal scholarship describes early nineteenth-century Finns as experiencing “a general spiritual unrest in Finland,” in which “[p]eople were expecting the end of the world and spontaneous revivals sprang up with people speaking in tongues, falling into a trance, preaching in trance, prophesying and having dreams and visions...” Leo Meller, “Early Pentecost in Lutheran Finland,” unpublished manuscript summarizing recent Finnish Pentecostal scholarship, 2004. See also: Lauri Ahonen, “Awakened,” in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), p. 343; Lauri Ahonen, *Missions Growth: A Case Study on Finnish Free Foreign Mission* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1984), pp. 8-9.

<sup>40</sup> In Småland, Sweden, newspapers in the early 1840s published numerous stories of odd religious manifestations. One ecstasy, termed “preaching sickness,” affected people who attended meetings held by powerful revivalists. Critics mocked the spasms, jerks, and emotionalism of those affected, but also conceded that many involved were converted, gave up alcohol, and returned stolen property. David Nyvall, *The Swedish Covenanters: A History* (Chicago, IL: Covenant Book Concern, 1930), pp. 36-38; George M. Stephenson, *The Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1932), pp. 24-48; Karl A. Olsson, *By One Spirit* (Chicago, IL: Covenant Press, 1962), pp. 60-64.

<sup>41</sup> Rodgers, pp. 30-34.

<sup>42</sup> Frederick Hale, *Trans-Atlantic Conservative Protestantism in the Evangelical Free and Mission Covenant Traditions* (New York: Arno Press, 1979), p. 13.

and American influences.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Scandinavian pietists in Minnesota and the Dakotas who practiced tongues-speech and healing prior to Azusa Street should not be viewed simply as converts to American evangelicalism. Perhaps the most obvious Pentecostal origin is American evangelicalism, but Scandinavian pietism also provided the Pentecostal movement with leaders and precedents.

Pre-Azusa Scandinavian Pentecostals did have contact with English-speaking evangelicals. *Folke-Vennen* published articles by Hauge and Rosenius next to translations of articles by American Holiness leaders. Faith healer John Alexander Dowie also may have wielded some influence, as Carl M. Hanson, several years after receiving the gift of tongues, began attending a Minneapolis mission associated with Dowie. However, I was unable to find evidence that Pentecostal practices among Scandinavians in Minnesota and the Dakotas originated with English-speaking evangelicals. I did not find any evidence that the Scandinavians from Minnesota and the Dakotas had contact with Parham's Apostolic Faith band, which operated primarily in Kansas, Missouri, and Texas. Parham's group did not grow significantly until 1905, well after Pentecostal congregations had formed on the northern Great Plains.<sup>44</sup> The Scandinavian Pentecostals themselves testified to a separate origin. Peter Thompson, recalling the outpouring at the Swedish Free Mission in Moorhead, stated, "At that time we had not heard of any other places having received a like experience."<sup>45</sup>

The pre-Azusa Scandinavian Pentecostals figured prominently in the origins of the Evangelical Free Church of America and the Evangelical Covenant Church of America. Minnesota, a hotbed of Scandinavian free church activity at the turn of the twentieth century, was home to a number of pre-Azusa Scandinavian Pentecostal congregations. Evangelical Free Church historian Arnold T. Olson wrote that he doubted "that all of the pioneers would be accepted in our churches today.

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup> Parham attracted sizable crowds in 1901 in Kansas, but by 1902 had lost most followers. Parham next found success in a fall 1903 revival in Galena, KS, followed by a February 1904 revival in Baxter Springs, KS. He moved to Texas in April 1905, where he found significant support in Orchard, Houston, and Galveston. James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1988), pp. 87-100.

<sup>45</sup> Peter B. Thompson, "Pentecostal Outpouring," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 27, 1937, p. 8.

Some preached ‘a second blessing’ and some even practiced speaking in tongues.”<sup>46</sup>

A 1934 history of the Swedish Evangelical Free Church of America recounted:

The so-called “tongues movement” had also a short but lively chapter in our history. If the writer recalls rightly, this movement had its beginning in one of our churches in South Dakota. A small group within this church was affected by it. They thought it was from God and that they were divinely gifted with a special language and therefore called as missionaries to Africa.<sup>47</sup>

While this account did not identify the years these phenomena occurred, they likely took place in the 1890s or 1900s, the period documented by the chapter in which the paragraph was located. The statement, “If the writer recalls rightly, this movement had its beginning in one of our churches in South Dakota,” is subject to multiple interpretations. The author may have intended to identify the earliest-known instance of tongues-speech among the Scandinavian free churches (but not necessarily elsewhere). A more tantalizing interpretation is that, from the perspective of the author of the 1934 history, the Pentecostal movement seemed to have its origins, not in Topeka or Los Angeles, but in South Dakota.

The latter interpretation is supported by a similar account of a revival in South Dakota reported by B. F. Lawrence in his 1916 history, *Apostolic Faith Restored*:

Between 1900 and 1903, the Spirit fell in South Dakota upon a band of people, who afterward went to Africa. I have not been able to get in touch with the man who could give me full information concerning this work, but I think that these people were Norwegians. I know that the man who accompanied them to Chicago was, and that he afterward preached in La Grange, Illinois. His name was Bakke. These people, at least Mr. Bakke, did not believe that tongues were the evidence of the baptism, but regarded them as gifts given in the sovereignty of God.<sup>48</sup>

Lawrence’s account, in the first published history of the Pentecostal movement written by an insider, demonstrates that early Pentecostals were aware of the early glossolalic revivals among the Scandinavians in Minnesota and the Dakotas, and that at least some viewed them as a precedent to what later happened at Topeka or Azusa Street.

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<sup>46</sup> Arnold T. Olson, *The Significance of Silence* (Minneapolis, MN: Free Church Press, 1981), p. 151.

<sup>47</sup> *Golden Jubilee: Reminiscences of our Work under God, Swedish Evangelical Free Church of the U.S.A., 1884-1934* (Minneapolis, MN?: The Church, 1934?), p. 40.

<sup>48</sup> Lawrence, *Apostolic Faith Restored*, pp. 46-47.

Early Scandinavian Pentecostals in Minnesota and the Dakotas, recent immigrants to America whose primary tongue was not English, maintained significant connections to their roots in Scandinavian pietism. Judging from a number of letters to *Folke-Vennen* from Carl M. Hanson, A. O. Morken, and others, that periodical had some influence among early Pentecostals. *Folke-Vennen*, a Norwegian-language non-denominational evangelical periodical, was published weekly in Chicago. Its articles reflected a broad spectrum of influences in Scandinavian pietism, ranging from Martin Luther's sermons, to devotionals by Norwegian revivalist Hans Nielsen Hauge and Swedish pietist Carl Olof Rosenius, to translations of writings by American Holiness leaders such as A. B. Simpson. Stanley H. Frodsham reported that evangelist F. A. Sandgren was spirit-baptised in 1907, after which he spread the news of the Pentecostal outpouring through the columns of *Folke-Vennen*.<sup>49</sup> However, the periodical printed testimonies of tongues-speech as early as February 1904 (Audobon, MN).<sup>50</sup> *Folke-Vennen* began publishing news of the revival stemming from Azusa Street in 1906, including articles by Norwegian Pentecostal leader Thomas B. Barratt,<sup>51</sup> early Pentecostal missionary to India, Minnie Abrams,<sup>52</sup> and Chicago Pentecostal leader William H. Durham.<sup>53</sup> Durham served as pastor of the North Avenue Mission, where F. A. Sandgren was an elder.<sup>54</sup> Further study of *Folke-Vennen* would be a valuable addition to the study of Pentecostal history.

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<sup>49</sup> Frodsham, *With Signs Following* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1926), p. 42. Sandgren served as pastor of the North Avenue Mission in Chicago in 1917 and later affiliated with the Pentecostal Assemblies of the USA. F. A. Sandgren, Chicago, to E. N. Bell, Springfield, MO, November 19, 1921, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

<sup>50</sup> A. O. Morken, "Fra vor egen Loesekreds" [trans. Erik L. Williamson], *Folke-Vennen*, February 25, 1904, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> *Folke-Vennen*, December 13, 1906, p. 1; *Ibid.*, January 16, 1908, p. 2; *Ibid.*, July 2, 1908, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, February 20, 1908, p. 4; *Ibid.*, February 27, 1908, p. 2; *Ibid.*, March 5, 1908, p. 2; *Ibid.*, March 12, 1908, p. 2; *Ibid.*, June 25, 1908, p. 3; *Ibid.*, September 3, 1908, p. 5.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, March 26, 1908, p. 4.

<sup>54</sup> Riss, pp. 594-95. Edith Blumhofer, in an excellent biographical essay on William H. Durham, noted that Sandgren and Durham had been friends since 1903. Edith L. Blumhofer, "William H. Durham: Years of Creativity, Years of Dissent," in *Portraits of a Generation: Early Pentecostal Leaders*, ed. James R. Goff and Grant Wacker (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2002), pp. 127, 131.



It is possible that early Pentecostals in Chicago first became aware of contemporary tongues-speech, not from news of Azusa Street, but from news of prior glossolalic revivals in Minnesota and the Dakotas. Durham and Sandgren may have read about pre-Azusa tongues in *Folke-Vennen* as early as 1904. Likewise, Frederick A. Graves, an early Pentecostal and noted musician in Zion City, IL,<sup>55</sup> must have been aware that his friend, Carl M. Hanson, claimed to possess the gift of tongues when Hanson attended Graves' Minneapolis mission for several years at the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>56</sup> These multiple connections between Chicago Pentecostal leaders and pre-Azusa glossolalic revivals on the Great Plains point to the need to further study Pentecostalism's diverse roots. Azusa Street may have been the focal point of early Pentecostalism, but prior revivals, including those in Minnesota and the Dakotas, provided precedents and leaders for the emerging movement.

The genesis of the pre-Azusa Scandinavian revivals in the northern Great Plains, separate from the Topeka and Azusa Street revivals, underscores the plural nature of the Pentecostal movement. This study challenges the historiographic assumption that the modern Pentecostal movement began on January 1, 1901 in Topeka,

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<sup>55</sup> Gordon P. Gardiner, *Out of Zion: Into All the World* (Shippensburg, PA: Companion Press, 1990), pp. 41-42; Charles Edwin Jones, "Frederick A. Graves," in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), p. 680.

<sup>56</sup> Anna Hanson Berg, interview by Wayne Warner, September 23, 1980, audio recording. According to Berg, her father, Carl M. Hanson, attended Graves' mission for four years. Articles from John Alexander Dowie's periodical placed Graves in Chicago in late 1902, where he served as an elder in Central Zion Tabernacle, then in Minneapolis as early as March 1903 through at least June 1905. *Leaves of Healing*, December 6, 1902, p. 223; *Leaves of Healing*, March 7, 1903, p. 635; *Leaves of Healing*, June 24, 1905, p. 349.

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Kansas, and augments the growing body of scholarship identifying Pentecostalism's non-American roots, in order to better tell the full story of the full gospel.



**God's 'Moses' for Pentecostalism****Remapping the Smale-Trail**

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According to Frank Bartleman, William Seymour was God's '*Joshua*' of Pentecostalism; therefore, Joseph Smale was "God's '*Moses*' - to lead the people as far as the Jordan, though he himself never got across."<sup>1</sup> A critique of the '*Moses*' role ascribed to Smale is long overdue. As the events of the Azusa Street Revival are examined in this centenary year, it seems appropriate that Joseph Smale's contribution should also be highlighted, for the following three reasons which will be developed throughout this paper:

1) By 1905 and 1906, Joseph Smale was a prominent and catalytic figure in the Church life of Los Angeles (L.A.), contributing to the heightened expectancy among Christians across denominational lines, who were awaiting a Pentecostal revival of Last-Day proportions. However, until recently,<sup>2</sup> very little research has focused in upon Joseph Smale's participation in the processes that led up to the days of Pentecostal overflowing at Azusa Street, and so the '*Moses*' motif and reputation has remained unquestioned for a century.

2) Examination of the '*Smale-Trail*'<sup>3</sup> origins, adds a further dimension to Pentecostal history. For up until now, the Welsh Revival of 1904-05 has been regarded as the primary stimulus for Smale's involvement pre-Azusa Street. But actually, I would argue, the '*Smale-Trail*' began much earlier, by virtue of the fact that Joseph Smale was a student of C.H. Spurgeon between 1887 and 1889. Therefore, some of Smale's pneumatological perspectives which are evident from the commencement of his arrival in L.A. from 1897 can actually be traced back to his mentor at 'The Pastor's College' in London. Such was Spurgeon's influence as the back-drop to Smale's long-held anticipation for revival.

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street: The Roots of Modern-Day Pentecost* (Logos International, 1925, 1980), 62.

<sup>2</sup> I am indebted to Cecil M. Robeck, for generously sharing his Smale research with me. I understand that Robeck's forthcoming book may include the most comprehensive focus on Smale to date.

<sup>3</sup> The '*Smale-Trail*' is a personal phrase that I use colloquially, with reference to my ongoing Ph.D. research into the life and ministry of Pastor Joseph Smale.

As far as I am aware, a link between C.H. Spurgeon and Pentecostal history has never been established in detail. This is integral to my thesis – that another important root of Pentecostalism is identifiable here, courtesy of Smale’s involvement in L.A. Distinct from other Holiness and Wesleyan strands, this root can perhaps best be described as “Spurgeonic” in essence, incorporating what Smale simply calls the balance of “Word and Spirit.”<sup>4</sup> It explains both Smale’s willingness to embrace the work of the Holy Spirit in expectation of revival, as well as indicating part of the reason why he ultimately withdrew from the Pentecostal movement as quickly as he did.

Now is probably the right moment to also acknowledge a personal aspect that impresses upon this research. Namely, that my exploration into Smale’s life and ministry is undoubtedly shaped by similar convictions and presuppositions, given my own Baptist tradition and attendance at the same college as Joseph Smale, albeit one hundred years after him! That said, a succinct reference to the Spurgeonic-Smale roots in London will provide some helpful background to the remainder of the paper which is to focus on L.A.

