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Aims and Scope

Pentecostal Education (formerly *The Pentecostal Educator*) semiannually e-publishes scholarly and practical articles related to theological education within the Pentecostal tradition to encourage the continuing maturation of Pentecostal theological education. It is intentionally practical, applied, and international.

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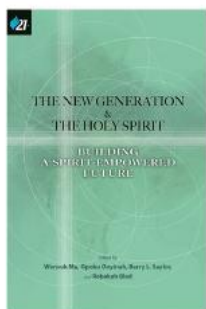
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Navigating Pentecostal Exegesis and Cultural Engagement: Editorial

It is indeed appropriate to commence this editorial with a series of congratulatory messages and commendations. On behalf of the board of the World Alliance for Pentecostal Theological Education (WAPTE) and the editorial team of *Pentecostal Education* (PE), the journal of WAPTE, I extend my sincerest congratulations to Dr. William M. Wilson on his election as chairman of the executive committee of the World Pentecostal Fellowship (WPF) for a second term. His exemplary leadership of the Spirit-empowered movement in this generation is commendable. I also congratulate all newly elected advisory board members of WPF for their immense contributions to the growth of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement worldwide.

I wish to extend a special congratulations to Dr. Kirk Kauffeldt on his election as the board chairman of WAPTE, succeeding Dr. Paul R. Alexander. As we celebrate Dr. Alexander's significant contributions, we look forward to the innovative leadership that Dr. Kauffeldt is poised to bring. His appointment signals a promising new vision, energy, and transformative direction for WAPTE. Finally, I congratulate Dr. Simo Frestadius on his election as WAPTE's vice chairman, succeeding Dr. Ulrik Josefsson, whose enthusiastic service has been noteworthy. Together, these leaders herald a bright future for WAPTE.

The last three issues of this journal were special issues, each focusing on a specific theme. It is a joy to return to a diverse array of themes that educate and enlighten Pentecostalism in its diverse expressions. In the first article, Douglas Lowenberg posits 1 Timothy 3:16 as Christ's Hymn. He provides an exegetical analysis of the text, exploring its historical and literary contexts. This hymn, found in Paul's pastoral letter, affirms core Christian doctrines such as Christ's incarnation and exaltation, serving as a counter to false teachings in Ephesus. It captures the mystery of godliness, revealing a divine truth through Christ that empowers believers to live devoutly and love genuinely. The hymn not only affirms doctrine but also serves as a tool to bolster church identity, promote moral conduct, and uphold doctrinal purity, emphasizing the centrality of Christ in fostering authentic godliness and safeguarding the Christian community. In the second article, Kelly Goins examines Acts

1:8 through an ecclesiological lens, addressing issues of prejudice and racism within the church. He interprets Samaria's inclusion in the church's missional mandate as a call for the church to confront systemic biases. Acts 1:8 serves three purposes: it's a geographical pathway to Rome, a symbol of Israel's unification, and a societal filter that challenges prejudice. Drawing from biblical exegesis and history, the article reflects Jesus's interactions with Samaritans as a model for the church's mission. This perspective highlights that a genuine mission involves love and unity within the church and society.

Geoffrey Butler's article, "The Church's Book," explores how Pentecostal hermeneutics can be deepened through the theological interpretation of Scripture (TIS). Rooted in the belief that the Holy Spirit guides our understanding of the Bible, Pentecostals view Scripture as transformative, aiming for character development rather than mere information. Historically, the Pentecostal movement has been cautious about critical scholarship, prioritizing community experience and the Spirit's leading. The article cautions against over-relying on historical-critical methods while encouraging the honoring of both tradition and the Spirit's work in interpretation.

Sanna Urvas and Markus Nikkanen critically examine Pentecostal beliefs about demons, highlighting how views influenced by Derek Prince and Michael Heiser may distort biblical teachings. She contends that Prince's dualistic cosmology, with its focus on demonic hierarchies, can undermine God's sovereignty and neglect biblical concepts of salvation. Heiser's scholarship provides valuable insights but risks interpretive overreach when disconnected from Scripture. The authors advocate for a biblical hermeneutic centered on Christ's lordship, warning against speculative cosmologies that stray from biblical revelation. They emphasize the need for theological discernment rooted in Scripture to guide Pentecostal practice and doctrine regarding evil and deliverance. In the next article, Chiong Xiao Ting responds to Urvas and Nikkanen's examination of Pentecostal demonology. It discusses how the authors critically examine Derek Prince's influence on Pentecostal exorcism and Michael Heiser's divine council perspective on the understanding of demons. Like Urvas and Nikkanen, Ting responds to the ongoing debate on whether Christians can be possessed or merely influenced, citing biblical evidence and global Pentecostal practices. The article ends by emphasizing the importance of balanced deliverance ministry, calling for contextualized, ethical practices that integrate psychological and medical care, fostering a holistic approach to spiritual freedom within Pentecostal communities.

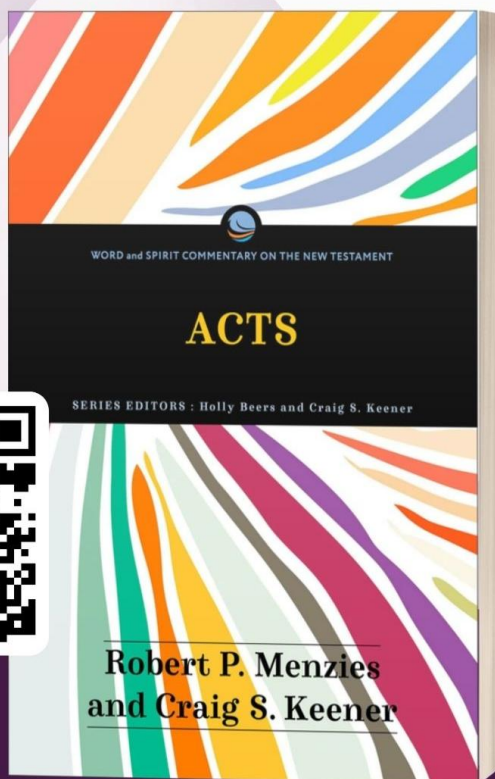
Noriyuki Miyake's article examines the "Second Chance Theory" (SCT) in Japanese missions, suggesting that unbelievers might encounter the gospel after death in Hades, contrasting with traditional views of immediate judgment. Advocates like Okawa and Kubo argue that Hades differs from hell, citing 1 Peter and Revelation for post-mortem evangelization. However, theological analysis indicates a lack of biblical support for salvation after death, emphasizing faith during life. The article promotes culturally sensitive mission strategies that respect ancestor veneration while maintaining biblical integrity, addressing evangelism challenges in Japan. In the last article, Gordon J. Melton, the distinguished Professor of American religious history, provides a master list and directory that highlights the dynamic growth and diversity within the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement in the USA. The movement is founded on the belief in the Holy Spirit's ongoing activity, emphasizing spiritual gifts, divine healing, and the roles of apostles and prophets. With over 500 denominations, it illustrates a vibrant but complex ecclesiology focused on authentic, Spirit-led worship. Despite resistance to structures, these groups uphold core Pentecostal doctrines, including baptism in the Holy Spirit. The movement encompasses various ethnic, linguistic, and doctrinal expressions, all dedicated to advancing God's kingdom through Spirit-empowered ministry.

This issue of the journal features three comprehensive and insightful book reviews authored by Julia Owiti, Slade Hogan, and Jaime L. Riddle. Each review provides critical analyses and nuanced perspectives that significantly enhance understanding and discourse within their respective fields of academic study. Collectively, these articles and book reviews contribute to a deeper understanding of Pentecostal theology and its engagement with contemporary cultural issues. The insights presented challenge the church to evolve and address pressing societal concerns while remaining anchored in its doctrinal roots.

Christian Tsekpoe
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The Right Song for the Right Setting: An Exegetical Study of 1 Timothy 3:16 (Part 1)

Douglas P. Lowenberg

Abstract

Songs, hymns, and creeds are occasionally inserted into Scripture by the author as a sub-genre to emphasize some aspect of his message. This study focuses on the Christ hymn found in 1 Timothy 3:14-16. Some interpreters seem to extract such songs from the literary and historical context and interpret them as an independent Christological statement, but this approach seems to miss the author's intention for the song. This study analyzes the six lines of this majestic song to identify the meaning of its words and phrases based on the historical context in Ephesus at the time of the writing. This study is divided into a two-part series. While part one discusses the context and content of the hymn, part two focuses on its meaning and implications.

Key Words: commissive language, dualism, Artemis, parallelism, historical context

Introduction

When the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to select an existent hymn¹ or compose a song or write a poetic, credal statement to insert in the text of one of his epistles, the apostle undoubtedly believed this artistic

¹ 1 Timothy 3:16 is labeled by various scholars as a song, hymn, hymn fragment, or credal statement. See Jeremy Begbie, "The Bible and Music," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 523. The hymn may have already been well-known in the early church. Paul employed it to stress his agenda. See William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 551-552. Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 762, refers to the passage as an early Christian hymn focusing on Christ.

addition, with its distinct lyrics, assonance, and commissive language,² would contribute significantly to the thrust of his written communication supplementing his normal narrative style. One of the best-known songs Paul used is the Christ hymn³ of Philippians 2:6-11, which elaborated his message to the believers in Philippi appealing to them to emulate the love and humility of Christ so that they would preserve unity among the believers and maintain a gospel witness in their pagan environment. He considered that the poetic form and contents of the hymn were the most effective way to convey his intentions.⁴

There is another song Paul employed,⁵ found in 1 Timothy 3:16, which can be properly understood only by carefully examining its content within the literary and historical context of the epistle. To isolate the content of the song from the historical context of the first recipients and examine its lyrics and poetic form as an abstract Christological statement is to miss Paul's purpose for the song in this epistle.⁶ Jeannine Brown observes, "Meaning is always contextually situated."⁷ As the hymn is studied, one must consider if there are direct references in the

² For a discussion on commissive and inferential language see Robert H. Stein, *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible: Playing by the Rules* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994), 73-74. Commissive language not only provides information but also contains content that intentionally evokes emotions and feelings. The author may have used this type of language to elicit a response and commitment from the hearers. This type of language act is an important reminder that God communicates to people holistically including their rational mind and the emotions.

³ Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 192.

⁴ For an exegetical analysis of this poem, see Jeannine K. Brown, *Embedded Genres in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2024), 17-48.

⁵ It is not in the scope of this article to address the authorship or dating of 1 Timothy. However, this study is written with the belief that Paul is the original author. For further examination of these issues, see Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, rev. ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), 607-649; Homer A. Kent, Jr., *The Pastoral Epistles*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1982), 23-68; and Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 9-36.

⁶ Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 762, observes, "The question of context usually either is neglected or at best receives mere lip service."

⁷ Jeannine K. Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2021), 24.

song to the historical context described in the epistle. This essay will attempt to explain the meaning of the Christ hymn and its relevance to the context of Paul's churches in Ephesus.⁸

The Text⁹

The complete thought unit leading up to and including the song reads:

Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the¹⁰ pillar and foundation of the truth. Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great:

He¹¹ appeared in a body,
was vindicated by the Spirit,
was seen by angels,
was preached among the nations,
was believed on in the world,
was taken up in glory.¹²
(1 Timothy 3:14-16 NIV)

The Historical Context of the Epistle

An essential consideration for understanding the song is an examination of the church's historical context in Ephesus, with special attention

⁸ Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, NIBC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988),¹⁰ rightly observes, "The letter betrays evidences everywhere that it was intended for the church itself, not just Timothy. But because of defections in the leadership, Paul does not, as before, write directly to the church, but to the church through Timothy." For a similar view see Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 20.

⁹ Mounce comments, "It is generally recognized that this paragraph is the heart of the Pastoral corpus." Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 214.

¹⁰ Mounce translates the phrase "the pillar" as "a pillar" which agrees with the anarthrous form in the Greek text. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 213.

¹¹ Mounce uses the relative pronoun, who, in his translation which agrees with the Greek text and is supported by the oldest manuscript evidence. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 213-214.

¹² The NIV uses this indentation scheme for the song which proposes three strophes of two lines each and a type of parallelism within each strophe. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 214, configures the hymn with two strophes, each with three indented lines. The poetic aspects of the song will be discussed below.

given to the false teachers.¹³ The heterodox instruction¹⁴ that was destroying the faith of some and blemishing the public witness of the gospel was being propagated by insiders, Ephesian elders, who had defected from the faith, a fact prophesied earlier by Paul (Acts 20:29-30). It is generally assumed that the false teachers were converted Jews¹⁵ who were syncretizing Christian doctrine, Hellenistic Judaism, Mosaic Law, Greek dualism and asceticism, local magic,¹⁶ and materialism¹⁷—a strange amalgamation of beliefs and practices that seems to be self-

¹³ Fee believes the only legitimate occasion and purpose for Paul writing this epistle is to stop the influence of the false teachers. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy*, Titus, 7. However, Samuel M. Ngewa, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus* (Nairobi: Hippo Books, 2009), 80, states that “Paul’s ultimate goal in writing this letter is to inform Timothy and the members of the church in Ephesus how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household.”

¹⁴ Paul writes to Timothy to command certain, unspecified men μὴ ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν (not to teach other, different, or novel, things). The present tense complementary infinitive has the prefix ἕτερος meaning other, other of a different kind, which is combined with the word, διδάσκω, to teach. The word, called “a fascinating word” by Mounce, refers to false teachings which differ from Paul’s gospel (Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 19) and is only found twice in the NT, both times in this epistle (1 Tim 1:3; 6:3). It is also worth noting that the infinitive is in the present tense implying that the action is present and is ongoing. Thus, Mounce translates it “continue to teach.” See Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 598-599; and William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 303.

¹⁵ Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 44. Paul speaks of “Jewish myths” in his letter to Titus in Crete (Titus 1:14), but he does not use the word “Jewish” in his letters to Timothy. There is clearly a strong Jewish influence on the content of the false teachers in Ephesus in terms of teaching the law and an implied exclusion of Gentiles from the believing community. A Jewish perspective could explain the attention to myths, genealogies, and the mediatorial roles of Moses and angels.

¹⁶ The magical milieu of Ephesus is seen in the slow conversion process of Ephesians who held onto their practices of sorcery until a gospel power encounter exposed the demonic nature and destructiveness of their indigenous religion. Their total commitment to the Lordship of Christ was marked by their abandonment and eradication of their pagan religious paraphernalia (Acts 19:17-20).

¹⁷ Ephesus was known as a trading center with a robust economy giving aggressive, shrewd, and hardworking people the opportunity for profit and wealth. A significant portion of the economy centered on religious worship (Acts 19:23-31). See Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 37, 38.

contradictory in some cases. Paul described their doctrine as “falsely called knowledge” (1 Tim 6:20), which was spreading like “gangrene” (2 Tim 2:17). Clearly, all the features of their teaching cannot be explained from a traditional Jewish perspective. And certain aspects of their distortions had manifested previously in other regions of the Mediterranean, which Paul confronted in his epistles to Corinth,¹⁸ Colosse,¹⁹ and Ephesus.²⁰

Like “savage wolves” (Acts 20:29), these men were destroying the faith of some who were disciples of a ministry Paul himself established and expanded during three years of residence in Ephesus (Acts 20:31). And while Paul was building up the Ephesian church, he strategically sent missional ambassadors to declare the gospel to “all the Jews and Gentiles who lived in the province of Asia” (19:10). Now, years later in revisiting the city, he was confronted with the poisonous influence of false teachers who were not only “distorting the truth in order to draw away disciples after them” (20:31) but practicing a lifestyle that undermined the gospel witness before a vast pagan audience in the city and region.²¹

¹⁸ See 1 Corinthians 7:1 where the Corinthians assert that it is not good for a man not to marry (“touch a woman” as a euphemism for conjugal relationships with one’s wife) which seems quite similar to the false teachers of Ephesus who forbid people to marry (1 Tim. 4:3). For an in-depth discussion of the issue in Corinth, see Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 270-277.

¹⁹ Paul confronted the false teachers in Colosse who were imposing human-made rules on the believers and judging them based on what they ate and drank (Col 2:16, 21, 23). In Ephesus, the opponents are commanding believers to abstain from certain foods (1 Tim 4:3). See F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 113-129.

²⁰ In his epistle to the Ephesians, Paul addressed many of the issues that reoccur in his correspondence to Timothy such as the supremacy of Christ over all aspects of his creation, the mystery of Christ’s saving work, the unity of Jews and Gentiles in the body of Christ, household codes related to marriage and to owner-slave relationships, and godly conduct in terms of sexual morality, conversations, and anger. For further study, see Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians*.

²¹ Every aspect of life in Ephesus, civic, religious, cultural, social, and economic, was permeated by religious beliefs and practices. The cult of Artemis predated the 4th century BC. The influence of the emperor cult was growing. Judaism was being practiced by local Jews and possible God-fearers as

Paul was so provoked by the presence and destructive content of these opponents that he commissioned Timothy to remain in Ephesus. Timothy was to serve as his apostolic representative, silence their teaching, counter it with a powerful proclamation of the truth of the gospel, and appoint godly leaders to pastor and safeguard the churches.²² He was also to set an example for all the saints to follow and instruct the believers in how they were to conduct themselves in the church of the living God, in their homes, and in the marketplace.²³ Leaving Timothy in Ephesus and moving onward to Macedonia (1 Tim 1:3), Paul remained highly concerned about the situation in Ephesus. His irritation is evident as he writes to Timothy, leaving out his normal greeting section in the letter to immediately address the critical concerns at hand.

While Paul did not elaborate explicitly the identity²⁴ of the opponents nor expose all the errors of their teaching and conduct, there is enough information in his exhortations to Timothy to summarize the general content of their attractive deception (2 Tim 4:3). Having “wandered from” and “rejected” the truth (1 Tim 1:6; 6:10, 21; 1:19), “abandoned the faith” (4:1), and “been robbed of the truth” (6:5), they were following deceiving spirits and embracing doctrines taught by demons (4:1).²⁵ Their calloused hearts and seared consciences allowed them to

indicated by the presence of a local synagogue (Acts 18:19). Whereas the Jews in Ephesus initially welcomed Paul and his gospel preaching, they grew hostile, became obstinate, refused to believe, and maligned the Way (Acts 19:9). This led to Paul establishing a teaching-preaching-miracle working, missional sending center, distinct from the synagogue, the lecture hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9-12). See Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 37-39.

²² It is generally understood that the church in Ephesus consisted of numerous house churches scattered across the city and beyond. Multiple gatherings made supervision of church leaders and their doctrine more challenging. See Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 8.

²³ I. Howard Marshall, “1 Timothy, Book of,” *DTIB*, 801.

²⁴ Paul refers to a group of false teachers as “certain men” (τισὶν, *tisin*, an indefinite plural pronoun, 1 Tim 1:3), unspecified people. However, he named two of the more destructive leaders, Hymenaeus and Alexander (1:20), whom he had excommunicated. Hymenaeus is referenced again along with Philetus (2 Tim 2:17) as ringleaders who have wandered from the truth and destroy the faith of others. Alexander the metalworker opposed the gospel message and brought great harm to Paul. He was an ongoing threat (2 Tim 4:14-15).

²⁵ Mounce stresses the fact that these men “made a conscious, deliberate choice to reject the truth and as a result have brought the church into reproach.” Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 67.

confidently proclaim false doctrine as hypocritical liars (4:2; 1:7; 6:4). Based on what Paul prophesied earlier, the false teachers were bent on “drawing away disciples after them.” They did not hesitate to “distort the truth” to gain a following (Acts 20:30). Apparently, they were successful in their efforts, which was depleting the church of committed followers and weakening her witness to the pagans.

To establish their preeminence as legitimate church leaders, they pursued “endless genealogies” (1 Tim 1:4), which exalted and defended their status as authentic, historical leaders in the community.²⁶ Andrew E. Hill observes, “The purpose of genealogies generally is to . . . legitimize an individual or familial claim to some position of leadership or service.”²⁷ Paul provided no details on their genealogical explorations, but there seem to be two possible reasons, depending on their ethnic identity, for this ceaseless investigation. The false teachers may have been Hellenistic Christian Jews²⁸ whose families had lived in the diaspora for decades. After coming to faith in Christ, they wandered

²⁶ Guthrie notes an “absorbing interest in genealogies” among contemporary Jews which centering mainly around Pentateuchal descendency. Donald Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, rev. ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), 628. Friedrich Büchsel proposes that the genealogies are the biblical history of Jewish people but embellished by mythical interpretation. Friedrich Büchsel, “γενεά, γενεαλογία, etc.,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol 1, ed. Gerhard Kittel; trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 664. Towner mentions one reason for studying genealogies, “Within Judaism, genealogies played the key role of establishing a person’s bloodline and link to a particular family and tribe: rights by birth.” Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 110. However, some scholars think the pursuit of genealogies had to do with the content of their teaching and not about their status in the community. “There is no evidence to suggest . . . that the false teachers speculated on their own genealogies which would give them standing in Judaism.” See: I. Howard Marshall and Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, ICC (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 366. However, the opponents desire to be recognized as teachers of the law (νομοδιδασκαλοι) by the community implies they were searching for ways to strengthen their leadership positions in the churches where they were already teaching unorthodox doctrine.

²⁷ Andrew E Hill, “Genealogy,” in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*, ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 245.

²⁸ According to Büchsel, “They are Jews.” Büchsel, “γενεά,” 664; of the same opinion is Solomon Andria, “1 Timothy,” in *Africa Bible Commentary*, ed. Tokunboh Adeyemo (Nairobi: WordAlive, 2006), 1469.

from Paul's gospel and determined to impose the Mosaic Law and Jewish cultural practices on the Christian community.²⁹ Their distance in terms of time and geography from Israel and from orthodox Jewish teaching resulted in their ineptitude in explaining the content of and purpose for the Law (1:7). As self-proclaimed teachers, they were trying to fabricate a familial connection with one of the tribes of Israel based on genealogical records to secure their status as qualified instructors of the Law.

On the other hand, the false teachers may have been Gentiles³⁰ who had converted to Christianity but then succumbed to the teachings of Judaizers, which led to their mélange of Christian doctrine, Mosaic Law, Greek dualism, and local mysticism.³¹ For example, the name of one of the opponents, Hymenaeus, has never been identified as a Jewish name.³² A Jewish ethnic exclusivism influenced them, and they became extremists, zealous for their new, blended faith. Even though they were Gentiles, they investigated genealogies in the Pentateuch³³ to unearth mythical connections between themselves and the people of Israel.³⁴ In either case, whether the opponents were Jews or Gentiles, they were attempting to elevate their status as recognized teachers and broaden their influence in the churches founded by Paul.

²⁹ The practices they imposed on their followers may not have included circumcision which is not mentioned in either of the epistles to Timothy. On one hand, they instituted a measured Judaizing, and on the other hand, they were extreme in their religious and cultural restrictions: forbidding marriage and the eating of certain foods.

³⁰ Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 10, observes that the teachers "may not be Jews."

³¹ A case can be made for the false teachers being Hellenistic Gentiles. The two teachers whom Paul excommunicated, Alexander and Hymenaeus, have names that identify them as Greeks (1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17; 4:14). Hymenaeus was a name frequently found in Greek mythology. Regarding Alexander, although this name was given to Jews, Towner asserts that this man was the same individual who inspired the riot of the idol makers against Paul in Acts 19:33. His occupation and influence in the city would imply that he was a Gentile who eventually gained a prominent position in the Ephesian church. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 160.

³² Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 28. The name Alexander is a Greek name but was used by both Gentiles and Jews.

³³ Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 628.

³⁴ Highlighting one's identity with a tribe in Israel along with maintaining Jewish religious and cultural practices and having received formal, Jewish orthodox training served increase the status of teachers both in the church and synagogue (Phil 3:3-6).

In contrast to their fanciful heritage that supposedly qualified them for spiritual leadership, Paul presented himself as an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command and will of God (1:1; 2 Tim 1:1), appointed to the service of Christ by the Lord himself (1 Tim 1:12).³⁵ As the worst of all sinners, a confession intended to stand in radical contrast to the self-righteousness of the opponents, he experienced an abundant outpouring of grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus the Lord (1:15, 14, 2). He was entrusted with the “glorious gospel” (1:11) which he offered to all who would believe in Christ (1:16). Paul’s Christian identity was based on his membership in the spiritual family of God, “God’s household” (3:15), where the Sovereign King was his “Father” and where relationships were governed by “love” springing from a “pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1:5).

What were the major tenets of the false teachers?³⁶ Could their erroneous emphases have influenced Paul in the Christ hymn he included? There were Jewish components to their faith system, but the propagators lacked expertise in their understanding of the Mosaic Law.³⁷ While they wanted to be teachers of the law, “They do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm” (1:7). Paul declared that the law, which the opponents stressed, was good and that there was a place for the law (νόμος) in the Christian faith if it was used lawfully (νομίμως)³⁸ (1:8; 2 Tim 2:5; Rom 7:12, 16).

³⁵ To bolster his authority as a commissioned agent of Jesus Christ who has the right to stop the false teachers, Paul stresses that he is an apostle of Christ within the Ephesian context. Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 37.

³⁶ The content of the false teachers was a syncretistic blend of many religious elements but not clearly systematized.

³⁷ In Paul’s two letters to Timothy, there is no mention of the opponents pushing for circumcision as was the case with Pharisaic Christian Judaizers in Galatia, Antioch, and Jerusalem. This leads one to believe that the false teachers of Ephesus were more Hellenized and, while they held strongly to some aspects of asceticism, they maintained a high view of the human body. Unlike most Hebraic Christians, they did not advocate circumcision, their perspective agreeing with Paul but for different reasons. Another possible explanation for no mention of the need for circumcision was that the audience being targeted by the false teachers was Jewish, people who already bore the mark of the covenant. They had little concern for preaching their hetero-gospel to the Gentiles.

³⁸ The law (νόμος) was to be used lawfully (νομίμως), also translated as properly or rightfully. Paul used the same adverb in 2 Timothy 2:5 to describe the athlete who was required to complete “according to the rules” (νομίμως). This is probably a play on words: the law used lawfully. Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 11.

Paul believed the law glorified God as holy, the Creator, Savior, and Judge and provided instruction for how the people of God were to live (1:1, 17; 2:10; 4:3; 2 Tim 4:1). God was revealed in the law as the living God (ὁ θεός ζῶν), present and working among his people (1 Tim 3:15).³⁹ The law compelled his people to offer the Lord all their worship, love, loyalty, and obedience. The law revealed the truth that God provided grace, mercy, peace, and forgiveness to his people, and this reconciliation came through faith in God and his provision of salvation, not through adherence to legal codes (1:2, 16; 3:15; 6:17) or maintaining a Jewish cultural identity. For Paul, the law recorded the history of God establishing his covenant with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom he unilaterally delivered from bondage in Egypt. The purpose for the nation was that they might know God experientially and worship him as the supreme God; bear witness to his holiness and supremacy in word and deed to the nations; and be a conduit of blessing as they introduced the Savior to all people.

Paul asserted that the law established boundaries intended to restrain God's people from conforming to the sinful ways of the pagan nations. These divinely ordained limits were to set the Jews apart in terms of their faith, worship, and moral conduct. But their repeated transgressions of God's law made it abundantly apparent that "unregenerate people [did] not have the ability to do what is good . . . and the power of sin [was] stronger than the law."⁴⁰ The law was powerless to upright God's people morally and enable them to obey him. "The law was not the source of life."⁴¹ Thomas R. Schreiner⁴² summarizes what could be considered the lawful purpose of the law. First, the law had a "convicting function," revealing that humankind without the Holy Spirit could not live in right relationship with God. The basis of acceptance by God was repentance from sin and faith in

³⁹ This declaration of faith also countered the false beliefs of the predominant pagan society who worshiped Artemis and other gods within the Greek pantheon.

⁴⁰ Thomas R. Schreiner, *The Law and Its Fulfillment: A Pauline Theology of Law* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993), 85. Paul taught that obedience to the law did not make one righteous, upright before God. While the law was good and spiritual (Rom 7:13-14), it was powerless to transform lives and to enable people to overcome sin and live uprightly (Rom 8:3). The law set apart the OT people of God from their pagan neighbors, but it did not change their hearts nor enable them to keep from transgressing God's standards.

⁴¹ Schreiner, *The Law*, 61.

⁴² Schreiner, *The Law*, 15-16.

him as a loving and merciful God who provided forgiveness, uprightness, and fellowship with him. Second, the law had a “prophetic function” revealing God’s promise to send his Servant, the Messiah, his Son and Seed—the Savior of all people who would provide blessings for all the nations.

It seems one of the unlawful uses of the law promulgated by the opponents was to compel their Jewish followers to maintain their distinct ethnic identity and adhere to cultural norms that promoted separation from Gentiles. Gentiles who converted to Christ and followed the false teachers were expected to live Jewishly, adopt a Jewish cultural lifestyle, and uphold Old Testament commands including dietary laws such as abstaining from certain foods (4:3). The opponents’ views of the dietary laws corresponded with early Jewish Christian beliefs exhibited by Peter (Acts 10:13-14), who, despite Christ’s teaching on dietary liberation (Mark 7:19), held to Old Covenant restrictions dividing Christian Jews from Gentile seekers (Acts 10:28).