### *Spurgeonic-Smale Roots*

C.H. Spurgeon’s influential teaching on pneumatological themes indicates some formative strands for Joseph Smale’s own convictions about the need for, and the possibility of, Holy Spirit power. Spurgeon propagated two consistent challenges in the college environment as well as from the Metropolitan Tabernacle pulpit: (a) the pastor’s need for Holy Spirit power, and (b) the Church’s need for revival. A cursory glance at some of the titles Spurgeon gave to sermons over his latter years illustrates this expectation for Christian life and ministry,<sup>5</sup> as do statements like this one, quoting Spurgeon himself:

If at the commencement of the gospel we behold the Holy Spirit working great signs and wonders may we not expect a continuance – nay, if anything, an increased display – of his power as the ages roll on?<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Joseph Smale, *Our Church Quarterly* (First Baptist Church, LA), Vol. I, No. I, (December 1897): 1.

<sup>5</sup> C.H. Spurgeon, *Sermons: Our Urgent Need of the Holy Spirit* (Jan. 7, 1877); *The Personal Pentecost and the Glorious Hope* (13 June, 1886); *The Holy Ghost – The Need of the Age* (March 13, 1887).

<sup>6</sup> C.H. Spurgeon, *The Pentecostal Wind and Fire* (Metropolitan Pulpit; Sept. 18, 1881), 93.

Not a surprising openness to signs and wonders, perhaps, given Spurgeon's own experience in childhood, when he was prophesied over, that one day he would preach the gospel to great multitudes.<sup>7</sup> Or instances recorded during sermons, whereby he spoke out 'words of knowledge' to members of his congregation.<sup>8</sup> Although on other occasions, Spurgeon was critical and suspicious of manifestations of power,<sup>9</sup> so it is uncertain what he would have made of the phenomena in LA before and during the Azusa Street revival.

With our focus switching to L.A. from now on, the continuity of Smale's Spurgeonic roots is evident from the outset of his ministry at First Baptist Church. From 1897, Smale started to preach and encourage prayer for a move of the Spirit across L.A., assessing the spiritual milieu there at the end of the nineteenth century, as follows: "we are looking for a revival, and several signs of it are already with us." In fact, Smale's first message to his church also included ten "great factors promoting a mighty revival" with reminders of the essentiality for "a full indwelling of the Holy Spirit" that "through word and Spirit we come to know God... and they that know their God shall be strong and do exploits."<sup>10</sup> Having made a connection between the formative influences of Spurgeon upon Smale, it would seem beneficial to move on swiftly, to the third and major justification for remapping the Smale-trail.

3) Pentecostal historiography has tended to compact and minimize Smale's role within the Azusa Street narrative, interpreting events based, primarily, on the assessment provided by Frank Bartleman.<sup>11</sup> By my estimation, Bartleman's simplistic and subjective way of dealing with Joseph Smale is a mixed contribution. Helpfully, though not entirely accurately, Bartleman explains some of the main facts about Smale, which bear repeating here, especially by way of introduction to this 'Moses' character before us:

i. When news of the 1904 Welsh Revival caught the interest of Joseph Smale, it resulted in his visit to meet Evan Roberts, to witness the revival firsthand.

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<sup>7</sup> C.H. Spurgeon, *Autobiography 1: The Early Years* (Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), 27.

<sup>8</sup> C.H. Spurgeon, *Autobiography 2: The Full Harvest* (Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), 60.

<sup>9</sup> C.H. Spurgeon, (*Sword and Trowel*, December 1887), 606; Spurgeon dismissed aspects of Edward Irving's revival as merely "Irving's actings" or "pantomimes".

<sup>10</sup> Smale, *Our Church Quarterly*, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, 13– 62.

ii. Returning to L.A., Smale communicated accounts of the Welsh outpouring and prophesied that L.A. would soon be shaken by a similar mighty Pentecost.

iii. In anticipation, Smale initiated home prayer groups, and 15 weeks of daily prayer meetings in his church (First Baptist Church, L.A.), seeking the revival to come to L.A.

iv. The board of Smale's own church complained, and so Smale resigned his pastorate, establishing First New Testament Church, L.A.

v. Smale's new church witnessed speaking in tongues for the first time on Easter Sunday 1906, spoken by Jennie Moore, who later married William Seymour.

vi. But tensions continued to surface under Smale's ministry, between "freedom of the Spirit" and "organization" within church life.

vii. Smale did not receive the gift of "speaking in tongues," and being frightened off by "wicked spirits" he consequently rejected the new movement.

However, in telling the Azusa Street account from his pivotal perspective, Bartleman omits other crucial information about Smale and his two churches, which is necessary for a broader and more accurate interpretation of the above events. So, by delving into other unpublished source materials from that era, such as church records and bulletins from First Baptist Church and First New Testament Church L.A., plus information gleaned from archived newspaper accounts, it is now possible to piece together a more detailed background to the sequence listed above. Whilst not altering the Pentecostal story-line, the *Smale-Trail* does at least enrich our understanding of some of the characters, events and theologies at work in L.A., in the lead-up to April 1906. Following the chronological order, and allowing much first-hand material to form the narrative, some of the pertinent influence of Joseph Smale's role in L.A. will now be presented.

### *Preparation for Revival: Brokenness (1897-1904)*

Smale's early years at First Baptist Church L.A. were mixed. Seven hundred new members joined in the first five years,<sup>12</sup> and yet attempts to steer the prestigious city church in the direction of anticipated revival were hampered by a continual stream of church conflicts and personal disappointments. All of which were aired publicly in the L.A. press, with sensationalized headers such as "Warfare Breaks

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<sup>12</sup> 'Five Years of Success,' *Los Angeles Herald* (Feb. 6, 1902), 10.

Out in First Baptist Church!”<sup>13</sup> It is worth citing a few of the problems that Smale faced, to indicate the contributory factors that led to the deterioration in his health, and, by 1904, the point of virtual burnout.

Behind the scenes, Smale’s marriage to Alverda Keyser in June 1898 broke down from the outset.<sup>14</sup> Publicly, divisions in the church became increasingly apparent, as many factions emerged within the large congregation over various issues, especially regarding Smale’s dominant leadership style. By 1903, the number of disaffected members had grown, antagonistic business meetings were frequently adjourned gone midnight, over 100 members had left to join Temple Baptist Church, and conflict with the area Baptist Convention ensued.

It is in this context that Smale’s trip to visit the Welsh Revival should be regarded. For the journey that was so instrumental in the revival fire spreading to California, has been typified as some form of ‘scouting’ mission. But the pertinent question, *how or why did the decision to visit Wales actually come about?* is answered by the simple fact - that Smale was a broken man... often regarded as one of the precursors to a revival in itself.

By 1904, Smale’s absence from the pulpit due to ill health was becoming more frequent. So in July 1904 the church members agreed to send Pastor Smale abroad on an extended vacation for “six months or such time as he shall be fully recovered... providing for him a trip to England and the Holy Land.”<sup>15</sup> Some members later admitting their hope that he may not return to L.A!<sup>16</sup>

### *Fifteen Weeks at First Baptist (1905)*

After nine months away, Smale was given a grand reception by five hundred church members, presenting him with \$150 in gold. Then on Sunday 28 May 1905, Smale preached his first sermon back, on the theme: “The Great Welsh Revival.” The church clerk records this as “a remarkable service, long to be remembered, commencing at 11 o’clock AM and closing at 2.15PM. At the close of the sermon, the Pastor invited all those who were not right or felt they wanted to get nearer to God, to come forward and kneel. At least two hundred people came. Prayer was offered and there followed a general confession of sin and an

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<sup>13</sup> ‘Call for Trial of Pastor Smale,’ *Los Angeles Times* (Sept. 15, 1902), 14.

<sup>14</sup> Smale and Keyser remained separated until their divorce in 1910.

<sup>15</sup> First Baptist Church LA (FBC LA), *Records*, Volume IX (1905), July 31.

<sup>16</sup> ‘Bombs for Baptists,’ *Los Angeles Times* (Sept. 11, 1905), 11.

asking of forgiveness from each other. The Spirit was strongly manifest.”<sup>17</sup> That first week back in L.A. was significant. Smale arranged a meeting for the next day, speaking “about the conditions prevailing in Wales before the revival. There followed a prayer and praise service with many manifestations of the Spirit.”

Smale “did not care to commit the church to another week’s services, but announced that he would be at the church each evening,”<sup>18</sup> in case others wished to join him. Interest across L.A. was growing rapidly, as the clerk describes: “Prayer and Praise services have been held every afternoon and evening during the week. The meetings have been well attended by people from outside churches. The Holy Spirit has been felt in every meeting.” Symptomatic of other occurrences of revivals, two aspects from the second week of meetings deserve comment. Firstly, the demise of the sermon! “One member remained standing and witnessed that she had been filled with the Spirit. Then in quick succession, followed testimony, prayer and praise until about 1.30pm – the Pastor having no chance to preach.” Secondly, the sign of public confession and forgiveness was in evidence, even extending across the churches in L.A. At the evening service on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June, two other L.A. ministers “were received on the rostrum by Pastor Smale and they participated in the meeting.” Rev A.P. Graves and Rev. Randall both confessed to having done much to injure Smale and the church, by letters to private individuals, the public press and by word of mouth.”<sup>19</sup>

The weekly advertisement in the *Los Angeles Times* was altered to incorporate the *Word and Spirit* dimension, reading: “The First Baptist Church of L.A. is a fellowship for evangelical preaching, evangelical teaching, pentecostal life and pentecostal service.”<sup>20</sup> By the tenth week, with momentum gathering, a clarification of purpose and desire in the daily meetings, was summarized as follows: “The subjects of prayer have been, first for a Pentecost; second, for the infilling with the Holy Ghost of all Christian believers; third a reversion of the Church of Jesus Christ to Holy Ghost administration; and fourth, the conversion of sinners.”

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<sup>17</sup> FBC LA, *Records*, May 28.

<sup>18</sup> ‘Pastor Smale Stirs ‘Em Up,’’ *Los Angeles Times* (June 8, 1905), II.5.

<sup>19</sup> FBC LA, *Records*, June 11.

<sup>20</sup> ‘Church Services,’ *Los Angeles Times* (July 29, 1905), I.11.

<sup>21</sup> FBC LA, *Records*, Aug. 6.



Articulated at the time, was some self-awareness regarding the significance of these epoch-making events, in that “God is answering the cry for a New Testament Assembly in beginning with this First Baptist Church.”<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the effects of the revival were already being felt in tangible ways, locally and globally. For instance, by August 6<sup>th</sup> 1905, it was reported that two members of First Baptist Church “have intimated that they believe the Lord has called them to be missionaries in China. They hope to leave in about two months from now, and we rejoice to say they are not going forth under a [Missions] Board, but will look to the Lord for their support.”<sup>23</sup> Localized church business matters, reinforced by the “desire to have the church administered by the Holy Ghost,” were illustrated by the decision to discontinue the services of the choir leader, now that the Holy Spirit was leading the meetings.<sup>24</sup>

Inevitably, not everyone at First Baptist Church was enthusiastic. In the midst of the dispute with the choir master and the choir threatening strike action, Smale used his final sermon at the beginning of his final week to speak about “The Fleshly Life of the Modern Church.”<sup>25</sup> It was at this point, in the fifteenth week, that the first formal objection to the daily meetings for prayer was lodged, but only by one of the deacons, Mr. Dozier. And the intriguing comment by Dozier’s wife, who asked Smale if “these people [Christians from other churches] could not be made to remain away from the Wednesday night meetings so that we can have our own little family and the Pastor to ourselves.”<sup>26</sup>

Historically, the impression has been given that the whole Diaconate reacted against Smale, resulting in his forced resignation and the establishment of First New Testament Church. However, the actual position was as follows - Deacon Dozier requested a special church members meeting “to consider the Pastoral Relations.” This was actually voted down by the Board of Deacons, with their request to the deacon in question to “stop his opposition and fall in line with the church.”<sup>27</sup> But pursuing his request that Smale should resign, Deacon Dozier refused to accept the legality of the proceedings, and the matter was adjourned.

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> FBC LA, *Records*, Aug. 23.

<sup>25</sup> FBC LA, *Records*, Sept. 3.

<sup>26</sup> FBC LA, *Records*, Sept. 6.

<sup>27</sup> FBC LA, *Records*, Sept. 11.

That same afternoon, Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September 1905, Smale decided not to continue as pastor any longer and tendered his resignation. Aware of the other six deacons' support, Smale wished to avert further bad publicity for the church in view of all that had gone on before. He also admitted to being "in need of a rest," after the strain of two meetings every day for the previous fifteen weeks.<sup>28</sup> However, within eight days, the inaugural meeting of the First New Testament Church was convened at Burbank Hall!<sup>29</sup>

*First New Testament Church – "Under the Headship of Christ"*

Smale's loyal deacons at First Baptist recognized their former pastor's unique and anointed contribution, in a statement issued the week after his departure. They applauded his faithfulness to "accentuate truths that have received scant courtesy at the hands of our own Baptist people... The truths to which we refer are:

- a) The Headship of Christ over the Church
- b) The Holy Ghost administration of the Church
- c) The Baptism of the Holy Ghost for all believers."<sup>30</sup>

The core issues for Smale and many others had crystallized around these three doctrines. So joined by about 225 L.A. Christians (mostly from First Baptist), there was the opportunity to implement church life and practice in 'new wine skins,' with the motto as above: "*Under the Headship of Christ.*" The revival of the previous fifteen weeks transferred effortlessly, under the power of the Spirit, into First New Testament Church, with the opportunity to create "a church reigned over by the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>31</sup>

But to what extent was/is it possible to 'organize' "Holy Ghost administration of the Church" anyway? Smale was certainly not reticent to define the framework for the new church, as within three months he had established "the great principles of our organized life."<sup>32</sup> Although these actions provoked Bartleman to criticize the measure of spontaneity at First New Testament Church, the church itself

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<sup>28</sup> 'Baptist Boil Still Biling,' *Los Angeles Times* (Sept. 12, 1905), II.10.

<sup>29</sup> First New Testament Church (FNTC), *Our First Anniversary* (Sept. 1906), 3.

<sup>30</sup> FBC LA, *Records*, Sept. 17.

<sup>31</sup> FNTC, *Our First Anniversary*, 3.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

felt that by the end of the first year, that they had established freedom from “all the man-made systems of religious life and service.”<sup>33</sup> Given his ambition to train every member for “complete Christian service,” Smale’s church model quickly developed. Within six months, he had formulated a well-ordered mix of evangelistic ministries among the Chinese, Spanish and Mexican communities of L.A.; a Bible and Missionary Training School – called “The New Testament Training School;” organized dates for fasting and prayer; and more besides.<sup>34</sup>

Space here does not permit analysis of other comparisons that could be made with Spurgeon’s evangelistic, church-planting, educational and social concern projects – each emanating from the life of the local church. But what is striking is Smale’s view of the intrinsic relationship between the rapid development of organized church life and Holy Spirit administration.<sup>35</sup> In this context, Smale’s teaching on the subject of “The Pentecostal Blessing,” was delivered (published April 1906, under the same title).