The false teachers attempted to keep their followers from transgressing God’s law (1:9-10). The focus was more on the conduct to be avoided than the Spirit-filled and Spirit-led life of freedom. The identity markers of their group were their Jewish lifestyle and the sinful behaviors they avoided (1:9-11). For Paul, the ultimate identity marker of those made righteous by Christ was “love” and humility, neither of which were noted among the opponents (1:5, 7; 6:4).⁴³ His reference to love may have originated in the Shema, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” (Deut. 6:5), and reinforced by Christ’s declaration of the greatest commandment: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . soul . . . mind . . . and the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt 22:37-39). Love fulfilled the law.

For the opponents, their teaching on Law subtly replaced the declaration of the gospel and marginalized the centrality of Christ. These teachers of law undoubtedly regarded Moses and the angels as the

⁴³ Mounce explains, “The opponents’ preaching resulted in speculation. The goal of Paul’s command that they stop their false preaching is love, thus repeating a basic conviction of the early church that the greatest command, in that it sums up all the other commands, is the command to love (Matt 22:34-40; Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14) and that love is more significant than ritual observance such as law keeping.” Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 22.

mediators between humankind and the high and holy God.⁴⁴ Guthrie comments, “Jewish transcendental theology demanded an efficient mediatorial system to bridge the ever-widening gap between man and God.”⁴⁵ “In Jewish thought, angels performed a mediatorial function in relation to the law.”⁴⁶

To counter this doctrinal wandering, Paul highlighted the Person of Jesus Christ who “came into the world to save sinners.” He stressed that Christ Jesus came to earth as a “human being” (ἄνθρωπος), “appearing” visibly and tangibly (1 Tim 1:15; 2:5; 2 Tim 1:10). Paul emphasized the humanness of the divine mediator who bridged the gap between a holy God and sinful people.⁴⁷ He was the only mediator with God (1 Tim 2:5). Christ Jesus was their hope (1:1; 4:9) and their Lord (1:2, 12). He was the Savior of all people (4:10), the one who gave himself as a ransom for all, including Jews and Gentiles (2:6-7). He displayed unlimited patience, love, and mercy towards sinners, lawbreakers, and rebels who had transgressed God’s law. He came to save sinners, not the righteous. And while Jesus was no longer with them physically, he was in them through the presence of the Holy Spirit, and he would return one day and appear again (2 Tim 4:1, 8).

As for God’s angels, they were an “unseen presence” serving, observing, and witnessing the conduct of believers, noting their righteous judgments (5:21), reminding them of their accountability to God, but contributing nothing to Christ’s work of salvation.⁴⁸ G. W. Bromiley makes this observation about angels, “They do not do the real

⁴⁴ Daniel G. Reid, “Angels, Archangels,” in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. G. F. Hawthorne, R. P. Martin, and D. G. Reid (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 22, observes, “In some Jewish traditions, the Law had been ordained through angels and by a mediator” which stood in stark contrast to Paul’s teaching on the work of God in Christ. As is common in some Christian traditions, believers petition saints and angels to carry their requests to Christ who then mediates their needs to God.

⁴⁵ Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 568.

⁴⁶ Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 566, 568.

⁴⁷ Andria states, “This verse [2:5] clearly affirms the humanity of Jesus . . . a mediator has to be one of us.” Andria, “1 Timothy,” 1470. Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 35.

⁴⁸ For a further examination of the role of angels, see Stephen F. Noll, “Angels, Doctrine of,” *DTIB*, 45-48. See Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 315.

work of reconciliation, which is Christ's prerogative . . . Jesus had to tread his way of atoning self-giving alone."⁴⁹

Acceptance by God did not come through adherence to the law, Jewish ethnicity, or living according to Jewish cultural norms and sensibilities, but by faith in the Person and work of Jesus Christ.⁵⁰ Repeatedly, Paul spoke of the necessity of faith in Christ as the means to entering and abiding in God's kingdom. The apostle's own transformation served as "an example for those who would believe on him" (1:16). The worst of all sinners (1:15) experienced God's mercy and forgiveness and entered God's kingdom through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. The advancement and promotion of God's work was "by faith" (1:4). "God is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe" (4:10). Timothy was to be an example for the believers in his faith (4:12). Paul confidently confessed, "I know in whom I have believed and am convinced that he is able" (2 Tim 1:12).

When one notes the multiple references Paul made to the inclusiveness of the gospel, for both Jew and Greek, it appears he was offsetting the false teachers' message of an exclusive salvation for the Jews.⁵¹ Paul countered: "[God] wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth . . . [Christ Jesus] gave himself as a ransom for all men . . . For this purpose, I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth. I am not lying—and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles" (2:4, 6, 7).⁵²

Some scholars believe the misled teachers blended their commitment to Mosaic Law with Hellenistic dualism. Dualism considered the spirit good and created matter evil.⁵³ Because of the sexual aspects of marriage, the opponents forbade people from marrying. This perspective seems quite contrary to the Hebrew Bible, which portrayed God creating man and woman in his own image, blessing them, uniting them, and calling them to be fruitful, increase in number, and fill the

⁴⁹ G. W. Bromiley, "Angel," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984), 46.

⁵⁰ Douglas J. Moo, *Romans*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 244, aptly comments, "Sincerity is not enough. As long as people are 'sold as slaves to sin,' sincerity by itself can never lead to genuine fulfillment of God's law."

⁵¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 165, 167, speaks of the false teachers' separatist and elitist tendencies.

⁵² Gentiles is the translation of *ethnê* which Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 37, asserts refers to the nations distinct from Israel (1 Tim 2:7; 3:16; 2 Tim 4:17).

⁵³ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 9.

earth (Gen 1:26-28). But the Ephesian teachers viewed marriage, conjugal relationships, physical pleasure, and certain foods as evil, creaturely, and of the flesh.⁵⁴ The human body, at best, was a matter of indifference and served as the vehicle for the spirit.⁵⁵ For some dualists, moral constraints were not crucial because the body would perish. The body, at worst, was evil and needed to be treated harshly, severely limiting its behavior.⁵⁶

Coupling this ascetic view with the errant belief that “the resurrection had already taken place” (2 Tim 2:18), the opponents adopted an over-realized eschatology. They believed they were already living the existence of angels.⁵⁷ They had experienced spiritual resurrection—no further physical resurrection was needed. They had become angel-like, where gender distinctions were irrelevant. Because of their new realm of existence, women were emancipated from social conventions that were part of the corrupt, created order, such as marrying and bearing children.⁵⁸ This perspective could have emerged from a mystical interpretation of Jesus’ answer to the Sadducees when asked about marriage in heaven: “When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven” (Mark 12:25). Thus, for the false teachers, marriage was carnal and conjugal relationships inappropriate, making childbearing impossible.⁵⁹ It seems

⁵⁴ Kenneth E. Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 200, 203, describes the ascetics who claimed, “The body is evil. True spirituality means even if you are married, marital relations should be avoided . . . they were convinced that spirituality and sexual practices were incompatible.”

⁵⁵ Believing that the body would be destroyed by God in the end, bodily appetites such as food and sex were matters of indifference. They had no bearing on one’s eternal destiny. This view encouraged a libertine perspective on life. However, Paul admonished Christians to have a high view of their bodies and to guard their moral purity because the body was included in the saving work of Christ. Their bodies belonged to the Lord, served as a temple for God’s Spirit, and would one day be resurrected. See Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 255-260.

⁵⁶ Fee discusses the dualistic view of the body: one from an ascetic perspective; the other from a libertine angle. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 273-280.

⁵⁷ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 99.

⁵⁸ Werner Foerster, “σέβομαι,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 7; ed. G. Kittel, G. Friedrich; trans. G. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), 183.

⁵⁹ Foerster, “σέβομαι,” 183, reports that the false teachers “regarded the family with contempt.”

this teaching was most readily received by women in the church who also became agents committed to spreading the deception further.⁶⁰ Wives, now living the life of angels as authentic spiritual people, were to abstain from conjugal relationships with their husbands. This teaching, also present in Corinth, resulted in Christian husbands succumbing to the temptation of cohabitating with prostitutes (1 Cor 6-7). In Ephesus, Paul's repeated plea was for moral purity and marital faithfulness (1 Tim 3:2, 12; 5:2, 22).

An alternative explanation for some of the aberrant doctrines of the false teachers regarding marriage was that they accepted various aspects of local animistic beliefs and practices. Artemis, the patron goddess of Ephesus, was honored as the supreme goddess of the city. Many citizens were shaped by the teachings of her pagan cult. Because Artemis was a goddess committed to virginity and celibacy, many of her adherents, especially women, chose a life of celibacy as part of their commitment to her. For false teachers who already endorsed Hellenistic dualism, it would be easy to support this component of the Artemis cult, especially if it made the new religion of Christianity more attractive to the local citizenry. Clearly, Paul rejected all aspects of dualism and pagan beliefs originating from Artemis. He encouraged women to marry and bear children.⁶¹

When it came to their teaching regarding godly character, conduct, and attitudes, they imposed legalistic rules but not inner righteousness. Their conceit led to division, strife, quarrelling, envy, slander, and suspicion (6:4). In a milieu of conflict, Paul exhorted the believers, "I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger and disputing" (2:8). Their seared consciences, hypocrisy, and dualistic asceticism allowed them to preach ascetic restraint, on one hand, while being greedy for financial gain, on the other (6:5-10).⁶² Likewise, while disdaining the flesh and preaching against marriage, they had taken sexual advantage of women in the church, especially young widows (5:4, 15). Paul warned: "They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires" (2 Tim 3:6). Paul

⁶⁰ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 8, 122.

⁶¹ For further discussion, see Sandra Glahn, *Nobody's Mother* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2023).

⁶² Marshall observes that Paul, in this epistle, provides "a full-scale treatment of the dangers of wealth, both the desiring of it and the misuse of it (6:3-19; cf. 2:9-10; 5:6). The author is quite clear that there are real dangers, against which Christians must be extremely vigilant." Marshall, "1 Timothy," 804.

admonished Timothy to pursue absolute purity in his relationships with younger women (5:2; 4:12) and called for younger widows to marry (5:14).

While the false teachers were indoctrinated by and followed deceiving spirits and demons, Christians were to attune to the voice of the Holy Spirit warning them of these hypocritical liars (4:1). The Spirit lived in the followers of Christ, gave them discernment of truth and deception, enabled them to uphold the truth, and empowered them to live uprightly before God and people (2 Tim 1:14). True believers collectively represented the temple of God (1 Tim 3:15) where God's Spirit dwelt (1 Cor. 6:19). With regards to the false teachers, there was no mention of the Holy Spirit. Paul taught elsewhere that the Spirit was not present in the lives of unbelievers (compare Romans 7 with Romans 8). They lived under the enslaving power of sin and were incapable of doing God's will.

The heresy of the false teachers in Ephesus was complex and deceiving. It attracted many and caused believers to wander from the gospel. The truth of the gospel was compromised; the attractiveness of the gospel was distorted. Silencing the elders who boldly propagated this errant message with its perverse lifestyle was Timothy's top priority.

The Literary Context of the Hymn

Having looked at the historical situation in Ephesus, giving special attention to the content and conduct of the false teachers, our focus will narrow to the paragraph containing the song (3:14-16). In these verses, Paul described the occasion and purpose of the epistle.⁶³ While he was serving elsewhere, personally addressing apostolic issues, he maintained great concern for the church and his emissary in Ephesus. He desired to return and work alongside Timothy to squelch the false teaching and proclaim the true gospel, but he recognized his plan to travel back to Ephesus could be delayed.⁶⁴ However, the fragility of the spiritual

⁶³ Fee believes this paragraph presents the occasion but not the purpose which was stated in 1:3, silence the false teachers. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 91. Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, rev. ed., TNTC (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1990), 98, seems misdirected when he states, "This section marks a pause in the apostle's instructions . . . to give a reminder of the wonder of the Christian revelation."

⁶⁴ While the situation in Ephesus was dire, Paul must have identified other locations that were equally or more tenuous. For this reason, he left Timothy in Ephesus while he traveled on to Macedonia (1:3). Paul undoubtedly received

climate in the Ephesian church could not wait for his personal intervention or be dependent on him alone. In light of this uncertainty, he drafted the apostolic missive⁶⁵ of 1 Timothy, commissioning his official representative to exert greater zeal in confronting the false elders who were embedded in the church and exerting a destructive influence on the faith of believers and their witness to unbelievers. He also wanted to use the epistle to publicly convey greater apostolic authority on his young ambassador, which would encourage Timothy and influence the church leaders and congregants to heed Timothy's instructions. It was mandatory that Timothy and the church recognize their critical role as the people of God in the city of Ephesus and the province of Asia.

Paul states that his chief purpose for writing was the conduct (ἀναστρέφω)⁶⁶ of the members of God's household and not only among family members but as God's public witnesses in Ephesus.⁶⁷ He needed to alert them to the fact that God had claims on the behavior of his people.⁶⁸ Character and conduct, along with sound doctrine, were woefully lacking in the church due to the impact of the false teachers. One word that seemed to comprehensively describe the conduct Paul wanted from the believers was "godliness" (εὐσέβεια).⁶⁹ For him, this

updates on the progress of Timothy's mission in Ephesus and saw the need for his return. One cannot be certain whether he faced travel delays or ongoing spiritual dilemmas in his current location that demanded more of his time and attention, but in any case, he realized his speedy return to Ephesus was unlikely.

⁶⁵ Paul started this paragraph by stating, "I am writing these things to you [Timothy]" (Ταῦτά σοι γράφω), where the "these things" referred to all he had already penned and possibly included the entire epistle. See Larry J. Perkins, *The Pastoral Letters: A Handbook on the Greek Text* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017), 68.

⁶⁶ Paul uses ἀναστρέφεσθαι which is a present, middle, or passive, infinitive. In the middle voice, it would read "to conduct oneself." The verb means to behave or conduct oneself in a general, comprehensive sense. See Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 139. Mounce says this word refers to people's general conduct, their way of life. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 220; Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 70.

⁶⁷ In the Greek text, the subject of the verb, to conduct, is not stated. While some believe Paul is speaking primarily Timothy, his deputy representative, the context seems to include the entire church, the household of faith, all those commissioned to live in all godliness, proclaim the truth of the gospel, and safeguard the doctrine taught by the apostle. Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 99.

⁶⁸ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 272-273.

⁶⁹ A comprehensive definition of godliness is provided below along with its syntactical relationship to "the mystery," the subject in the nominal clause.

word encompassed the breadth of their responsibilities to mentally understand the truths of the Christian message and physically demonstrate godly behavior, relationships, and attitudes that faithfully bore witness to the person of Christ.

Regarding their conduct, while Paul saw the necessity of godly elders pastoring each congregation and setting an example for their congregations to follow, the behavior of the saints was not to be legally imposed on them by a hierarchy of leadership, but be self-regulation, aided by the Spirit. His appeal was that every believer would “conduct themselves,” stressing the middle voice of the infinitive, as loving and loyal children in God’s family (3:15). Their confession of faith had to be mirrored by godly living that affected every aspect of life and every relationship. Their conduct and their verbal witness had to reflect the character and work of Christ.

The churches met in homes and followed the model of typical Greek households, where there were elders, parents, family members, servants, and slaves.⁷⁰ Paul believed the interpersonal relationships in the body of Christ, the spiritual family that made up the household,⁷¹ were vital to the testimony of the gospel. God was “Father” of all, the source of their physical and spiritual lives (1:2; 2 Tim 1:2). His people were adopted into and became one united family through the redemption offered by Christ. As a member of this family, Timothy himself was instructed to treat the older men as “fathers,” older women as “mothers,” younger men as “brothers,” and the younger women as “sisters” (1 Tim 5:1-2). The normative household codes that governed relationships in society, including husbands and wives, parents and children, owners and slaves, were to be honored while raising the standard for these relationships based on Christian love, respect, and purity.

The household of God was “the church of the living God” (3:15). They were the people of God who assembled to worship, pray, study, serve, and witness on behalf of the God who was alive, active, powerful, and present among his people.⁷² They “had been entrusted with the truth”⁷³ and had the responsibility to safeguard and proclaim it with faithfulness and integrity. The “church of the living God” stood in stark

⁷⁰ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 608.

⁷¹ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 103-104.

⁷² Stott, *The Message*, 104.

⁷³ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 91.

contrast to the pagan temples dedicated to Artemis, the Caesar cult, and other local deities, but had tragically wandered from the truth and lost the vitality of her spiritual life and witness.

The church represented a metaphorical temple with its pillars and a foundation devoted to God. Paul frequently referred to the believing community as the temple of God where the Holy Spirit dwelt (1 Cor 3:16-17; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21).⁷⁴ Wherever the believers gathered to worship Jesus Christ and proclaim the gospel, they functioned like a temple erected in a public space where the citizens of the city could listen to and observe the gospel in action. Paul referred to two essential components of a temple using two anarthrous singular nouns: a pillar (στῦλος) and a foundation (ἐδραίωμα), and both were directly related to the truth of the gospel.⁷⁵ A singular pillar symbolized the church as a unified body holding up the truth for the local community to observe. Possibly, Paul used the anarthrous form to indicate that the church in Ephesus was important in the spreading of the gospel, but it represented only one of many churches charged with this responsibility.⁷⁶ Pillars held the roof aloft. In the context of Ephesus, the temple of Artemis, one of the wonders of the ancient world, housed 127 columns, each standing 18 meters high to support an auspicious glimmering marble roof honoring their goddess.⁷⁷ The church had the obligation to lift high the truth of the gospel for all to see. Solomon Andria notes that the pillars functioned not only to support the roofs of ancient temples, but they also displayed inscriptions praising the gods worshiped in that sanctuary. The writings engraved on the stone columns provided information for successive generations of worshipers about the character and accomplishments of their gods.⁷⁸ Paul's admonition to God's household in Ephesus was to boldly declare the gospel through their verbal witness and behavior.

Paul used the analogy of the foundation of a temple to describe another aspect of the church's responsibilities. A foundation serves to buttress, stabilize, and keep a structure from shifting.⁷⁹ In like manner,

⁷⁴ For further discussion, see Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 92.

⁷⁵ Pillar and foundation stand appositionally to the church and household. Each of these descriptions is a critical component of the responsibility of the body of Christ in Ephesus. See Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 71.

⁷⁶ See Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 100.

⁷⁷ Stott, *The Message*, 105.

⁷⁸ Andria, "1 Timothy," 1473; Keener, *Bible Background*, 608, refers to the role of pillars as providing support, upholding structures.

⁷⁹ Stott, *The Message*, 105. Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 71.

God's family was to bear the weight of the gospel and safeguard it from shifting or being eroded by perpetrators of heterodox doctrine, whether they were false Christian teachers, Judaizers, or pagans. Paul's emphasis in this paragraph that introduced the song was on the church of the living God, knowing how to conduct itself within the household of faith and before their pagan neighbors. Their conduct had the responsibility of proclaiming the truth and safeguarding the truth.⁸⁰

Bridging between his metaphors describing the mission of the believers and the song, he reflected: "Beyond all question,⁸¹ the mystery of godliness is great" (ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον, 3:16). By common agreement among the people of God, the mystery that produced the capacity for his household to fulfill their calling in declaring and protecting the truth of the gospel as a way of life was beyond human comprehension.⁸²

To understand the phrase, the mystery of godliness (τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον),⁸³ it is essential to analyze the syntactical relationship between "mystery" and "godliness." The definite article (the) and the noun (mystery), form an inclusio bracketing "the godliness." Literally, it reads, "the—of the godliness—mystery." One explanation of the syntactical relationship is to identify "the godliness" as a genitive of product. Daniel B. Wallace explains that the genitive (godliness, εὐσεβείας) is the product of the noun (mystery) to which it is related.⁸⁴ Godliness is the product

⁸⁰ Paul believed that Timothy's example of godliness would have a more powerful influence against the false teachers than any attempt to combat their baseless myths. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 653.