### *Nine Secrets for “The Pentecostal Blessing”*

Although to date no copy of the book has been located, we do know the nine secrets that Smale presented for a person to obtain the Holy Ghost in Pentecostal fullness:<sup>36</sup>

- i. Have done with sin
- ii. Have done with self
- iii. Have done with skepticism
- iv. I will accept every manifestation of the Holy Spirit in others
- v. I will receive whatever the Spirit determines as my life work
- vi. I will obey unquestioningly and instantly every leading of the Spirit
- vii. Listening to God
- viii. Praying for the blessing
- ix. Glorifying Christ.

As well as the brief teaching outline preserved, Smale indicates his view that the Pentecostal blessing would naturally become evident in tangible ways, whether

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<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>34</sup> First New Testament Church, *Historical Number of the Bulletin* (March 18, 1906).

<sup>35</sup> FNTC, Bulletin for December 17, 1905.

<sup>36</sup> ‘At the Churches Yesterday – Pentecostal Blessing,’ *Los Angeles Times* (Nov 27, 1905), 16.

unity, the creation of a “Color Blind” congregation,<sup>37</sup> salvation, personal holiness, obedience to (world) evangelization, etc. But as for *glossolalia* being “*the*” or “*an*” initial sign of Spirit Baptism, Smale was open, though not emphatic.

### *The Gift of Tongues and Azusa Street*

Following Jennie Moore speaking in tongues at the New Testament Church on Easter Sunday 1906, the arrival of the gift of tongues and “holy laughter” at Burbank Hall has already been well documented.<sup>38</sup> But the manner in which Smale related to the Azusa Street meetings requires a reference at this point of the Smale-Trail. In the same week as the “*Rolling on the Floor in Smale’s Church*” phenomena (July 1906), Smale argued from 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 that the gift of tongues was not for every Christian. Just as the gifts are given to “one,” then “to another,” so “the Scripture does not say, ‘*To all is given the word of wisdom*,’ etc.”<sup>39</sup> By implication, Smale’s divergent views on the gift of tongues immediately set him apart from the Azusa Street meetings, though Smale was quick to point out to his own church that he:

Still maintains a cordial attitude toward them [The Azusa Street Meetings], and will continue to do so as long as God’s Spirit works in them. He has a love for every child of God, but is obliged to differ from some of the doctrinal positions taken by the leaders of the Apostolic Faith Movement.<sup>40</sup>

Ultimately, whether the gift of tongues by-passed Smale, or he by-passed the gift, is unknown. But Smale was certainly not impressed with what he perceived to be excessive manifestations of the “Comeouters” group that had split with First New Testament Church by September 1906. They were led by his old friend Dr. Henry S. Keyes, whose seventeen year old daughter, Lillian, dominated services “out-rivalling the orgies conducted on Azusa Street.” Dr. Keyes announced “he had just been given the power to raise the dead,” whilst “several rolled on the floor in an ecstasy of bliss...” believing that “miraculous power is to be poured upon the band of men and women who have left Pastor Smale’s church.”<sup>41</sup> Simultaneously,

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<sup>37</sup> FNTC, *Our First Anniversary*, 8.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Rolling on Floor in Smale’s Church,’ *Los Angeles Times* (July 14, 1906), II.1; “‘Holy Roller’ Mad,” *Los Angeles Times* (July 17, 1906), II.14; ‘Queer ‘Gift’ Given Many’, *Los Angeles Times* (July 23, 1906), 15.

<sup>39</sup> FNTC, *Bulletin* for July 8 – July 15, 1906, 1.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>41</sup> ‘Claim Power to Raise Dead,’ *Los Angeles Times* (Sept. 24, 1906), II.7.

at Smale's church that same morning, "no one claimed to have the gift of tongues, and the pastor preached without interruption." Smale was moving in a different direction, in line with the key mission objectives deployed since the beginnings of First New Testament Church in September 1905.

### *Holy Spirit Mission Strategy*

For Smale, baptism in the Spirit must lead Christians to regain "soul-winning" power. In keeping with his Spurgeonian roots, Smale encouraged the new church in missiological endeavors. Within three months of their formation, Mrs. Davis, "an old woman," came forward to go as a missionary to Jerusalem.<sup>42</sup> Then the most significant mission strategy emanated from the revival fires of First New Testament Church L.A. In March 1907, Smale traveled to China with the sole purpose of establishing a "Gospel Mission." His trip is well documented, thanks to a tract recently discovered, entitled: "*An Apostolic Journey in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*."<sup>43</sup> Although Bartleman criticized Smale for too much organization at the Spirit's expense, Smale's interpretation of the mission work accomplished between 1906 and 1908 is presented to speak for itself:

Think of it, one church, which though its membership is about 525, its giving strength is confined to about 200, sent forth to China in the space of ten months and without resorting to personal appeals... the sum of \$3100, and there was contributed to home work by the church the sum of \$8722.<sup>44</sup>

Furthermore, the China New Testament Church, formed on Smale's visit to Pak-hoi, in 1907, was still in existence when he returned to China in 1921.

### *Conclusion*

The longevity of the Smale-Trail, beginning with those Spurgeonian roots in Britain, and contributing towards, and later running parallel with, the 1906 Azusa Street revival in L.A., raises some important questions and tensions that Smale experienced, such as the relationship between "*Word and Spirit*," "*Reformed and Pentecostal*," and the boundaries between "*organization and freedom in the Spirit*." In 1913, Lewi Pethrus wanted to contact Smale at a critical time of Baptist-Pentecostal tension in Sweden. Bartleman wrote back to Pethrus, still maintaining that Smale was God's '*Moses*,' who "died in Moab, spiritually-

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<sup>42</sup> 'Indian is a Hustler,' *Los Angeles Times* (Dec. 9, 1905), 17.

<sup>43</sup> First New Testament Church, *An Apostolic Journey in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (1908).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

speaking.”<sup>45</sup> However, Pethrus obviously felt that Smale had wisdom and experience to share, more than Bartleman realized. In fact, by 1913 Joseph Smale was in England, still emphasizing “Word and Spirit,” and establishing the ‘Spanish Gospel Mission’ among other works – but that’s another story along the Smale-Trail!



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<sup>45</sup> Frank Bartleman, Personal Letter to Lewi Pethrus (July 9, 1913). I am indebted to Desmond Cartwright for directing me to this letter, as well as Smale’s later pioneering work with the Spanish Gospel Mission.

## Just Another American Success Story?

A Response to Jürgen Moltmann on the Place of Optimism in the Pentecostal Tradition

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### Introduction

No less authority than internationally esteemed theologian Jürgen Moltmann complains that Pentecostalism's "overly optimistic" theology often causes it to come across as a religious version of "an American success story". He accordingly calls for a Pentecostal appropriation of Martin Luther's theology of the cross as a corrective.<sup>1</sup> Moltmann's polite criticism is all the more serious because of his own work on a highly developed pneumatology and his willingness to dialogue extensively with Pentecostals.<sup>2</sup> Doubtless some truth resides in his remarks. Versions of Pentecostal faith emphasizing an over-realized eschatology or extreme teachings on physical healing and material prosperity come to mind. Also, tendencies toward triumphalism often seem evident in a movement that has come from being socially castigated as at best fanatic, or worse, neurotic, or worst of all, even demonic, to becoming what may be the fastest growing, most widely popular expression of Christianity in the world today. Testimonials about how our team has come from worst to first probably sound like an old Amway program to a lot of listeners.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, many Pentecostals, perhaps not too unlike Paul (cf. 1 Ti 1:15), labor to lift up the praises of God's grace all the more mightily by highlighting the depths of depravity from which Christ has extrapo-

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<sup>1</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, in "The Spirit Gives Life", Harold D. Hunter and Peter D. Hocken, eds. *All Together in One Place: Theological Papers from the Brighton Conference on World Evangelization* (Sheffield, Eng: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 22-37.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. see Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) and Jürgen Moltmann, "A Response to My Pentecostal Dialogue Partners", *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* (JPT) 4 (1994), 59-70.

<sup>3</sup> Short for "American Way", Amway is a popular but controversial marketing business built on a particular version of the "American dream" promising riches to participants. See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amway> (accessed February 19, 2006). Testimonial style success stories have been a prominent part of Amway presentations for years.

lated us and the heights to which the power of the Spirit has now elevated us. That can sound a lot like “a success story,” American or otherwise.

Nevertheless, I cannot but wonder if the “American” part of the phrase has latent within it some of the political-economical dynamics common on today’s international scene quite apart from religion, Pentecostal or otherwise. The term is perhaps a play on the (though not entirely undisputed) North American origins of Pentecostalism. An underlying inference that Pentecostalism immoderately imbibes the spirit of North American culture is unsettling. Though I do not think it of Dr. Moltmann, an old supposition that Pentecostals are a bit off balance after all comes to mind too. More importantly to me, however, is how does the overall charge challenge Pentecostals to self-evaluation and self-improvement? And, is there a place for self-definition and self-defense within that process? Using Moltmann’s comment as a springboard, I wish to take the subject beyond his basic point to address these issues through a comparison-contrast approach on pessimism and optimism in Protestant and Pentecostal models for theology and spirituality. I will also appeal to the patristic writings of Pseudo-Macarius as an example of a Pentecostal model of theological spirituality holding much promise for contemporary Pentecostalism.

### *Is Protestantism Overly Pessimistic?*

Professor Moltmann suggested Martin Luther’s theology of the cross, recognizing and even centralizing the place of sin and suffering in Christian faith and life, as a cure for an overly optimistic Pentecostalism. But does the doctrine as traditionally developed suggest an overly pessimistic strain in Protestantism itself?

### **Paradigmatic Protestantism**

Luther is certainly a central figure in Protestant faith. Justo Gonzalez notes that his theology of the cross bears the mark of his own existential anguish during his personal spiritual journey. It is not so much a specific point of theology as an entire paradigm for doing theology. Luther liked to set up contrasting concepts such as glory and cross, law and gospel, and legal and evangelical. Anything even slightly suggesting approbation of human ability or effort, that is, self-righteousness or good works, might be labeled glory, law, or legal and forthrightly rejected. That which emphasized human inability or humility before God might be labeled cross, gospel, and evangelical and forthrightly accepted. Most importantly for our present purposes, Luther’s theology of the cross emphasized that the God who is otherwise hidden is only really made known in suffering and



the cross. The doctrine was admittedly a useful and powerful weapon in Luther's battle against perceived moralism and rationalism.<sup>4</sup>

Luther's theology of the cross, however, at least as it is popularly or traditionally stated, may be not so much incorrect as incomplete. Pentecostal scholar Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen suggests the complexities of Luther's thought have not always been correctly conveyed, and that a new day of dialogue is dawning showing surprising subtleties in several key areas—including in his theology of the cross. Along with God's austere hiddenness and self-revelation in suffering, should be included more of an emphasis on God's loving concern for us and its consequences.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, more of an optimistic appraisal of the divine-human relation and its salvific components is in order. All is not dark and dismal. Appropriate emphases of the Christian life can and should be joy and victory, peace and blessing (cf. Eph 1:3; Acts 13:52). These themes resonate readily with much Pentecostal pneumatic, and optimistic, perception and experience.

Though appreciative of the man and his ministry in many ways, Pentecostals part company with Luther in an all important area: pneumatology. D. H. Tripp notes that Luther's *simul justus et peccator* soteriology tended to limit his expectation of the inward working of the Holy Spirit. Other Reformers, such as, for example, John Calvin, sought to some extent to correct this imbalance. Later Lutherans, however, with the exception of Pietists such as Johann Arndt, emphasized ex-

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<sup>4</sup> Justo L. Gonzalez, *A History of Christian Thought: From the Protestant Reformation to the Twentieth Century* vol. III (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1975, 1987), 40-47.

<sup>5</sup> Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *One with God: Salvation as Deification and Justification* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004), 40-45. In 'Theology of the Cross: A Stumbling Block to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality?' *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honor of Russell Spittler*, eds. Wonsuk Ma and Robert Menzies (Sheffield, Eng: Sheffield Academic, 2004), 150-163, Kärkkäinen suggests Pentecostals can benefit from pondering Luther's theology of the cross (151, 157, 161-63). I agree. But careful parameters should be set and kept. (Luther's over identification of God-Satan and good-evil (Ibid, 152-61) reminds me of the chief and same error of the otherwise often excellent Jungian system of psychology, probably due to too much uncritical influence from Hinduism. See Wallace B. Clift, *Jung and Christianity: The Challenge of Reconciliation* (New York: Crossroad, 1996), 129-39.) Kärkkäinen himself is careful to guard Pentecostal principles of faith and victory and spiritual power (cf. 'Theology of the Cross', 151, 161).

periencing the Holy Spirit even less than Luther.<sup>6</sup> Not surprisingly, therefore, Pentecostal theologian Frank Macchia lists concerns over contemporary Protestant-Reformed-Evangelical lack of attention to pneumatology.<sup>7</sup> Much of the in-criminatory pneumatological inadequacy among many Protestants today may be traceable to Luther himself. Suffice it to say that Luther alone is insufficient as a model for Pentecostal spirituality and that that insufficiency arises in part from skewed theology, especially on the Holy Spirit. An adequate theological spirituality calls for consideration of other, additional models and methods.

Like Martin Luther, Jürgen Moltmann's theology has been heavily impacted by his own experience of anguish, in Moltmann's case, as a prisoner of war (1945-48). The power of hope and of God's presence in suffering has ever since played an important part in his life and thought. The theology of the cross is especially significant for Moltmann.<sup>8</sup> He builds on a dialectical interpretation of the cross and resurrection of Jesus. The cross, signifying death and divine absence, represents the complete opposite of the resurrection, signifying life and divine presence. A contradiction exists between the two commensurate with the contradiction between reality as it is now and as God intends it to become. But since the same Jesus died and raised again a paradoxical continuity and complementariness also exists. Moltmann's eschatological perspective proposes that God is simultaneously expressing present solidarity with the suffering and empowering the

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<sup>6</sup> D. H. Tripp, "A Protestant Reformation: Introduction", *The Study of Spirituality*, eds. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, Edward Yarnold, SJ (New York: Oxford, 1986), 342-43. Lutheran participants in the contemporary Charismatic Renewal are new and notable exceptions. See L. Christenson, "Lutheran Charismatics", *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements (NIDPCM)*, eds. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2202): 847-51 ( 848).