⁸¹ Paul introduces the song with the statement, "By common consent, great is the mystery the produces godliness." By common consent, undeniably, or most certainly are translations of ὁμολογουμένως. By common consent within the body of Christ, the mystery that makes godliness possible is great—beyond human comprehension. See Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 72.

⁸² The greatness of this mystery is emphasized by Paul based on the word order of the sentence, "great" coming first in the statement and serving as an adjective to "the mystery." Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 72.

⁸³ Both nouns have a definite article: the mystery and the godliness. "The godliness" accentuates the particular character that God has made possible through his mystery.

⁸⁴ Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 106. Wallace labels this form a genitive of produce. "The genitive substantive is the produce of the noun to which it stands related."

of the mystery. This grammatical perspective can be seen in Towner's translation: "the mystery from which true godliness springs is great."⁸⁵

Godliness represents an important word that Paul used multiple times in the Pastorals (1 Tim 2:2; 3:16; 4:7, 8; 6:3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim 3:5; Titus 1:1).⁸⁶ In the first-century Greek context, godliness referred to an entire way of life that manifested respectful devotion to a god or to God.⁸⁷ For Paul, *eusebeia* represented a life that honored and revered God as Creator and Redeemer in all aspects of life, including external behavior, internal attitudes, and sound doctrine. The people who pursued godliness devoted their entire lives—body, mind, and spirit—to honoring and pleasing their god. The apostle believed redeemed human beings, full of God's Spirit, were capable of and expected to live this way in their relationship with the living God and with all people. True godliness included outward forms or expressions of living a life pleasing to God and loving people. And godliness included a power dimension⁸⁸ that brought about internal transformation, constraint against carnal temptations, courage to proclaim the gospel, and faith to perform the miraculous.⁸⁹ However, what provided the capacity to live a life of

⁸⁵ Towner, *Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 270.

⁸⁶ *Eusebeia* occurs 15 times in the NT. Of those, 10 are found in the Pastorals.

⁸⁷ Foerster, "σέβωμαι," 168-196, asserts that godliness (*eusebia*) describes "the whole of Christian existence as the vibrant interplay between the knowledge of God and the observable life that emerges from this knowledge." Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 170. See F. Q. Gouvea, "Godliness," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. W. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1984), 468. Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 72, 62, translates *eusebia* as complete piety which integrates faith and life. He explains that this manifestation of piety included "the daily decision to pursue a life of godliness in conformity with the gospel." Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 763, 792, states, *eusebia* "refers to the manner of life that issues from a [proper] knowledge of God, and thus includes both right thinking and right living."

⁸⁸ John R.W. Stott, *Guard the Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1973), 88, reports, "True religion combines form and power."

⁸⁹ Paul describes the false teachers displaying a form or veneer of godliness while denying the power of godliness (μόρφωσιν εὐσεβείας —τὴν δύναμιν εὐσεβείας, 2 Tim 3:5). These two genitives are genitives of production, "the genitive substantive produces the noun." Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 104). Godliness was exhibited publicly through true worship and authentic love, not through ascetic practices and Jewish legalism. The mystery which was Christ produced godliness through the power of the gospel (Rom 1:16) applied to the

godliness was the mystery, a truth only graspable through divine revelation.

What then was the mystery that could generate a lifestyle of godliness? That God made it possible for sinful people to become members of his family, know and experience the truth, conduct themselves in ways that honored him, and demonstrate love for others was a great mystery. How was it possible that people once dead in sin (Eph 2:1, 5) could exhibit this type of godliness?

A “mystery” was a truth about the Person of God or a work of God which could only be known when God provided revelation for people to comprehend what was previously unknown and unknowable. But now the mystery explaining how people could live godly lives had been unveiled.⁹⁰ The punctuation at the end of the phrase, a colon or semicolon, indicates that there was not a full stop (period) between the declaration and the song. The phrase was intended to continue with a relative pronoun, “who” (ὃς), followed by the song, which explained the mystery that produced the godliness needing to be displayed by God’s people. This mystery was not simply the revelation of information but a Person, Jesus Christ. The mystery was Christ, who serves as the subject for each of the six lines in the song.⁹¹ The answer to how it was possible to live in godliness is the content of the song.

While beyond the scope of this study, one should note that Paul moved immediately after the song with an adversative (δὲ, 4:1) to describe what the Holy Spirit revealed about the false teachers. Christ and the results of his life stood in stark contrast to the message and conduct of the heretics. Paul denounced them and the demonic sources of their teaching, the perversion of their content and conduct, the contradiction of their message compared to God’s revelation, and the tragic impact they are having on the gospel witness and the household of faith.⁹²

life of the believer through the presence of the Holy Spirit. See Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 792-793; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 547-548; Guy H. King, *A Leader Led: An Expository Study of 1 Timothy* (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1962), 91.

⁹⁰ See Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 226. Mysteries are described by Paul in Colossians 1:26, 27; 2:2; 4:3; Ephesians 5:32.

⁹¹ Perkins, *Pastoral Letters*, 73.

⁹² See Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 432.

Conclusion

This initial section undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the context, content, and theological underpinnings of the Christ hymn as presented in 1 Timothy 3:16. This investigation elucidates the hymn's pivotal role within the overarching framework of Paul's pastoral and doctrinal objectives, particularly in his endeavor to address the proliferation of false teachings in the early church in Ephesus. The hymn functions as a critical affirmation of Christ's incarnation and exaltation, thereby reinforcing essential tenets of the Christian faith that serve to counter divergent theological viewpoints and stabilize ecclesiastical doctrine and godly living in the city. Part 2 of this article will delve into the meaning and the implications of the Christ Hymn in 1 Timothy 3:16.

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A Visible Unity: Cecil Robeck and the Work of Ecumenism

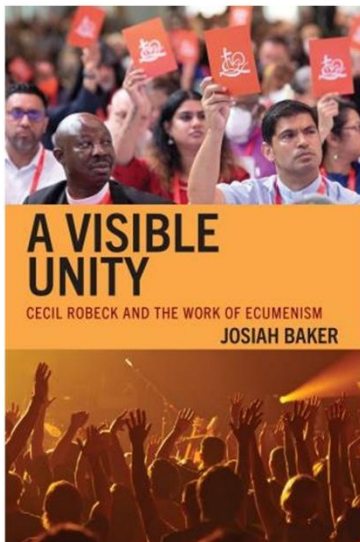
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The Samaritan Dilemma: An Ecclesiological Interpretation of Acts 1:8 in Addressing Prejudice and Racism within the Church

Kelly S. Goins

Abstract

This article explores the inclusion of Samaria in the missional mandate of Acts 1:8, where Jesus instructs his disciples to be witnesses “in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Through an ecclesiological lens, the study examines three interpretations: (1) Samaria as a geographical steppingstone to Rome, reflecting the gospel’s spread in Acts; (2) Samaria as a symbol of Israel’s hoped-for unification, aligning with Ezekiel’s prophecy of a restored kingdom; and (3) Samaria as an ecclesiastical filter, challenging the church to confront prejudice and racism. Drawing on biblical exegesis, historical context, and theological analysis, this article argues that Samaria’s inclusion serves all three purposes, with a unique and intentional emphasis on addressing systemic prejudice within the church. By referencing Jesus’s interactions with Samaritans, such as the parable of the Good Samaritan, and drawing parallels to modern examples like Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech, the study underscores Samaria’s role as a call to overcome division and hatred. The findings suggest that Acts 1:8 compels the church to purify its witness by fostering unity and love, confronting biases before extending its mission to the world. This interpretation has implications for contemporary ecclesiastical practices, urging the church to address racial and social prejudices to embody Christ’s vision of love for the world.

Keywords: Samaria, mission, prejudice, unity, racism

Introduction

As a young man, I learned Bible stories in Sunday School and church. I grew up going to church every Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night. I heard Acts 1:8 so many times that I had it memorized by the age of ten: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,

and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).¹ I heard it called the “missional mandate” and knew it was a key Scripture in my Pentecostal upbringing. I never really understood the relation that these locations had in proximity to each other, and as a preacher’s kid, I never really questioned it. In my mind, they were concentric geographical regions that represented larger and larger areas. I understood Jerusalem, where Pentecost was poured out in AD 33. Without looking at a map of the region, I reasoned that if Jerusalem is the city, then Judea must be the state, Samaria must be the country, and the “ends of the earth” was just that—everywhere else. After consulting a map of Israel, however, I quickly learned that Jerusalem was indeed the city, Judea was the governing province, but Samaria was actually the province to the north of Judea, and of course, the “ends of the earth” was the rest of the world.

My question is this: Why is Samaria included in Christ’s missional mandate to the church? Is it just a coincidence, or is there a deeper understanding that I am missing? In this paper, I will attempt to answer this question. There are three possible theories. The first is that Paul’s mission was to reach Rome with the message of Christ, and because Samaria was to the north of Judea and in the path to Rome, one had to journey through Samaria to get to Rome. Second is that Christ’s intent had always been the unification of Israel, which would include the reunification of the Southern Kingdom (Judah) and the Northern Kingdom (Samaria/Israel). This view meshes with the disciples’ question in Acts 1:6 on the restoration of the kingdom of Israel. Jesus’ answers to their question would also support this view. Third would be that Samaria represents more than a geographical region, but also prejudice and hatred toward others. We will look at the strengths and weaknesses of each view and how this affects our understanding of the missional mandate of Acts 1:8 in the first century, today, and in the future.

Exegesis

When the disciples finally realized that Christ’s departure was imminent, they had just one last question to ask him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6). This doesn’t seem to be an unusual question. Jesus spent much of his time teaching about the kingdom of God (v. 3), and the disciples were very interested in their positions and roles in this kingdom to come. However, the disciples did

¹ All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the NIV.

not fully understand what the process would look like or what it would entail. F. F. Bruce supports this dream of the disciples' "burning expectation of an imminent theocracy with themselves as its chief executives" (Mark 10:35–45; Luke 22:24–27).² They anticipated a kingdom of military dominance and restoration; Jesus's idea was more of spiritual freedom and global evangelism.

The disciples asked for times and dates, and Jesus answered in terms of power and mission. Jesus redirected the disciples' question to better refine their understanding of the kingdom of God. Instead of confirming or correcting their understanding of the kingdom, he focused on its fulfillment and mission. Notice that Jesus did not correct or condemn their question because the liberation of Israel would be fulfilled eventually in the eschaton, but for the mission at hand, Jesus focused the disciples' and the world's attention on the propagation of the spiritual liberation of humanity through the promise of the Holy Spirit.

What was the significance, if any, of the inclusion of Samaria in the mission of Acts 1:8? Craig Keener gives clarity on the translation of the phrase in verse 8, "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Keener says, "Instead of the τε that precedes Ἱερουσαλὴμ being pleonastic in view of the following polysyndeton (the three occurrences of καὶ that follow), we might translate, 'not *only* in Jerusalem but also ...' Because one feminine definite article covers both the Greek words for Judea and Samaria, we should think of them together as the next stage of the mission."³ Keener suggests that one could identify three geographical sections in the book of Acts instead of four by combining Judea and Samaria into one geographical region. While this is one of the better explanations of the inclusion of Samaria, it tends to downplay the importance of Samaria and speaks more to the hope of the unification of Israel.

Unification of Israel

Surprisingly, not a lot of writing exists on the purpose of the geographical expansion of the Acts 1 mission. Some hold the belief that the inclusion of Judea and Samaria supported Ezekiel's prophecy of the unification of Israel (Ezek. 37:15–28). Around 922 BC, the ten northern

² F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1988), 36.

³ Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 1, *Introduction and 1:1–2:47* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015), 702.

tribes of Israel, who rejected the rule of Rehoboam, formed a separate kingdom under Jeroboam. The Northern kingdom was called Israel, and the Southern kingdom was called Judah. As is indicative in family conflicts, the animosity and hostility grew throughout the years because of the division.

The dream of a unified kingdom, however, was embedded in the hearts and minds of Israel. Ezekiel's prophecy of the sticks illustrates the belief that God would restore Ephraim and Judah into one people and the division between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms would be united into the kingdom of God under the covenant of peace (Ezek. 34:25; Jer. 54:10). James E. Smith writes, "God would gather the true 'sons of Israel' from all the lands where they have been scattered over the years and bring them back to their own land. They would be 'one nation' in the land, 'on the mountains of Israel.'"⁴ Is it any wonder that the disciples' question to Jesus in Acts 1:6 was focused on this hope of restoration of the kingdom of Israel? Bob Utley contends that the "disciples still had a totally Jewish nationalistic perspective."⁵ It was hard for them to see the restoration of Israel in any other perspective than military domination and freedom from Roman occupation. To add to this dream of unification was possibly a hope of administrative positions for the disciples since they were on the frontlines with Jesus. Bruce points out that at an earlier date, the disciples had been captivated by the thought of such positions, and they hoped this united kingdom would include them.⁶ Could it be that Jesus's answer to their question was not a denial of this unification, but a fulfillment that would bring unity to the kingdom of God in a spiritual sense and not merely a military or political sense? I am not rejecting this position of unification in Acts 1:8. I believe it's merely one layer to the full understanding of this great mission.

Road to Rome

The second position maintains that the geographical progression of Acts 1:8 merely signifies the road to Rome, which marked the beginning of the "ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Since we know that the Holy Spirit

⁴ James E. Smith, *The Major Prophets*, Old Testament Survey Series (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing, 1995), 481.

⁵ Bob Utley, *Luke the Historian: The Book of Acts*, Study Guide Commentary Series, New Testament vol. 3B (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 2003), 12.

⁶ Bruce, *Book of Acts*, 35.

was initially poured out in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, we are sure of the starting point of this spiritual migration. Determining the meaning of “ends of the earth” will give us some direction for the spread of the New Testament church. Keener and Bruce suggest that “the ends of the earth” is a direct reference to Rome.⁷ Keener continues that the short-term strategic goal in Acts is Rome; however, the long-term perspective is to take the Holy Spirit to all people (Ps. 67:1, 67:7; Isa. 45:22, 49:6, 52:10; Acts 13:47).⁸ While Rome might possibly have been the intended destination of the gospel in Acts, this would seem limiting for the future propagation of the gospel. Rome was not the outer edge of civilization in the first century, but it was the center of the Roman Empire. The “ends of the earth” didn’t end in Rome—it began there. Rome was the epicenter of Roman domination and control. Jesus is possibly echoing the language of Isaiah 49:6, which anticipates the light of the gospel spreading throughout the world: “I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.” If the message of salvation was going to penetrate the Gentile community and ultimately reach to the “ends of the earth,” then eventually it would have to go through Rome.

It is also widely held that Acts 1:8 serves as a table of contents for the book of Acts because the spread of the gospel in Acts begins in Jerusalem (Acts 1–7), continues to Judea and Samaria (8–11:18), then spreads to the “ends of the earth” (11:18–28:31). This progression begins with Jews but ultimately targets Gentiles. This may seem like a simplistic approach to the mission, but it is, again, a layer of the purpose. God uniquely developed those who were to spread this message to the specific regions. For example, Peter and John preached the good news of Jesus to Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 1–7). Philip the evangelist took the gospel to Samaria. Some believe that Philip could have been a Hellenist or at least sympathetic to Hellenists, as he was assigned to the distribution of food to widows following the dispute in Acts 6 between the Hellenists and Hebrews. Therefore, Philip did not bring a traditional witness based on Jewish tradition. Instead, it is possible that he communicated in a way that the Samaritan people understood and accepted with miracles and healings. Peter and John showed up in

⁷ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), np; Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, fn, 37.

⁸ Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, n.p.

Samaria to verify and validate what God was doing through Philip among the Samaritans.

It is also interesting to note that the Jews did not consider Samaritans to be Gentiles or Jews. P. U. Maynard-Reed asserts, “Samaritans were not viewed as Gentiles but as schismatics, heretics or half-breeds. They were regarded as a sort of *tertium quid*—neither Jew nor Gentile. Thus, they stood as a halfway house between Jewish and Gentile worlds, leading to a transition to the Gentile mission.”⁹ Lastly, the Apostle Paul was born in Tarsus, the capital city of Cilicia under Roman governance (Acts 22:3), which made him a Roman citizen (16:37–38). However, Paul was also a citizen of Israel, being raised in Jerusalem and trained “at the feet of Gamaliel” (22:3). Paul’s status as a Jewish and Roman citizen gave him the unique pedigree to present the gospel of Christ to both Jewish and Gentile audiences. Can you see God’s design now in the book of Acts with 1:8 serving as the table of contents for the spiritual migration of the church, and the apostles, Philip, and Paul uniquely designed to take the message of salvation through the witness of the Holy Spirit to the “ends of the earth”?

Samaritans as Half-Breeds

While Samaritans were not viewed favorably by the established Jewish culture in Jerusalem, did Jesus show signs of prejudice toward Samaritans? I mentioned earlier that the Samaritans were viewed as half-breeds and heretics. This rivalry began with the division of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. According to 2 Kings 17, Israel was conquered by the Assyrians and repopulated with people from Babylon and other nations around 722 BC. The Samaritans began a downward spiral of disobedience and compromise. Tensions grew even greater with the return of exiles to Jerusalem under Cyrus’s edict in 538 BC. The rebuilding of the wall and temple in Jerusalem became a political threat to Sanballat, as recorded in Ezra 4. The animosity possibly peaked around 128 BC when the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim was destroyed by the Hasmoneans. Later, the Samaritans who were excluded from the inner courts of the temple in Jerusalem by Jewish authorities desecrated the temple by spreading human bones within the temple

⁹ P. U. Maynard-Reid, “Samaria,” in *Dictionary of the Latter New Testament and Its Developments*, ed. Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davis (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 1076.

porches and sanctuaries during the Passover around AD 6.¹⁰ It appeared that at every turn in history, the conflict grew greater and greater between these two rivaling regions.

We pick up on this tension between Jesus and Samaritans even in the Gospels. Exclusively in Matthew 10:5–6, Jesus sends out the twelve disciples with these instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.” This seemed to be the sentiment of other Jews as they would avoid Samaria altogether when traveling north to Galilee or beyond. However, on other occasions, Jesus expressed more compassion toward Samaritans. In Luke 9:51–56, the Samaritans refused to be hospitable to Jesus and the disciples as they traveled from Galilee to Jerusalem, which happened frequently in the region. The disciples wanted to call “fire down from Heaven and destroy them” (v. 55). But Jesus refused their request and rebuked them for it.

Luke records the account of Jesus healing the ten lepers in Luke 17. Here, Jesus refers to the Samaritan leper as “this foreigner,” which would seem to be a derogatory comment, yet he does not refuse to heal him and even commends him for his gratitude when the other nine did not bother to return (v. 18). Only the Gospel of John records the story of Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman at the well near the Samaritan town of Sychar. Not only does Jesus ask her for water, but he also offers her salvation. He extends this salvation to the entire town as he stays for two days ministering and loving these Samaritan people, possibly a foreshadowing of what Jesus knew was in store for them after Pentecost. It seems like the intolerance toward Samaritans was beginning to change. The change may not be evident in the lives of other Jews, but we do see Jesus’s compassion for them beginning a transition. Christ’s mission to “seek and save the lost” included even the despised and pagan Samaritans (Luke 19:10).