<sup>7</sup> Frank D. Macchia, "Toward a Theology of the Third Article in a Post-Barthian Era: A Pentecostal Review of Donald Bloesch's Pneumatology", *JPT* 10-2 (April 2002): 3-17.

<sup>8</sup> E.g., Moltmann, sharing his own heavy indebtedness to eschatological universalism, suggests the theology of the cross tempers what could otherwise become "optimistic humanism". See "The Hope for the Kingdom of God and Signs of Hope in the World: The Relevance of Blumhardt's Theology Today", *Pneuma: Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 26-1 (Fall 2004), 4-16 (15-16).

Church through the Holy Spirit for the mission of moving humanity's present history toward God's victorious future.<sup>9</sup>

Moltmann's theology powerfully demonstrates the necessity of holding together dialectical or paradoxical truths regarding what may be termed pessimistic and optimistic realities of human existence. I think this is an idea that Pentecostals might benefit from through practical application. When talking about sickness and healing, affliction and deliverance, poverty and material blessing, struggle and victory, and so on, Pentecostals are well advised to emphasize a well-rounded theology capable of accounting for times when people are not healed or delivered or prospered.<sup>10</sup> Our sufferings share in the cross of Christ. Our victories share in the resurrection of Christ. Yet many Pentecostals would probably point out that the glory and victory of the resurrection is what sets the suffering of the cross into perspective—not (only) the other way around. Therefore, the suffering and struggle encountered in the life of faith are not to be denied but neither are they to be embraced only in and of themselves. They contribute to the glory of God as they testify to God's victorious power. Even in the reality of experiencing difficult times as devout believers the transitory nature of darkness in the light of glorious victory is always an appropriate emphasis. That is faith's victory over the world in the world (1 John 5:4-5). We should never, however, lose sight of the truth that human foolishness and weakness and divine wisdom and power are often surprisingly and amazingly inter-mingled (cf. 1 Co 2:1-5).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See "Jürgen Moltmann" by Richard Bauckham in *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century* ed. David F. Ford (Cambridge: Massachusetts: Basil Blackwell, 1989, 1990), 293-310 (293-96).

<sup>10</sup> Pentecostal "already-not yet" eschatology is beginning to address such issues. Furthermore, D. J. Wilson notes that Pentecostal eschatology has often involved integration of pessimism and optimism. See "Eschatology, Pentecostal Perspectives On" in *NIDPCM*, 601-05 (601). Recent developments tend to depart from radical pessimism without diminishing traditional optimism, "Theology, Pentecostal". See F. D. Macchia, *NIDPCM*, p 1120-41(p 1138-40). Perhaps the best sustained Pentecostal treatment of "now-not yet" eschatology is still Steven J. Land's *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 1993). See esp. his "fusion-fission" discussion in cp. two.

<sup>11</sup> Pentecostal biblical scholar Gordon D. Fee affirms the "happy tension" of the "radical middle" between under/over realized eschatology as a means for Evangelicals and Pentecostals to understand lived experiences of the Spirit's power and human weakness in our contemporary existence in this world. See *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 822-26.

## Problems with the Protestant Paradigm

In all fairness, Jürgen Moltmann did not accuse Pentecostals of being “optimistic” but of being “overly optimistic”.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, in tune with the music of Moltmann’s own theology one might suggest that an “overly” optimistic theology is one that does not adequately account for its pessimistic counterpart. In other words, teaching that does not hold in delicate tension problems and potentialities inherent in the life of faith would be correspondingly deficient. That God is really made known in the weakness of Jesus Christ’s crucifixion and suffering is a central tenet of Christian faith (cf. 2 Co 13:4). That Christ’s followers also share in some sense in the sufferings of our Lord in this life is certain (cf. Rom 8:17). Yet neither of these texts (nor scores more like them) accents either suffering or glory or either weakness or power to the exclusion of the other but rather both suffering and glory and weakness and power are included together. Any approach to Christian faith and life that does not adequately account for the reality of suffering is deficient. Any approach to Christian life and faith that does not actually elevate suffering to victory is also deficient. A Pentecostalism that does not aggressively address the ongoing assault of sin, sickness, and suffering—spiritual, emotional and psychological, physical, social and cultural, or economical—on human individuals and institutions is deficient. A Pentecostalism that does not boldly declare present and permanent victory over these and all forms of evil and suffering through Christ and by his Spirit is also deficient.

Admittedly, a pessimistic or even fatalistic strain often surfaces in Protestantism. Randall Collins notes that the incisive sociological analysis of Max Weber identified intense anxiety and insecurity in Calvinistic Protestantism (in particular) as responsible in part for producing radical social and economic change bringing in the modern rationalist capitalist society.<sup>13</sup> Weber, himself a Protestant, felt the strain of a society bereft of magic, miracle, or mystery with people becoming increasingly rich and decreasingly religious. Not surprisingly, he was often “pessimistic about the modern situation”.<sup>14</sup> Some Protestants, however, such as John Wesley especially and Wesleyan-Arminianism after him, mightily labored to lift

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<sup>12</sup> Moltmann, though perhaps not altogether appropriately, has been criticized for putting hope too much into the future and not enough into the present. See “Jürgen Moltmann”, Bauckham, *The Modern Theologians*, 309-10. Precisely this point would be problematic for Pentecostals.

<sup>13</sup> Randall Collins, *Max Weber: A Skelton Key*, Masters of Social Theory Vol. 3 (Newbury, CA: Sage, 1986), 48-51.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

Protestantism to a more optimistic level.<sup>15</sup> Pentecostalism is certainly part of a stream of Christian theology and spirituality that advances a more optimistic agenda for Christian life and faith.<sup>16</sup> Pentecostals continue to believe in the contemporary validity of the biblical category of blessing. Through faith in Christ we are redeemed from the curse and blessed through receiving the promised Holy Spirit (Gal 3:13-14). All of life is now uniquely graced or gifted with divine presence and influence. Pentecostals affirm that redemption includes release from the curse through Christ and reception of the blessing of the Spirit.<sup>17</sup> Life in the Spirit is a blessed life. Pentecostals may differ from many other Christians precisely in a more comprehensive application of salvation blessings to all of life, that is, to every area of life.<sup>18</sup> For us salvation is not merely eternal or spiritual but also temporal and physical, emotional, financial, and so on and so on. Pentecostals often argue the atonement itself suggests salvation is holistic in nature.<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, Pentecostal theologian Amos Yong describes salvation in terms of “multi-dimensionality”.<sup>20</sup>

Protestantism may be sometimes more pessimistic and Pentecostalism at times may be more optimistic. But is Protestantism “overly” pessimistic or Pentecostalism “overly” optimistic? When Protestantism relies almost exclusively on certain aspects of concepts such as a theology of the cross, namely, that God is hidden

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. “Predestination Calmly Considered”, *The Complete Works of John Wesley* (The Wesleyan Heritage Collection; Ages Software, Inc. Rio, WI: 2002), 10-220-76 and Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *Foundations of Wesleyan-Arminian Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1967).

<sup>16</sup> An excellent example of a contemporary Pentecostal appropriation of Wesley’s upbeat outlook is Winfield H. Bevins’ *Rediscovering John Wesley* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway, 2004). I am also deeply grateful for Winfield’s encouragement regarding an earlier draft of this particular writing.

<sup>17</sup> William Simmons, “Galatians”, *The Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament: An International Commentary for Spirit-Filled Christians*, ed. French L. Arrington & Roger Stronstad (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 992-93.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. French L. Arrington, *Christian Doctrine: A Pentecostal Perspective: Vol. Two* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway, 1993): 160.

<sup>19</sup> E.g., John Christopher Thomas, “Healing in the Atonement: A Johannine Perspective”, *JPT* 14-1 (October 2005): 23-39.

<sup>20</sup> Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 91-98.

unless known in suffering, even to the extent that present practical benefits of the Lord's love and compassionate concern for us are all but obscured, then the answer may be yes. The more biblical position is that God is uniquely made known in the entire Incarnational event (John 1:14, 18; 14:5-14),<sup>21</sup> including but not exclusively in the cross. Consequently, God is made known to believers not only in trouble but in triumph over trouble. Therefore, Jesus said, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33 NIV). As to the latter question of whether Pentecostalism is "overly optimistic", I turn to it now.

### *Is Pentecostalism Overly Optimistic?*

Our discussion hinges on much more than whether we have an upbeat outlook on life or not. What is at stake is our model of spirituality as it relates to our method of theology. Macarius, or Pseudo-Macarius (approx. late 4<sup>th</sup> century A. D.), lived and wrote not only before magisterial Protestantism began but even before catholic became Catholic or orthodox became Orthodox, and exemplifies a decidedly Pentecostal perspective. Not surprisingly, his "optimistic" view of human nature and divine grace is also clearly stated.<sup>22</sup>

### **Paradigmatic Pentecostalism**

Macarius' prominence near the springs of Pentecostal-like streams of spirituality suggests he may be in many ways a helpful model for Pentecostals today. Patristic scholar and Orthodox theologian Kallistos Ware points out Macarius' charismatic connections and Pentecostal perspective.<sup>23</sup> While we should not overly identify Macarius with modern Pentecostals or Charismatics the similarities of

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<sup>21</sup> Benny C. Aker, "John", *The Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament: An International Commentary for Spirit-Filled Christians*, ed. French L. Arrington & Roger Stronstad (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 13-14 and 83-85.

<sup>22</sup> *Pseudo-Macarius: The Fifty Homilies and the Great Letter* in *The Classics of Western Spirituality*, trans. and ed. George A. Maloney, S. J. (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), H 4:53-54; cf. 274, fn. 14. I use "Macarius" for "Pseudo-Macarius", a modern designation distinguishing him from Macarius of Egypt.

<sup>23</sup> Kallistos Ware, "Preface" of *Pseudo-Macarius*, xi-xviii (p xii, xviii).

spiritualities are significant.<sup>24</sup> Ware seems intent on establishing Macarius' sense of balance. He says Macarius writes with "warmth of feeling, an affectivity, and enthusiasm" a message of "hope, light, and glory" but is at the same time "devoid of *facile optimism*". Macarius' "enthusiasm" is "rooted in the realism and austerity of the desert".<sup>25</sup> Again, Ware insists that

For all their warm enthusiasm, the Macarian Homilies are not an unbalanced work. While Pentecostal, they are also Christ-centered. While primarily concerned with inner awareness of God's presence in the heart, they are also outward looking.<sup>26</sup>

He goes on to note Macarius' balance on grace and works and divine sovereignty and human liberty.

Kallistos Ware succinctly summarizes the main outlines of Macarius' teaching on heart-centered spirituality under three simple headings. First, there comes a stage in which initially the heart is under the dominion of evil. Second, a stage of spiritual struggle between grace and sin simultaneously indwelling the heart occurs. Third, a stage when sin is cast out from the heart by the Holy Spirit in cooperation with the human will can be experienced. This third rather strong point is carefully nuanced. The "basic progression envisioned by Macarius", according to Ware, is "from a heart possessed by evil, to a heart indwelt by sin and grace, and then ultimately to a heart that belongs to God alone."<sup>27</sup> Obviously Macarius stressed the heart, or affective center, of spirituality. He also emphasized the entire human person of spirit, soul, and body as one whole being in full relation with God. Furthermore, for Macarius eschatology brings together the present journey in glory and the eternal destiny to glory in a process-goal orientation for

<sup>24</sup> Laurence W. Wood argues that contemporary "Pentecostalism has its theological roots in Fletcher and in Wesley himself, and beyond Wesley to Pietism and to the Early Church Fathers", specifically naming Macarius. See "An Appreciative Reply to Donald Dayton's 'Review Essay'" in *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 27-1 (Spring 2005): 163-72 (172 and 170).

<sup>25</sup> Ware, "Preface" of *Pseudo-Macarius*, xi (italics added). Here "enthusiasm" is a technical term for emphasis on intense spiritual experience and its accompanying elements, lit., a being filled with God.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, xv-xvi, xiii. In line with Kärkkäinen's assertion (above) that Luther has been at least to some extent misunderstood, D. H. Tripp says that for Luther "Prayer is always set in the combat of this world; yet it realizes more of God's will for our perfection than Luther is usually credited with admitting." "Luther", *The Study of Spirituality*, 343-46 (345).

Christian life and faith including transformation and resurrection. Ware is sure that Macarius' stress on affective experience along with its attendant holistic anthropology and their integration with eschatology has much to offer Christians today.<sup>28</sup>

Jesuit authority on eastern Christian spirituality George Maloney indicates that in addition to influencing a wide range of ecumenical figures and faith movements, Macarius and his writings inspired Pietism and the Wesleys and have affinity with the contemporary Pentecostal and Charismatic movements.<sup>29</sup> The "preponderant accent" in Macarian doctrine is on spiritual combat and interior spiritual life with special stress on "the personal and intimate experience of fire and baptism in the Holy Spirit" that effects "mystical oneness with the indwelling Jesus Christ."<sup>30</sup> In his "spirituality of the heart", baptism in the Holy Spirit was an especially strong emphasis for Macarius.<sup>31</sup> These very values are also vital in today's Pentecostalism. With Ware, Maloney also describes Macarius in terms of balance. He says he shows "a balance of asceticism, mysticism, and theology" aimed at presenting "a radical asceticism and mysticism based on the Old and New Testaments" with emphasis on "individual subjectivity" or "spiritual interior experiences."<sup>32</sup> To Maloney, "Macarius is one of the most articulate and balanced of witnesses" in the Syrian monastic tradition.<sup>33</sup> Maloney goes farther. He argues that Macarius can be of benefit to modern readers precisely because he can bring balance to Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions.

One great source of aid to modern readers is his accent on interior discipline and the control of the thoughts and passionate desires of the individual. With his

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<sup>28</sup> See Ware, "Preface" of *Pseudo-Macarius*, p xiii-xiv.

<sup>29</sup> "Introduction" of *Pseudo-Macarius*, p 1-33 (25-27).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 12. An important Macarian emphasis for Pentecostalism today involves his explanation of the purpose for pursuing spiritual experience: spiritual and moral transformation. Religious experience is not an end in itself but a means to an end, namely, communion and union with God (e.g., H. 3:3; H 4:15). Cf. Tony Richie, "Transposition and Tongues: Pentecostalizing an Important Insight of C. S. Lewis", *JPT* 13-1 (October 2004): 117-37 (129-31) and Richie, "Awe-full Encounters: A Pentecostal Conversation with C. S. Lewis Concerning Spiritual Experience", *JPT* 14-1 (October 2005): 99-122 (108-21).

<sup>31</sup> See "Introduction", *Pseudo-Macarius*, 3-4, 19.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.



stress on humility and love, Macarius can call charismatic Christians away from objectivizing the gifts of the Spirit as a source of personal power, tools that could easily lead them on a vanity trip. Others who fear emotionalism within the charismatic renewal will find in Macarius an excellent balance in teaching about the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the need to surrender to the Spirit's indwelling presence in communicating the mind of the Father through the Son.<sup>34</sup>

Indeed an implication is that Macarius models for modern Pentecostals how spirituality and theology ought to appear in the context of charismatic Christianity. And, to relate Macarius to Moltmann on the theology of the cross, while Jesus Christ is central and his death on the cross is crucial, his stress is on what Jesus "is now doing for us and with us by his gloriously risen life within us."<sup>35</sup> Why is Catholic George Maloney so certain that Evangelical and Pentecostal Protestants will "feel at home with" Macarius? The answer is because of his "scriptural teachings and the stress on the openness to the Holy Spirit and the personal experience of God's grace working in their lives."<sup>36</sup> Inherent in Macarian doctrine is a necessary balance of the Holy Spirit's activity in the biblical and experiential realms of reality which Pentecostals today should certainly seek to exemplify.

### Possibilities in the Pentecostal Paradigm

Taking Macarius as something of a patristic paradigm of Pentecostal theology and spirituality leads to several enlightening insights.<sup>37</sup> Before listing some of these, let us note that the plausibility of a well-balanced Pentecostal religiosity provokes development of a symmetrical spirituality that welds well with sound doctrine. Pentecostalism seems inherently extreme only to those who have stifled experiential spirituality so long any expression of it seems so. Yet Pentecostals

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-20.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>37</sup> I am not advancing Macarius as an uncritical model. For example, on the one hand, Macarius clearly advocates persevering prayer for reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Since repentance, faith, and holy desire are also prerequisites, dynamic subsequence is obviously assumed (*Pseudo-Macarius*, H. 4:8, 26; H. 19:1-9). On the other hand, Macarius assumes a loose monastic setting and structure (*Ibid.*, H. 3:1; cf. 273, fn. 11, 12) foreign to most contemporary classical Pentecostals sharing Luther's non-monastic tradition. Overall, Macarius is admirably well-suited as a source of wisdom on the ways of the Spirit.

have had rampant extremism in our ranks. We owe it to ourselves and our peers to establish solid parameters of spiritual safety. Now, toward that end, first, the reality of the damaging, debilitating effects of sin in all human individuals and institutions should be honestly acknowledged. Pentecostals should never deny or downplay the horrible effects of sin upon ourselves and our world. Second, the intensity of ongoing battles against evil in all its forms even after conversion should be humbly accepted. Pentecostalism should never pretend to offer an easy escape but rather a call to arms. Third, the possibility of real, full victory over sin and all evil by the gracious power of the Holy Spirit should be happily embraced. If Pentecostal faith is not an automatic panacea, neither is it an artificial placebo; our spiritual walk should bear abundant witness to God's power to radically confront and conquer sin, to overcome evil, in our lives now and forever.

The preceding paragraph does not paint an overly optimistic portrait. The outlook is, however, essentially optimistic. The negativity and difficulty of life are not denied. Yet the keynote is upbeat. The darkness cannot extinguish or overcome the light (John 1:5). Not coincidentally Paul closes one of his most sustained statements on life in the Holy Spirit by sounding a note of irrepressible triumph in the face of suffering: "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Rom 8:37 NIV). True enough, Paul places victory in the context of struggle. But the accent is clearly on an overcoming life. As Pentecostal patristic scholar Stanley Burgess observes, Macarius is characterized by "a daily anticipation of the miraculous" and "a dependence on divine gifts of grace to overcome the demonic". With "a deep awareness of the effects of sin" he stresses a "life of prayer and an ascetic lifestyle that reaches towards an extremely high ideal of perfection." Furthermore, while the ascetic goal is "progress in grace" always "it is the Spirit of God who is the essential maker of that progress."<sup>38</sup> Most Pentecostals would probably say a hearty "Amen!"

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<sup>38</sup> Stanley M. Burgess, *The Holy Spirit: Eastern Christian Traditions* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1989), 144.

Macarius provides Pentecostals with a model of theological spirituality<sup>39</sup> in which affective experience includes dispositions, emotions, and actions. He also provides a model of anthropology in which the whole person engages and is engaged by God, spiritually and physically as it were. Furthermore, Macarius provides a model in which the present struggles and battles of life are infused by and fused with the joy and victory of the eschaton. Present-future dimensions of life in the Spirit overlap and interact.<sup>40</sup> The biblical Christological and pneumatological soteriology of Macarius models a method of theology and spirituality that accounts for and encounters the depths of sin—with all its suffering and sorrow—but affirms and accents the heights of salvation—with all its full and final victory now and forever.<sup>41</sup> The Spirit is changing believers from glory to glory until glory (2 Co 3:17-18). Pentecost makes a distinctive difference. As Moltmann himself observes, “A true theology of the cross is also a theology of Pentecost, and a Christian theology of Pentecost is a theology of the cross.”<sup>42</sup> Pentecost is what happens when the cross and the resurrection are climactically connected with the ascension and the outpouring of transcendent glory made possible by that series is dramatically imparted to believers (Acts 2:33). Pentecost takes the theology of the cross and the dialectic of the resurrection and makes both present positive realities experienced optimistically, if we will, in love and power. Pentecost is the love and power of God lived out in this world through overcoming the assaults of

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<sup>39</sup> Cf. Simon Chan’s excellent *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downer’s Grove: IVP, 1998). For me “theological spirituality” emphasizes a theologically informed spirituality. I affirm an understanding of a theologian as “a person of prayer, who speaks about the vision of God on the basis of his own immediate experience.” See “St Symeon the New Theologian: Introductory Note”, *The Philokalia: The Complete Text* vol. IV (compiled by St Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St Makarios of Corinth; trans. and ed. by G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard, and Kallistos Ware. London: Faber and Faber, 1995), 11-15 (12-13).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. John Christopher Thomas, “Max Turner’s *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts: Then and Now* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1996): An Appreciation and Critique”, *JPT* 12 (1998), 3-22 (17). Wilson says that “For most Christians the present determines the future” but “for most pentecostals the future determines the present”, “Eschatology”, *NIDPCM*, 601. In a subtle sense both views are not incompatible.

<sup>41</sup> Similarities of Macarian Pentecostalism and classical Pentecostalism are readily apparent in contemporary expressions. E.g., Land, Pentecostal Spirituality.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Jürgen Moltmann, “Pentecost and the Theology of Life”, *Pentecostal Movements as an Ecumenical Challenge*, eds. Moltmann and Karl-Josef Kuschel, *Concilium* 1996/3 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 123-34 (127).

evil by faith in God's grace and goodness. No false choice is forced between holiness or power, love or joy; both are made ours in Christ by his Spirit today and always.

Perhaps most importantly for the present discussion, the Pentecostalism of Macarius heavily accents the spiritual combat that characterizes this present life without ceasing to highlight the possibility and reality of present and permanent victory.<sup>43</sup> Ever increasing personal experience of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in hearts made alive and set afire by the indwelling and infilling of the Holy Spirit empowers believers to progressively participate in God's victory by sharing in God's glory. Sin is the enemy and salvation is the victory. Salvation is much more than forgiveness of guilt or reception of eternal life. In other words, salvation is much more than preparation for the afterlife; it is also advance participation in the afterlife. Salvation is entirely attributable to God's grace. In addition to being undeserved favorable divine disposition toward sinners, God's grace is also divine power working in and through those who yield and act in faith. Optimism in the Pentecostal model is not naïve self-assurance but knowing confidence in God. Pentecostal optimism is not a denial of evil but an embrace of grace. The war is all too real but still the evil is overcome with the good (cf. Rom 12:21).

Perhaps the attitude of many Pentecostals toward pessimism or optimism, or in more traditional Pentecostal terminology, toward a defeated life or a victorious, overcoming life, may be best summed up in Macarius' own words:

For just as on the racetrack the chariot that takes the lead becomes an obstacle, pressing and checking and preventing others from stretching out and reaching the goal first, so do the thoughts of the soul and of sin run the race in man. If the thought of sin gets the upper hand from the start, it becomes an obstacle, checking and hindering the soul from approaching God to carry off the victory against sin.

But where God truly mounts and guides the soul, he always obtains the victory, skillfully directing and leading with expertise the chariot of the soul to a heavenly mind forever. God does not wage war against wickedness, but since he possesses all power and authority of himself, he brings about victory by himself.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Pentecostals believe human life occurs "in the context of continual warfare between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan." See C. H. Kraft, "Spiritual Warfare: A Neocharismatic Perspective", *NIDPCM*, 1091-96 (1091).

<sup>44</sup> *Pseudo-Macarius*, H 1:9. Macarius is drawing on Ezek. 1:4-2:1. Similarly, Pentecostals often quote Jesus' command for Satan to get behind him, that is, out of the way of progress (Matt. 16:23).

For those who place faith in Christ divine glory and victory do not occur only in some vague future dimension. One who abundantly experiences inwardly the light and life of God through the Holy Spirit can “already live the eternal life”.<sup>45</sup> If we allow sin to rule our lives, it will ruin us. If we put God in charge, there is no limit to what the Lord can and will do in us. As the Lord Jesus said, everything is possible to those that believe (Mk 9:23). Or again, nothing is impossible for us because nothing is impossible for God (Matt. 17:20; Lu. 1:37). Now that is optimism! Is it “overly” optimistic? This Pentecostal does not think so.

### *Conclusion*

I have admittedly gone beyond Professor Moltmann’s comment about Pentecostalism as “an American success story” in getting at the question of a model for Pentecostal theological spirituality. I am also obviously extending Macarius’ insights beyond the direct struggle against sin in pursuit of personal holiness. Moltmann and Macarius, however, are building on models of spirituality that affect our methods of doing theology. Analyzing their approaches helps us identify and develop our own models and methods. Along those lines a few observations are in order. First of all, a strong Protestant theology of the cross and a vibrant Pentecostal spirituality are not mutually exclusive. That the wisdom, love, and power of God chose to confront and conquer sin through the incarnation-cross-resurrection-ascension-Pentecost series of events and experiences certainly suggest the importance of keeping derivative theological concepts together too. Reducing theology or spirituality to one or two elements is risky. That is true regardless of which few we might choose to use.<sup>46</sup> Secondly, Pentecostalism should not limit its resources to Protestantism in general or magisterial Protestantism in particular. Sixteen centuries of pre-Luther Christianity are not to be lightly ignored; for that matter, neither are five centuries nearly of post-Luther Christianity. We should boldly appropriate proper values wherever they are

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, H. 1:12.

<sup>46</sup> Charismatic theologian Larry Hart “was appalled to discover how little had been said by the theologians about the significance of Pentecost.” See “Spirit Baptism: A Dimensional Charismatic Perspective”, in *Perspectives on Spirit Baptism: Five Views*, ed. Chad Owen Brand (Nashville: Broadman, 2004), 105-80 (116).

found.<sup>47</sup> We should also, of course, boldly identify improper values wherever they are found.<sup>48</sup> Thirdly, a mature, moderate Pentecostalism is nonetheless necessarily a positive, optimistic version of Christian faith. Today is not a time to tone down our values regarding the Christian life as predominately a life of victory over the vilifying forces of sin—spiritual or physical, individual or social. Though the ultimate experience of permanent victory over sin and concomitant suffering and sickness is in God’s future eschatological consummation, the fact that the future begins today also means real and lasting power to prevail in the present tense.<sup>49</sup>

Every Pentecostal has not always got it all right. Some have succumbed to triumphalism. Some have espoused an over-realized eschatology or extreme views on physical healing or material prosperity.<sup>50</sup> Some have interpreted the movement’s growth or personal testimonies through rags-to-riches or failure-success hermeneutical paradigms. None of this diminishes the validity of optimistic dimensions of truth resident in each claim. Even if others allow political-economical-cultural dynamics to tarnish their perspective of Pentecostals, or presumptuously suppose that Pentecostals are a bit off balance anyway, the essential accuracy of Pentecostal optimism can be biblically, theologically, historically, and experientially affirmed. Yes, Pentecostals are challenged to self-evaluation and self-improvement.

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<sup>47</sup> As Simon Chan so convincingly contends, the continued energy and vitality of today’s Pentecostalism requires “a broader vision of themselves as part of the larger Christian spiritual tradition without thereby repudiating their evangelical heritage”. See Chan’s “The Renewal of Pentecostalism: A Response to John Carpenter”, *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 7:2 (July 2004), 315-25 (315).

<sup>48</sup> Among other things, Brand’s *Perspectives on Spirit Baptism* certainly shows how much across-the-traditions diversity really is present in the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement in spite of its amazing overall unity.

<sup>49</sup> Classical Pentecostals have correctly argued that a human being’s potential in the state of grace is characterized by victory over the old nature and authority in Christ’s Kingdom. E.g., Guy Duffield and N. M. Van Cleave, *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology* (Los Angeles: L.I.F.E. Bible College, 1983, 1987), 143-44.

<sup>50</sup> See James Philemon Bowers’, *You Can Have What You Say: A Pastoral Response to the Prosperity Gospel*, Pentecostal Leadership Series (Cleveland, TN: Center for Pentecostal Leadership & Care, 2004). Balance on prosperity does not preclude appropriate biblical superabundance beyond the realm of the “spiritual”. Cf. Thomas on John 10:10 in “Healing in the Atonement”: *JPT*, 34. Though Thomas focuses on physical healing, the holistic view he advocates suggests we need not limit superabundant life in Christ.

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Yes, in that process there is an important place for self-definition and self-defense. But a place for optimism in the Pentecostal tradition remains strong. Is Pentecostalism just another American success story? No. Is it, however, really, at its heart, still a success story? Yes! And so it should be.



## Biographical sketches of some Keswick leaders

**Steven Barabas, Th.D.,** was the author of *So Great Salvation. The History and Message of the Keswick Convention.*

### *T.D. Harford-Battersby*

The man primarily responsible for the founding of the Keswick Convention was T.D. Harford-Battersby. He was brought up an Evangelical in the Church of England, but while a student at Oxford he came under the spell of John Henry Newman, and adopted his Tractarian views. Following his graduation from the university he became a curate at Gosport. In two years he exchanged his High-Church views for the Broad-Churchmanship of the Rev. Frederick Myers, whose curate he became at Keswick in 1849, and whom he succeeded as rector of the parish when Mr. Myers died in 1852.

At Keswick he returned to the Evangelical fold, and became a leader of the Evangelicals in his diocese. But although he strove faithfully and diligently to live the Christ-life and to discharge his pastoral duties, he felt that there was something seriously lacking in his life, and was deeply conscious of the need of something fuller in his own life than he had yet experienced.

In the summer of 1874 he was on holiday with his family at Silloth, where the Rev. William Haslam was holding a mission. Haslam suggested that he attended the approaching Convention at Oxford, which he did. At first he thought the teaching one-sided and exaggerated, but on the fourth day, while listening to Evan Hopkins speak on the difference between seeking and resting faith, he received a blessing which not only changed his opinions but transformed his whole life. Two days later he gave the following testimony: "It was when I heard a dear brother clergyman speak of the faith of the nobleman whose son was healed, that the truth flashed upon my mind, and afterward God enabled me to trust and make a full surrender. It is a difficult thing to speak of my own experience, and very distasteful, yet perhaps for this very reason it may be right for one to do so, and to acknowledge the blessing I have received."<sup>1</sup>

Shortly afterwards, at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Union of the Diocese of Carlisle, where strong opposition was offered to the "Holiness Teach-

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<sup>1</sup> *Account of the Union Meeting for the Promotion of Scriptural Holiness, held at Oxford, August 29 to September 7, 1874*, p. 174.



ing,” as it was called, a paper by him telling of his change and his blessing was read, and he thus publicly committed himself to the new teaching.

The following year, in June 1875, the first Keswick Convention was held, in a tent in the Vicarage grounds. The defection of Mr. Pearsall Smith almost wrecked the whole movement, but the following year it was decided to hold another Convention; and every year since, except for some war years, similar gatherings have been held at Keswick.

For eight years (1875-82) Canon Harford-Battersby presided over the Convention as Chairman. In the summer of 1883 he died.

### *Evan H. Hopkins*

Evan Hopkins was for years the acknowledged leader of the Keswick teaching. He was the theologian of the movement. He had very unusual gifts both as a writer and a speaker. More than any other man, he kept the movement from being drawn into extravagance or excitement, and kept in on an even keel. For many years he was the editor of the recognized Keswick organs, *The Christian's Pathway of Power* and its successor, *The Life of Faith*. It is said that his book, *The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life*, did more than anything else to explain the movement to those of the Evangelical School in the Church of England, who were at first inclined to look askance at it.

He was born in 1837 in South America, where his father, an Englishman, was a Civil Engineer. He was educated as a Mining Engineer, and for some years worked at his profession, gaining a considerable reputation in it. In 1863, after he was brought to Christ by means of a coastguardsman, he entered the Divinity School in King's College, London, and after his graduation was ordained in the Church of England.

In 1873 he was invited to an informal meeting in Curzon Chapel, where, after listening to Robert Pearsall Smith on the subject of Holiness, he entered into a new experience of surrender and faith. What happened to him there may best be narrated in the words of his wife:

“How well I recall his coming home, deeply moved by what he had heard and experienced! He told me that he was like one looking out on a land wide and beautiful, flowing with milk and honey. It was to be possessed. *It was his*. As he described it all, I felt that he had received an overflowing blessing, far beyond anything that I knew; and it seemed as if a gulf had come between us. We sat up late that evening, talking, with our Bibles before us. O, I was hungry. At last, quite simply, but very really, I too took God at His word, and accepted Christ as my *indwelling Lord and life*, and believed that He did enthrone Himself in my heart.

“The text that had brought him such blessing was 2 Corinthians ix 8; and I remember how he printed it clearly on a card, keeping it constantly before him as he feasted on the facts it revealed. Now it would be, *GOD IS ABLE*, that possessed his soul in new power. Then it would be, *To make ALL grace abound toward YOU*; and ALL meant ALL in a fuller sense than it had previously done. Next it was, *That ye ALWAYS* – the perpetual present that is to be recognized – *having ALL sufficiency* – for there is no lack, no limit, no cessation of the abundant supply – *in ALL things* – heart-needs, trials, disadvantageous circumstances, Christian service – *may abound unto EVERY good work*. Christ had, indeed, become to him the ‘Fountain within’ springing up. It was not merely that his Lord would help him, It was that He would do *all*, and would live in him His own life – the only holy life possible to us, as he would often say.”<sup>2</sup>

In the meetings for consecration that were held, during 1873 and 1874, in London, throughout provincial England, and across the Channel on the continent of Europe, Mr. Hopkins was a welcome speaker. He took a helpful part in the famous Conferences at Broadlands, and Oxford, in 1874, and at Brighton, in 1875. In fact, it was an address given by him at the Oxford Convention that was the means of winning T.D. Harford-Battersby over to the Higher Life movement. He spoke at the first Keswick Convention, and appeared at Keswick as a leader for thirty-nine years without a break. No one was regarded with greater respect than he.

Mr. Hopkins served two long pastorates, the first for twenty-three years, from 1870 until 1893, at Holy Trinity Church, Richmond, Surrey; the second one for thirteen years, from 1893 to 1906, at St. Luke’s Church, Redcliffe Square, South Kensington, London. The remainder of his life, from 1906 to his death in 1918, he devoted to Convention work. When he died, the Convention lost one who was perhaps its most-used instrument and its best-loved leader.

For those who may wonder how the great blessing that Mr. Hopkins received at Curzon Chapel in 1873 lasted through the years, the following word of testimony which he began an address at Keswick in 1913 may prove illuminating:

“I think I ought to be the most thankful man in this tent, because I am privileged to testify that the blessing lasts. It has lasted with me forty years. I shall never forget that sacred spot, where the first consecration meeting was held, in London in May, 1873. I had been converted thirteen years, brought to the Lord through a coastguardsman, and I had learned the need of my own heart during those years. At the time that I refer to I was immensely stirred to seek this blessing. We had

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<sup>2</sup> A. Smellie, *Evan Henry Hopkins – A Memoir*, p. 54.

heard about it, and there in Curzon Chapel, Mayfair, under the gallery, sixteen well-known Christian people met together ... This was just the beginning of the movement, and I ought to be one of the most thankful men in this tent, because of God's gracious keeping power for forty years. I want to bear testimony to that fact, and give Him all the glory. There have been many failures. I am not glorying in the self, but what was revealed to me that day –the all-sufficiency of Christ – is as precious to my soul as it ever was.<sup>3</sup>

### *Charles A. Fox*

Among the eminent men in the early days of Keswick, Charles A. Fox held a high place. He was one of the few who could really be called orators. And yet, after graduating from Cambridge, his Bishop earnestly tried to dissuade him from Holy Orders because of a bad stammer. He persisted, however, and triumphed over his handicap marvellously, although all through life the liability to stammer stood on the very edge of his public speaking.

He began work in Devonshire, and went afterwards to Eaton Chapel, London, where he exercised a ministry of rare influence.

He was not present at the Oxford Conference, but was at Brighton –as a listener, mainly. T.D. Harford-Battersby and H.F. Bowker were so impressed by him at Brighton that they came to him at the close of the meeting and said that they proposed to hold a similar gathering at Keswick that summer, and asked him to come. His poor health prevented him from accepting their offer, and it was not until 1879 that he was present at Keswick for the first time. Mr. Fox was, in fact, dogged by ill-health all his life; for ten years after graduating from the university he had been unable to engage in public ministry on this account. When he did come forth from this enforced seclusion, it was with a deep knowledge of God.

It is said that Mr. Fox's prayers at Keswick made, perhaps, an even greater impression on those who attended, than did his addresses. He had a way of lifting the hearts of the whole company up into the very presence of the unseen God. Someone said of him that he had a face as if he had looked into the face of God.

In 1899 he was at Keswick for the last time. The next year he sent his final greetings to the Convention, "In thankful memory of five and twenty years' unbroken fellowship with beloved brethren at Kewswick Convention." He died soon after.

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<sup>3</sup> *The Keswick Week*, 1913, p. 122.

*George H.C. Macgregor*

After a distinguished career at the University of Edinburgh and at the New College, Edinburgh, George H.C. Macgregor was called to the East Presbyterian Church, in Aberdeen, Scotland, in 1888. He remained there until 1894, when he left for the Trinity Presbyterian Church, Notting Hill, London. His ministry at both churches was notable.

He went to Keswick for the first time in the summer of 1889, at the close of the first year of his ministry in Aberdeen. He had been told by some fellow-ministers of the quickening and joy they had found in the gatherings at Keswick, and he resolved to begin his first summer vacation there. He was a theologian – and he did not forget that he was a Scottish theologian. He came as a matter of purely intellectual interest. He was surprised to find that sanctification was presented not so much theologically as practically. At first he felt angry, as a Scotsman, at being told anything new in theology by Englishmen! Before long, however, he was brought to a crisis. He faced the question, “Shall I yield, shall I confess, shall I acknowledge, that I have been without the blessing?” By the end of the week he had definitely committed himself to God to be filled with the Holy Spirit for his service. That Sunday evening he wrote to his sister:

“The Convention is now over, and tomorrow we go back to the world. To say I have enjoyed it is to say nothing. To call it heaven may seem hyperbole, but it is perhaps the best and shortest way of speaking of it. I fear I shall never be able to speak of it. The joy is unspeakable and full of the glory. I have learned innumerable lessons, principally these: my own sinfulness and shortcoming. I have been searched through and through, and bared and exposed and scorched by God’s searching Spirit. And then I have learned the unsearchableness of Christ. How Christ is magnified here, you can have scarcely any idea. I got such a view for the goodness of God today that it made me weep. I was completely broken down, and could not control myself, but had a fit of weeping. And I have learned the absolute necessity of obedience. Given obedience and faith, nothing is impossible. I have committed myself into God’s hands and He has taken me, and life can never be the same again. It must be infinitely brighter than ever.”<sup>4</sup>

He spoke at Keswick for the first time in 1892, but thereafter took an active part in the Convention each year until he died eight years later, at the early age of thirty-six.

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<sup>4</sup> D.C. Macgregor, *George H.C. Macgregor, M.A., A Biography* (New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1900), pp. 109, 110.

In 1893, with Hubert Brooke and Charles Inwood, he went to Canada as Keswick missionaries. Twice – in 1897 and 1898 – he went to Northfield to speak at the Moody Conference there.

Macgregor's life and ministry was very short, but few men have left a more fragrant memory at Keswick than he. His addresses caught the year of the Convention as few have done. He had the great gift of making as clear as crystal everything he said and wrote. His books are still read by those interested in a simple and scriptural presentation of the subject of holiness.

### *J. Elder Cumming*

J. Elder Cumming was converted by a sermon of his own when he was a student of Divinity at Glasgow University. Part of a student's work was to write out a popular sermon. He had come to the application, when suddenly the question came to him, Have *you* done what you are asking others to do? He laid down his pen, knelt by his desk, and there and then gave himself to Christ.

He had been born in 1830 – the son of a ship's captain – and until he went to Glasgow was schooled in the Isle of Man. He was in his second year of study of Theology when he found Christ.

His first charge was the East Presbyterian Church in Perth, where he served for six years. He then removed to Newington Parish in Edinburgh, where he gave twelve years of his life. In 1871 he went to Sandyford Presbyterian Church in Glasgow, and there the rest of his ministry was spent. While he was at the Sandyford Church a great shadow fell upon him – the loss of his wife, a bright, energetic woman who died after a few hours' illness. He went to various Conventions in search of consolation. At the Mildmay Conference a lady remarked to him that Keswick was the best of all Conventions. He went in 1882. Twice he was accosted on the street by ladies he knew who expressed surprise at finding him at Keswick. Speaking, years later, of his experience there, he said:

"I cannot tell you what pain and misery I experienced during the first three days – first, something like indignation; secondly, something very like perplexity, for my theological chart seemed to have certain things laid clearly down, and I did not see how other things could be put in without disarranging the former. I cannot tell how the arrow of God's Word was going home. I passed a very miserable time during the first days of that week. Then the way the Lord dealt with me was this. He told me, while on my knees in my solitude, of this, and this, and this. In perfect simplicity and innocence I said, 'Lord, these ar not sins.' The answer that came by His Spirit was, 'Whatever they are, are they worthy of a son of God?' And at once I had to say, 'NO!' 'Are you willing to put them away?' 'Yes, Lord.' I should have to go home to settle some of them. I took pencil and paper, and

marked everything down and said, 'Now, Lord, I promise that by Thy grace I will.' It was all alone in the solitude of my room."<sup>5</sup>

He accepted the teaching of sanctification by faith. He went to Mr. Bowker, the Keswick Chairman, and told him that he was ready to organize meetings in Glasgow for the dissemination of this, to him, freshly discovered truth. A few weeks later the first Convention was held in Glasgow.

Dr. Elder Cumming became a speaker at Keswick in 1883, and he spoke from its platform for twenty-four years in succession. Failing health prevented his return after 1908, and he passed away in 1917.

He was sixty years of age when he began to write books. He wrote many, one of them, *Through the Eternal Spirit*, still being in print and still widely read.

His influence in Scotland was very considerable, and in his day he was regarded as one of the most able clergymen in his native land.

For many years the speakers at the annual Glasgow Conventions were, for the most part, his guests. In a testimony meeting at the close of one of the Conventions, his daughter, Miss Jenny Cumming, told the audience that she had been made to feel the reality of the fuller life taught there, not so much by what she had heard in the meetings as by observing the lives, lived in her own home, by those who were speakers on the platform.<sup>6</sup>

### *H.W. Webb-Peploe*

Prebendary Webb Peploe was born in 1837. His father was a Prebendary in Herefordshire, and his mother the accomplished authoress of *Naomi*, and other popular writings of the time.

He was educated at Marlborough and Cheltenham Colleges, and at Pembroke College, Cambridge. At Cambridge, while practising in the gymnasium, he injured his back so severely that he had to be in bed for some time. On the morning of an important track event, however, when his doctor called, he asked, "Doctor, may I get up and go and jump?" The doctor ironically said, "Yes"; but as soon as the doctor left Webb-Peploe went to the athletic field in a cab, and came off champion both in the high jump and the long run. As the price of his victory, he was obliged to return to bed again for some time longer.

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<sup>5</sup> *The Keswick Week*, 1895, pp. 125, 126.

<sup>6</sup> W.B. Sloan, *These Sixty Years*, p. 29.

Next year he won the swimming championship, but again at the expense of his health. Thus it came to pass that at the examination period he had scarcely attended lectures, and therefore could not attempt honours. He took his examinations lying flat on his back, but nevertheless headed the ordinary degree list, coming out ahead of some four hundred others.

His conversion was due, under God, to a tract given to him one day when he was on his way to the famous “Derby” horserace, at Epsom.

When he was ordained, in 1863, he was placed in sole charge of the church in his native place. Three years later he succeeded his father as vicar of King’s Pyon with Birley, where he laboured for the next ten years. In 1876 he went to St. Paul’s, Onslowsquare, London, where he worked for more than forty years. When he first went there, there were some people who said that the Church Missionary Society would get no more out of that church “now that a revivalist had come!” It was little foreseen that the contributions would be multiplied nearly tenfold. Eugene Stock says that Webb-Peploe was universally recognized as the leading Evangelical clergyman in London, and one of the first half-dozen in the whole country.<sup>7</sup>

Prebendary Webb-Peploe was a genuinely extempore orator. The addresses of his which appear in the annual Keswick Reports were always printed as he delivered them, and were never revised. His books consist mostly of unrevised addresses delivered by him. He was one of the finest orators in England, with a voice reminiscent of Gladstone’s in its resonance and compass.

He was not present at the Oxford Convention, but it was during the week of that Convention that he entered into an experience which changed his whole life. In one of his addresses he told how this happened.

“For many years I was a minister and a faithful preacher of the doctrine of justification, but I had no joy for every moment, no rest in the midst of trouble, no calm amid the burdens of this life; I was strained and overstrained until I felt that I was breaking down. I could believe the doctrine of justification, because I saw the facts in God’s Book; I believed that it was accomplished, because it was history; but when God said, ‘I can keep thee and bless thee every moment,’ it seemed too good to be true. Thus a minister goes on in his self-energized efforts, seeking calm and rest and strength, and the consequence is perpetual fret, perpetual wear down where there ought to be a bulding up, all because men do not believe God’s

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<sup>7</sup> Eugene Stock, *My Recollections*, p. 264.

word. Do not suppose that I despised the promised land. I wished for peace, for rest, for joy and calm.”<sup>8</sup>

“It may be helpful,” he continues, “to come to know how the Lord brought this blessing to me and showed me the life of privilege. Twenty-one years ago my wife and I went to the seaside. We were poor, and had several children. It was the year of the Oxford Convention; and on the day on which it opened I met Sir Arthur Blackwood, and after we had talked awhile he said, ‘Do you know about the Oxford Convention?’ I was a country clergyman then, and had not heard of it. He said, ‘People are coming together there to seek for a blessing, to pray for the life of rest.’ He looked me in the face and said, ‘Have you rest?’ I replied, ‘Yes, thank God.’ He said, ‘What do you understand by rest?’ ‘I mean that my sins are forgiven, that I am accepted in the Beloved, that God will somehow take care of me in this world, and receive me when I die.’ He said, ‘I thought you would say that; but do you know what it is to have perfect rest in the midst of duties and difficulties, to have a joy that never is broken at any moment of your life, to have a calm that is never interrupted, and to have a strength for every duty, with a sense of repose in the living God?’ I said, ‘No; I would to God I had; that is what I long for most.’ He said, ‘So do I. I will tell you what I will do. A friend is to send me every day an account of the Convention, and every morning we will go into the woods and read it. God can give us a blessing here as well as at Oxford.’

“Four days afterward my little child that was with us at the seashore was taken sick and died. I had to carry the little coffin in my arms all the way home, where I buried my little one with my own hands. I returned from the burial and said to myself, ‘Now you have lost your holiday, have come home in trouble, and you must speak to your people instead of letting your curate speak; you would better tell them about God and his love.’ I looked to see what lesson was assigned for the Sunday, and found it was the twelfth chapter of Second Corinthians. I read the ninth verse, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee,’ and thought, ‘There is the verse to speak on.’ I sat down to prepare my notes, but soon found myself murmuring in my tent against God for all he called upon me to bear. I flung down my pen, threw myself on my knees, and said to God, ‘It is not sufficient, it is not sufficient! Lord, let thy grace be sufficient. O Lord, do!’

“The day before I had left home my mother had given me a beautiful illuminated text, and I had asked the servant to hang it on the wall over my table, that I might find it there when I came back. As I OPENED MY EYES I WAS SAYING, ‘O

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<sup>8</sup> H.W. Webb-Peploe, *The Life of Privilege* (New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1896), p. 64.



God, let thy grace be sufficient for me,' and there on the wall I saw, 'MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE.' The word *is* was in bright green, *my* was in black, and *thee* in black. 'MY grace *is* sufficient for THEE.' I heard a voice that seemed to say to me, 'You fool, how *dare* you ask God to make what is! Get up and take, and you will find it true. When God says "*is*" it is for you to believe Him, and you will find it true at every moment.' That *is* turned my life; from that moment I could say, 'O God, whatever thou dost say in Thy Word I believe, and, please God, I will step out upon it.' The very farmers began to say, 'Mr. Peploe does not seem as fidgety as he used to be.' Men of business, your clerks will say, 'He is a changed man now.' You in the ministry who have two sermons a week to write, does it wear and tear you out? Two sermons a week were killing me then; now fifteen a week can be preached where God wills. I may be wearing out – I care not for that – it is not tearing out."<sup>9</sup>

The following year at the Brighton Convention he delivered three addresses, and in one of these referred to his own experience of entering into the rest of faith: "There was a watching, waiting and struggling to do right, yet I constantly found myself overcome and generally unable to realize anything like St. Paul's experience, 'Not I, but Christ liveth in me.' Was his an ideal picture, I asked, or is it possible for me to realize it? After a time, I saw that if I believed it would be mine. When we believe that what God Almighty says will be fulfilled in our hearts, the soul drops into the hands of the Lord Jesus, for Him to use for His own glory. I know that there are many cares which bring the minister low, and which in former days made it seem to me impossible to obey the calls to service. But when the truth came – 'Not I, but Christ that liveth in me' – the rest of faith was practically known in my ministerial life."<sup>10</sup>

When Canon Battersby and Robert Wilson found that Robert Pearsall Smith could not be at the first Keswick Convention, they turned to other speakers, Prebendary Webb-Peploe included. He had intended to go as a listener, but owing to the absence of the expected speakers, he had to take a large part in the ministry during the week. Indeed, he and another speaker shared the principal burden between them. After that, as long as he lived – he died in 1923 – he was one of the most active speakers in the work of the Keswick Convention, speaking again and again not only at Keswick, but all through Great Britain and the United States.

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<sup>9</sup> H.W. Webb-Peploe, *The Life of Privilege* (New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1896), pp. 67-9.

<sup>10</sup> J.B. Figgis, *Keswick from Within* (London, Marshall Bros., Ltd., 1914), pp. 40, 41.

About thirty years after the founding of Keswick, the Prebendary recalled the opposition the work was subjected to at the beginning, even from Evangelical clergy. “Surely,” he said, “*no well-instructed* Christian of our day, who heard the teaching which I have briefly depicted, would think of condemning it as opposed to God’s Truth, and yet it was only some twenty-eight, or twenty-nine, years ago that, when I had been asked to set forth ‘Keswick teaching’ before some fifty or sixty Evangelical clergy and I had heartily responded to the invitation, explaining from Romans vi-viii, from 1 Corinthians x. 13, and from 2 Corinthians xii. 9, guarded carefully by 1 John i. 8, 9, the blessed keeping power and purposes of the Lord Jesus Christ for the people – the chairman of the meeting (himself perhaps the very centre of Evangelical Churchmanship) rose as soon as I had finished my address, and said: ‘Heresy! Heresy! Damnable Heresy! I hold that it is for the glory of God that we should fall into sin, that He may get honour to Himself by drawing us out of it!’ Thank God! Further light was very soon given to the earnest, but misinformed, leaders of that last generation; and for the honour of our Lord and the good fame of the brethren, I may mention that each of the three great leaders, who most determinedly opposed the movement at first, afterwards invited me, as an exponent of Keswick teaching, to conduct missions, or to take special services in their parishes, and that, in each case, I was permitted to do what they asked, and to have these honoured fathers sitting humbly in their own parish churches, and listening earnestly, while I set forth ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ.’”<sup>11</sup>

The pre-eminent service of Prebendary Webb-Peploe to the movement lay in the fidelity with which he brought everything to the test of the Word of God. He handled his Greek Testament as familiarly as his English. He knew the Scriptures so well that some thought he could almost reproduce the sacred volume entire if it were lost. He confined himself to Scripture exposition more exclusively than any other speaker on the Keswick platform. No shade of meaning escaped his eye. His addresses almost constituted a class in New Testament exegesis.

On one occasion, when some perfectionists tried to capture the Convention, Prebendary Webb-Peploe was asked to answer them. He did so in an exposition of the Scripture teaching on Sin. It was most masterly. As he went on the dusk began to fall, and he offered to stop, but the great audience urged him on. There in the gathering darkness they sat, in a hush, as he poured forth the treasures of God’s Word. Never a breath of perfectionism was heard again. He was an Olympian and could, as Robert L. Stevenson puts it, have a pyramid!

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<sup>11</sup> C.F. Harford, *The Keswick Convention*, pp. 39, 40.

*Handley C.G. Moule*

Among the many leaders in the spiritual life who joined the Keswick group in the latter half of the eighties, was H.C.G. Moule, then Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge.

He was born in 1841, at Fordington, near Dorchester, where his father was Vicar. All of the seven boys in the family who grew up to maturity achieved distinction. At Cambridge University J.B. Lightfoot was his first College tutor and lecturer. Later Moule said of him, "No man ever loitered so late in the Great Court that he did not see Lightfoot's lamp burning in his study window; and the most regular worshipper in the morning chapel at seven o'clock always found Lightfoot there with him...His strong points were unfailing thoroughness of knowledge and unsurpassable clearness of exposition and instruction. Great was my sense of loss when, in 1861, he resigned his tutorship to become Hulsean Professor of Divinity."<sup>12</sup>

At College (Trinity) he won various Latin and Greek prizes, and in the Classical Tripos Examination his name appeared second in the First Class. The next year he took a First Class in his theological examination, and became a Fellow of Trinity.

For four years he was a Master at Marlborough, and then for five years he worked with his father, as his curate. In 1873 he returned to Cambridge to become first Junior, then Senior Dean. In 1880 he became the first Principal of Ridley Hall, a new theological College of the Evangelical School, the counterpart of which at Oxford was Wycliffe Hall, opened three years before. He was Principal of Ridley Hall for eighteen years, and then became Norrisian Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University, which post he left in 1901 to become Bishop of Durham. His immediate predecessors in the See of Durham were Lightfoot and Westcott, and it was universally thought that he was no unworthy successor of these great scholars. This position he held until his death in 1920.

The year before he died Bishop Moule, in an address delivered at Keswick, told the story of his regeneration and entrance into the Keswick movement in the following words:

"I first take you back just fifty-two years, to the time when I began to understand and possess some of the possessions which Keswick loves to show us the way to. In the year 1867, at twenty-five, my mother led me to the Lord Jesus Christ. I had

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<sup>12</sup> J.B. Harford and F.C. Macdonald, *Handley Carr Glyn Moule, Bishop of Durham. A Biography* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1922), PP. 18,19.

a good post as a form-master in a great public school. I was very well satisfied with life. To a certain extent, with all sorts of internal contradictions to the feeling, I was fairly satisfied with myself. And God in His great mercy kept me from what would be called wrong life, though not from a world of evil within.

“Then, one quiet day, I know not in the least how, or shall know in this life, there came on me conviction of sin, in its old-fashioned form, a sight of how richly I deserved the wrath of God and banishment from Him for ever, for I had kept Him out of my heart. With almost a fear in my brain I went to my mother. I will not dwell on her holy memory. Enough to say that she led me with God-given wisdom to the feet of Jesus and by spirit-sight I saw the Lamb upon the Cross of Calvary, and knew that He and only He stood between me and the second death.

“Then in due time I was ordained to the holy ministry – thank God, not before I had come to know Christ. And then I went on, at times with college duty, at times with parish duty; and in due time I was made Principal of a Theological Hall at Cambridge, with which I remained connected many years.

“I had been about four years there, living as the head of a religious institution, when I learned about certain possessions I had not possessed. I was on a visit with my family that autumn, 1884, at the house of a dearly loved relative in Scotland, near Linlithgow, a place where year after year the generous master and mistress had opened a great barn on their estate for what we may call a series of Keswick meetings. We, my family and I, were paying a visit to our friends, and the Convention was due to be held.

“Was I anxious to go? Not at all. I had been strongly prejudiced, much of my own fault, against the whole Keswick ideal. I thought it meant a doctrine of sinless perfection, which could only lead to an attitude in which the Christ of the atoning Cross seemed to cease to be necessary, and honestly I was afraid. But there was a great deal also of mixed motive, of jealousy and prejudice, in my mind.

“I wished to get away during the days of the Convention, but there was no opportunity to do this without breach of courtesy, and so I stayed; and, again as an act of courtesy, I went to the first meeting. It did not please me at all, and a severe conflict of thought and feeling followed upon it. Then there came the next night, and with some difficulty I made up my mind to go again.

“I still see the great barn, the thronging people, and myself sitting in the audience, by no means on the platform, listening to what might come, partly as the critic, but partly, I will admit, with a heart hungry for some gracious thing, if it was to be found. For I had begun to feel, after my years of converted life and ministerial work, guilty of discreditable failures in patience, and charity, and

humbleness, and I know not what. I knew that I was not satisfied, and I knew that I ought to find what would satisfy me; but I did not expect to find it there.

“Two addresses were given that evening, the first by the late Mr. William Sloan, of Glasgow, a noble specimen of the Scottish business man, out and out for God. He spoke on the first chapter of Haggai, in words which I do not think I shall ever forget, taking to pieces the Christian life which is not satisfied, and piercing into the reasons why it is not satisfied, all more or less reducible to our letting the self-life intrude itself into the work of God; the man feeling himself, after all, well-nigh as important in Christian work as his Master. Somehow or other that address, under the Spirit’s good guidance, pulled me to pieces with a second conviction of sin, the sin of the converted life, the sin of the professing Christian man.

“I may humbly say, thank God, that I was not a hypocrite. The Lord had showed me myself and Himself, in reality, as I have told you, long years before. But I had misread His promise, or read it so imperfectly that in deed and in truth I had a world of special sin to be convinced of that September night of 1884. And I remember, at the close of that address, feeling indescribably that it had been an even awful thing to go to that meeting. I was no longer the critic; the prejudices, the fears that there would be something, from the point of view of sacred orthodoxy (which *is* sacred), wrong and out of line, all vanished away. I knew that *this* was orthodox, the conviction of my sin.

“Then the second address was given. The speaker was one whom I afterwards claimed, and claim still, for our relation is the same, though he has gone above, as my beloved friend, Evan Hopkins, of blessed memory. He rose up, and delivered an address as characteristic as possible, luminous as the light, perfect in arrangement, simple in expression, but with all the power of spiritual conviction in it. It was one long ordered piling up of the promises of God to the soul that will do things toward Him – surrender itself into His hands, and trust Him for His mighty victory within. I will not – I must not – time flies – remind you what were the texts of the infallible Word which he piled up. It was as if there were two great weights in my balance. One was down heavily on the ground, loaded with the sins of my converted life and its grievous secret or open failures. Into the other balance the speaker now put promise after promise, aimed precisely at this, not for the unconverted man flying for refuge to the city where the guilty shall be safe under the protection of the high priest, but the promises to that same fugitive, now dwelling in the city of refuge, who is starving there, and wretched, and miserable, because of himself. And as these promises were recited, grace enabled me to take them as meant, not to take them as read, but to take them as meant; to realize that they were meant to act; that I was to step on them with both feet, and to see if they did not bear.

“And so, in the great mercy of God, before I left that barn meeting, two consciousnesses had come in upon me. One was that I was in the hands of an absolute Master, so grasping and fettering me that I should have no interests outside His, seek no gain, or praise, or whatever it was, except for Him; that I was an illustration of the words of the ancient moralist, Aristotle, describing his theory of human slavery: ‘The slave is but a part of his master, he exists but for his master, he has no interests of his own, and yet he is, as it were, a limb of his master, separate yet living with his life.’

“So I went out of that meeting, back to the hospitable house where we were staying. I recollect, as I walked up the stairs to my room for the night, the consciousness with which I knew, on the one hand, that I was the absolute bond-slave of a sovereign and irresponsible Master, on the other hand that I had found a Friend who would, so long and so much as I used Him, make me more than conqueror over the oldest temptation, over the most inveterate subtlety of the approach and invitation of evil, so as to teach even me how to walk and to please God. In the meeting of the next night I felt constrained to put pride into the pocket; to rise and say before all the people how the last night had been a great blessing to my soul.

“Then in due time I had to go back to my responsible work at Cambridge. I knew there was in front of me a very difficult, laborious, perplexing term, with grave problems regarding movements of Christian life in Cambridge. And I was naturally a restless, impatient, and somewhat nervous being. But I recollect two things about that term. First, that, by a power certainly not my own, I was able to meet every threatened difficulty with a quiet mind, which was half the victory beforehand. Then, what was the very opposite to my nature, when I was hard at work in my study, and an unlooked-for knock at the door came – instead of the old thrill and twist of impatience, there was the pleasure the swimmer feels in climbing a wave, because it gives him a free sense of the lift of the water, and the delight at once of action and of rest. These things now did not put me out. I possessed my possession. A Christ submitted to, a Christ trusted, a Christ used, made life a different thing.

“All this was thirty-five years ago, dear friends in Christ...but it is to me as if yesterday. What have I to say as to the time since then? Has it been unbroken victory, has it been unbroken rest? No. By whose fault? Never the Master’s. Every day and every hour He has been as full of help as ever, He has been as close at hand as ever. But did I never get indolent in the use of His helps to keeping awake? Did I never let myself get slack about regular prayer, when there was no excuse for slackness? Did I never let myself get careless over search of the Bible? Did I never let myself get indifferent about little bits of unpretending duty Inevitably then something seemed as if it paralysed the fingers that were to use the Lord. And the Lord, unused, humbled the man again and again, by letting him

feel what it would all be again if he did not possess his possessions and use what he possessed.

“But I know this well, that to this day, through these long years, with a Church and a world changed, with my life changed, as many a joy and many a sorrow has come over it, while God has often broken up the ground under my feet and clouded the sky above my head, and has put me to some of the greatest tests that human loss can bring, while also crowning me with mercies – all I can say is that, just as the old secret is used, the surrender of the spirit to the Lord, the same delightful results are assured, because He is the same. There is still a rest and a power for the soul, which means nothing less than this wonderful Christ, whom I saw in conversion, and who is indeed Christ for me now, in this after-blessing, as I ought to have seen Him from the first. Christ is still in me to make the weak strong, to make the easily defeated Christian conqueror, through Him that loved us.”<sup>13</sup>

The above quotation by Moule of his spiritual experience, given at the end of a life richly fruitful in the service of God, may be rather long, but it is one of the fullest accounts we have by any of the Keswick leaders of how they came to be a part of Keswick.

Dr. W.H. Griffith Thomas, at one time Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, said of Moule’s commentary on Romans, in the “Expositor’s Bible” series, “In this will be found a statement of the doctrine of Sanctification as seen in Romans vi-viii, which contains the essential principles of holiness associated with Keswick, put forward with all the scholarship and spirituality characteristic of the author. As long as that book is studied, the theology of holiness as set forth at Keswick cannot fail to receive due attention.”<sup>14</sup>

The adherence of Dr. Moule to the Keswick platform was a great accession of strength, for it brought into the movement one who had long been highly respected as a trusted Evangelical scholar and theologian. Keswick has had other great scholars, but there is no doubt that Dr. Moule was its greatest; and his books, though necessarily appealing to a far wider sphere than that represented by Keswick have done effective service to the Keswick movement.

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<sup>13</sup> H.C.G. Moule, *Christ and the Christian* (London, Marshall Bros., Ltd., 1919), pp. 49-58. (The paragraphing of this quotation is my own [Barabas], there being only five paragraphs in the passage as printed in the book.)

<sup>14</sup> C.F. Harford, *The Keswick Convention*, p. 231.

*F.B. Meyer*

F.B. Meyer was the best-known Baptist clergyman of his day. It is doubtful, indeed, whether any other minister of his time was better known throughout the world. Although an active pastor all his life to within a few years of his death, he travelled all over the world on preaching missions, making twelve journeys to America alone.

He was born in London in 1847, and after preparing for the Gospel ministry at Regent's Park College, was graduated from London University. He held pastorates at York, Leicester, and London – all of them notable ones. Twice he was President of the National Free Church Council, and once, President of the Baptist Union.

He was a prolific author, writing literally scores of books, in every field of Christian literature, many of which are still in print. His books are not of a very scholarly nature, but all are carefully written and dependable, evincing not only an unusual talent for fluent writing, but rare spiritual insight as well.

Dr. Meyer was present at the famous Broadlands, Oxford, and Brighton Conventions, and could tell of light and help that had come to him in each of these gatherings; but a visit of two members of the famous 'Cambridge Seven', Stanley Smith and C.T. Studd, to Leicester in 1885, when they were the guest of Dr. Meyer, was the incident that led to a definite step in his experience that finally equipped him to take his place on the Keswick platform. Let us allow him to tell the story in his own words:

"The visit of Messrs. Stanley Smith and Studd to Melbourne Hall will always mark an epoch in my own life. Before then my Christian life was spasmodic and fitful; now flaming up with enthusiasm, and then pacing wearily over leagues of grey ashes and cold cinders. I saw that these young men had something which I had not, but which was within them a constant source of rest and strength and joy. And never shall I forget a scene at 7 a.m. in the grey November morning, as daylight was flickering into the bedroom, paling the guttered cinders which from a very early hour had been lighting up the page of Scripture and revealing the figures of the devoted Bible students, who wore the old cricketing or boating costume of earlier days, to render them less sensible of the raw, damp climate. The talk we held then was one of the most formative influences of my life. Why should I not do what they had done? Why should I not yield my whole nature to God, working out day by day *that* which He would will and work within? Why should I not be a vessel, though only of earthenware, meet for the Master's use, because purged and sanctified?

"There was nothing new in what they told me. They said, that 'A man must not only believe in Christ for final salvation, but from every care.' They said, that



'The Lord Jesus was willing to abide in the heart which was wholly yielded up to Him.' They said, that 'If there were some things in our lives that made it difficult for us to surrender our whole nature to Christ, yet if we were willing to be made willing to surrender them, He would make us not only willing but glad.' They said, that 'Directly we give or attempt to give ourselves to Him, He takes us.' All this was simple enough. I could have said it myself. But they urged me to take the definitive step; and I shall be for ever thankful that they did. And if in a distant country they should read this page, let them be encouraged to learn that one heart at least has been touched with a new fire, and that one voice is raised in prayer for their increase in the knowledge and love of Him who has become more real to the suppliant, because of their brotherly words.

"Very memorable was the night when I came to close quarters with God. The Angel that wrestled with Jacob found me, eager to make me a Prince. There were things in my heart and life which I felt were questionable, if not worse, I knew that God had a controversy with respect to them; I saw that my very dislike to probe or touche them was a clear indication that there was mischief lurking beneath. It is the diseased joint that shrinks from the touch and tender eye that shudders at the light. At the same time I did not feel willing to give these things up. It was a long struggle. At last I said feebly, 'Lord, I am willing to be made willing; I am desirous that Thy will should be done in me and through me, as thoroughly as it is done in Heaven; come and take me and brak me and make me.' That was the hour of crisis, and when it had passed I felt able at once to add, 'And now I give myself to Thee: body, soul and spirit; in sorrow or in joy; in the dark or in the light, In life or in death, to be Thine only, wholly and for ever. Make the most of me that can be made for Thy glory.' No rapture or rush of joy came to assure me that the gift was accepted. I left the place with almost a heavy heart. I simply assured myself that He must have taken that which I had given, and at the moment of my giving it. And to that belief I clung in all the days that followed, constantly repeating to myself the words, 'I am His.' And thus at last the joy and rest entered and victory and freedom from burdening care and I found that He was moulding my will and making it easy to do what I had thought impossible; and I felt that He was leadeing me into the paths of righteousness for His name's sake, but so gently as to be almost imperceptible to my weak sight."<sup>15</sup>

Dr. Meyer often referred to this experience, and sometimes in speaking of it said that his early Christian life was marred and his ministry paralysed because he had kept back one thing from the bunch of keys he had given to the Lord. Every key

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<sup>15</sup> W.Y. Fullerton, *F.B. Meyer, A Biography* (London, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd.), pp. 57, 58.

save one! The key of one room was kept for personal use, and the Lord shut out. And the effect of the incomplete consecration was found in lack of power, assurance, joy, and peace. These things came to him only when he handed over the last key.

And yet, although this experience was a turning-point in his Christian life, Dr. Meyer saw the danger of living on it. One of his biographers tells us that on one occasion at Keswick someone asked him to recount the experience, and Dr. Meyer replied, "No, no, you cannot live on an experience."

After this experience, Dr. Meyer grew in spiritual influence and power, and the Keswick Trustees invited him to the Convention, not at first to speak, but as a guest. When, the following year, 1887, he was asked to speak, keenly realizing his insufficiency and his need of the Holy Spirit, he went through another crisis experience that marked a definite point in his life. Again he himself must be allowed to tell what happened to him then:

"Before I first spoke on the platform I had my own deeper experience, on a memorable night when I left the little town with its dazzling lamps, and climbed the neighbouring hill. As I write the summer night is again casting its spell on me. The light clouds veil the stars and pass. The breath of the mountain leads me to yearn for a fresh intake of God's Spirit. May we not count on the Aiointing Spirit to grant us a fresh infilling when we are led to seek it? May we not dare to believe that we have received, even when there is no answering emotion? Do we not receive by faith? These were the questions which a few of us had debated far into the night, at a preayer meeting convened at which a number of men were agonizing for the Spirit.

"I was too tired to agonize, so I left the prayer meeting and as I walked I said, 'My Father, if there is one soul more than another within the circle of these hills that needs the gift of Pentecost, it is I: I want the Holy Spirit, but I do not know how to receive Him; and I am too weary to think, or feel, or pray intensely.' Then a Voice said to me, 'As you took forgiveness from the hand of the dying Christ, take the Holy Ghost from the hand of the living Christ, and reckon that the gift is thine by a faith that is utterly indifferent to the presence or absence of resultant joy. According to thy *faith*, so shall it be unto thee.' So I turned to Christ and said, 'Lord, as I breathe in this whiff of warm night air, so I breathe into every part of me Thy blessed Spirit.' I felt no hand laid on my head, there was no lambent flame, there was no rushing sound from heaven; but by *faith*, without emotion, without excitement, I took, and took for the first time, and I have kept on taking ever since.

“I turned to leave the mountain-side, and as I went down the tempter said I had nothing, that it was all imagination, but I answered, ‘Though I do not feel it, I reckon that God is faithful.’”<sup>16</sup>

His hostess tells that that night she was sitting up for him, and he came in greatly agitated, and again and again as he walked up and down the room in deep self-examination, he said, “Can I have been wrong and wanting until now? Has my life hitherto been lacking power?” They prayed together, and he retired without any feeling of blessing, but the next morning all was peace. Later he wrote, “That was the high water mark! Alas, that tides like that should ever drop down to the beach!”

After this experience at Keswick, the Holy Spirit became more personally real than He had ever been before. He became quick and sensitive to every suggestion of the Spirit. The story is told that one day he and the officers of his church got together on some business. At such gatherings he always took the chair. On this occasion, however, he was so filled with the conviction of God’s presence that he could not now think of taking the chair. It was left for the Holy Spirit Himself. So the group sat with Dr. Meyer in the ranks, and transacted their business as in the very hearing of the Invisible Administrator and Guide.

It is doubtful whether any other Keswick leader ever did more than Dr. Meyer to make the distinctive Keswick message known throughout the world. There were other Keswick ‘missionaries’ – men who travelled to other countries as representatives of Keswick to promulgate the message of sanctification by faith and the Spirit-filled life; but no other – unless it be Dr. Charles Inwood – travelled more, and certainly no other was as well-received wherever he went. Speaking at Conventions seemed to be his special forte. His personality was magnetic; his message was appealing and attractive; and as a speaker he was second to none. He was perhaps the first to carry the message of Keswick to the United States. His death in 1929 left a gap in the ranks of Keswick leaders that has not yet been filled.




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<sup>16</sup> W.Y. Fullerton, *F.B. Meyer, A Biography* (London, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd.), pp. 65, 66.