One account of Jesus, the parable in Luke 10:30–37 of the Good Samaritan, needs closer examination. The other accounts of Jesus’s interaction with Samaritans were historical, real-life encounters recorded in the Gospels. But the story of the Good Samaritan was a parable crafted by Jesus with a specific point and reason. Let’s look at two elements of this parable. First, it is an expert in the Jewish law who asks Jesus the question, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 10:25). There isn’t much of a sense that he is trying to trick or trap Jesus

¹⁰ Walter A. Elwell and Philip W. Comfort, eds., “Samaria,” *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2001), 1153–55.

in a theological question to use against him to the religious establishment. He seems to be genuine in his questions and responses. Jesus's answer, however, seems to be directed not just to the lawyer but possibly to those who were listening in close proximity. Scripture does not give the occasion or the setting of the event, or mention others who may have been in the vicinity to hear Jesus's comments. But it seems likely that Jesus was not just responding to the lawyer but also making an indicting comment to the Jewish listeners concerning their prejudice specifically toward Samaritans.

Parables typically have a point to them or a specific meaning. It may help us to better understand Jesus's point by substituting common, modern characters in the positions of the characters of this parable. The robbers and the fellow who fell into the hands of robbers could represent any perpetrator and victim in our world today. But let's substitute a pastor for the priest and a professor for the Levite. For the Samaritan, let's substitute a Jihadist, transexual, or any subculture that others may detest or discriminate against. Jesus was not just giving a lesson on how to treat people who have fallen victim to abuse or crime. I believe he was challenging our view and ethos on discrimination and prejudice. Whatever culture to which this story is told could easily substitute the prejudice of the day, because that was what Jesus was challenging. So why did Jesus use the Samaritan in his story? Because Samaritans were the people group most hated by the Jewish community. Jesus's words still challenge the prejudices of our culture today.

Samaritans as a Filter

This journey of geographical progression of Acts 1:8 is best seen not simply as the geographical migration from Jerusalem to Rome that happened to include Samaria, but as a type of filter to purify the hearts of the New Testament church. Jesus' inclusion of Samaria was understood clearly by the disciples, and the significance of its inclusion spoke to the prejudice that was systemic in the Jewish culture. In the late summer of 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. addressed over two hundred thousand citizens assembled on the mall in Washington, DC. From the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, he delivered one of the most famous speeches in American history and for many arguably the most famous and influential of all time, called "I Have a Dream." At the conclusion of the speech, King's voice rang out the words "let freedom ring" with the powerful oratory of an anointed message:

So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that: let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.¹¹

History reports that King's speech *crescendoded* with a call to action to let this message of freedom ring from the highest mountain peaks in America: "mountains of New York," "Alleghenies of Pennsylvania," "Rockies of Colorado," and the "slopes of California." But not only that—"let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia." Why would King include Stone Mountain in Georgia? Surely there were taller mountains representing the Southern states. Any civil rights activist attending this march in 1963 knew why Stone Mountain, Georgia, was worth mentioning in this famous speech. It was one of the last bastions of white supremacy in America at the time. Carved on the side of the mountain are the images of three Confederate leaders. Stone Mountain is called the Mount Rushmore of the Confederacy. The Ku Klux Klan used the site for cross burnings as late as 1960. To the black man in America, it was a symbol of slavery. King included it in his speech to proclaim to all that freedom could not ring in America unless it also rang on Stone Mountain, Georgia.

I believe Christ's message was the same when proclaiming his message of freedom in Acts 1:8, not only to the disciples but also to every generation following, that to be a witness to the "ends of the earth," you must first be a witness in Samaria, a symbol of prejudice and division in his time. Jesus used Samaria as a type of ecclesiastical filter so that the Holy Spirit might flow freely through the disciples in power and love for the marginalized and overlooked of humanity. Just like the civil rights activists in Washington, DC, understood King's meaning of Stone Mountain, Georgia, I believe every disciple understood Jesus's meaning of Samaria. If someone today were trying to make a directive about spiritual unity, they might say something like, "Bring unity not only to Azusa Street, but also to Springfield, Missouri, and Memphis, Tennessee, and to the ends of the earth." Or if they were calling for racial justice, they might say, "Bring freedom not only in Springfield, Missouri, but also in Ferguson, Missouri, and Minneapolis, Minnesota,

¹¹ Martin Luther King, "Let Freedom Ring," August 28, 1963, <https://www.btbores.org/Downloads/I%20Have%20a%20Dream%20by%20Martin%20Luther%20King%20Jr.pdf>.

and to the ends of the earth.” Many Evangelical Christians would understand the meaning of these locations, and I believe the same is true for the disciples in Jesus’s day. Jesus defined the kingdom in terms of unity, harmony, and love. I believe Jesus was saying that before you can preach the gospel to the ends of the earth, you must first deal with your prejudice and hatred in *your* personal Samaria. This is the kingdom of God.

Prejudice or Racism

The problem of prejudice and racism is not limited to the twenty-first century but has persisted throughout history. The cancer of prejudice is a lingering effect of Adam’s original sin. Since the records of humankind have been kept in the historical narrative, we see residue of prejudice and racism systemically in humankind. Let me first clarify the difference between prejudice and racism. Merriam-Webster defines the word *prejudice* as a legal term that means “a preconceived judgement or opinion.” Synonyms for prejudice are bias, prejudgment, preconception, or partiality. A preference over Ford and Chevy can be a prejudice if it’s not based on facts, and any prejudice taken to an extreme turns into hate. On the other hand, Merriam-Webster defines *racism* as “a belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.” Where prejudice is not necessarily racial, racism is always hate-inspired. Both prejudice and racism are enemies of unity. We know that racism and extreme prejudice are not taught by Jesus and, in fact, are the opposite of his righteous DNA. Jesus is described in Scripture by love, and this is the standard to which we as followers of Christ need to aspire. I believe that Jesus’s words to the disciples in Acts 1:8 are a strong lesson toward this ideal of unity and love that will define the kingdom of God.

Throughout history, we see both prejudicial and racial biases through Scripture. Some begin as sibling rivalries and end up in major world religions while others define differences in class, gender, ethnicity, and race. It’s difficult to determine how these prejudices began, but it’s easy to identify when they reach the level of racism and hate. The modern church is accused by some as being filled with racists and closed-minded members, and rightly so as historically our loose affiliations and lack of accountability and education record many atrocities and spiritual evictions. I am by no means trying to justify or defend the church today. Culturally, we are making positive strides, but historically, our progression has been slow. Keener presents many examples of

individuals and churches who have been historically influential in America, as they helped slaves find freedom throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹² At the same time, other churches in the South advocated lynchings and promoted the KKK. For every heroic story of love and freedom, there exists an opposing story of tragedy and genocide. Many churches today are doing little or nothing to reverse this prejudicial stereotype and foster attitudes and practices of inclusion and love. The major issue of exclusivity in churches today is not just around racial boundaries but extends to gender, class, and sexual diversity. Jesus's heart was to save the world. This includes all people of every culture, gender, ethnicity, or sexual identity. Unity will be seen as the church steps out of its comfort zone and demonstrates love for the "others."

I have lived in or around Tulsa, Oklahoma, for forty-eight of my fifty-nine years. It wasn't until I was thirty-two years old and bought a history book published by the Tulsa Police Department commemorating one hundred years of service that I learned about the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921, now known as the Tulsa Race Massacre. This event, which has been a blemish on American history for the last century, took place in Tulsa - today a hub of Christianity known for its megachurches, Pentecostal education, and international ministries. I don't know why this event was left out of our Oklahoma history curriculum in Oklahoma public schools. I would speculate because it was an event that most white Oklahomans would rather not recount. It was horrific by every account and is an event that destroyed families and businesses, all because of racial hatred. With the Tulsa Race Massacre Centennial Commemoration taking place in 2021, churches all over Oklahoma dedicated a Sunday service to promote healing and forgiveness. This was a positive step in racial healing for our community and in my life personally, but the battle is far from over.

Over the course of the past several years, race relations have been at the forefront of the media and our lives. Reconciliation is greater and more complex than the mending of black/white relations. In the church, we experience racial, gender, generational, educational, and even spiritual prejudice. It seems systemic to humankind to have some sort of prejudicial bias related to those around us. Many books have been

¹² Craig S. Keener, "The Gospel and Racial Reconciliation," in *The Holy Spirit and Social Justice: Interdisciplinary Global Perspectives: Scripture and Theology*, ed. L. Antipas Harris and Michael D. Palmer (Lanham, MD: Seymour Press, 2019), 116–20.

written concerning racism in the past few years. Much of what is written is from a racial or political bias and offers little more than a Wittenberg Door to vent one's feelings and biases. Possibly, we are trying to solve the issue of racism when we may need to just acknowledge the tension and offer grace and understanding. Andy Stanley says that most issues are not problems to be solved, but tensions to be managed.¹³ Deciding who's right in all of this may never happen. Managing those tensions takes empathy and grace. Solving this issue may be as impossible as solving the polarization between Calvinism versus Arminianism or egalitarianism versus complementarianism. These biases are both systemic and systematic; they are part of our generational DNA, and they are recognized in our judicial, educational, political, and, unfortunately, ecclesiastical systems. Will we ever see complete unity and love, and the absence of prejudice and racism? Maybe not on this side of the eschaton, because all these systems are conducted by fallible humans. But look how far we have come in the last one hundred years. No more slavery, minorities are in every seat of government, everyone has the opportunity for success, and in many cases, the church is leading the way. But we have further to go. We didn't get here overnight, and the problem won't be solved overnight. As Ephesians 4:16 says, "He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. *As each part does its own special work*, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love" (NLT, emphasis added).

The scope of this paper is not to make a statement on racism or inequity in the church. I believe the inclusion of Samaria in Acts 1:8 is a powerful statement to the church that we need to deal with racism and prejudice in our personal lives and ministries before we can go to the ends of the earth. Only then will we experience the full measure of love that Christ intended for us to offer to the world. This kind of love will bring us closer to the restoration of Israel that many have hoped for, and the kingdom of God will be identified by the unity and love that God intended for us to exhibit.

Conclusion

So which position is right? Did Jesus answer the kingdom question from the disciples in Acts 1:8 merely because it served as a table of contents for the migration of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome? Or was it to

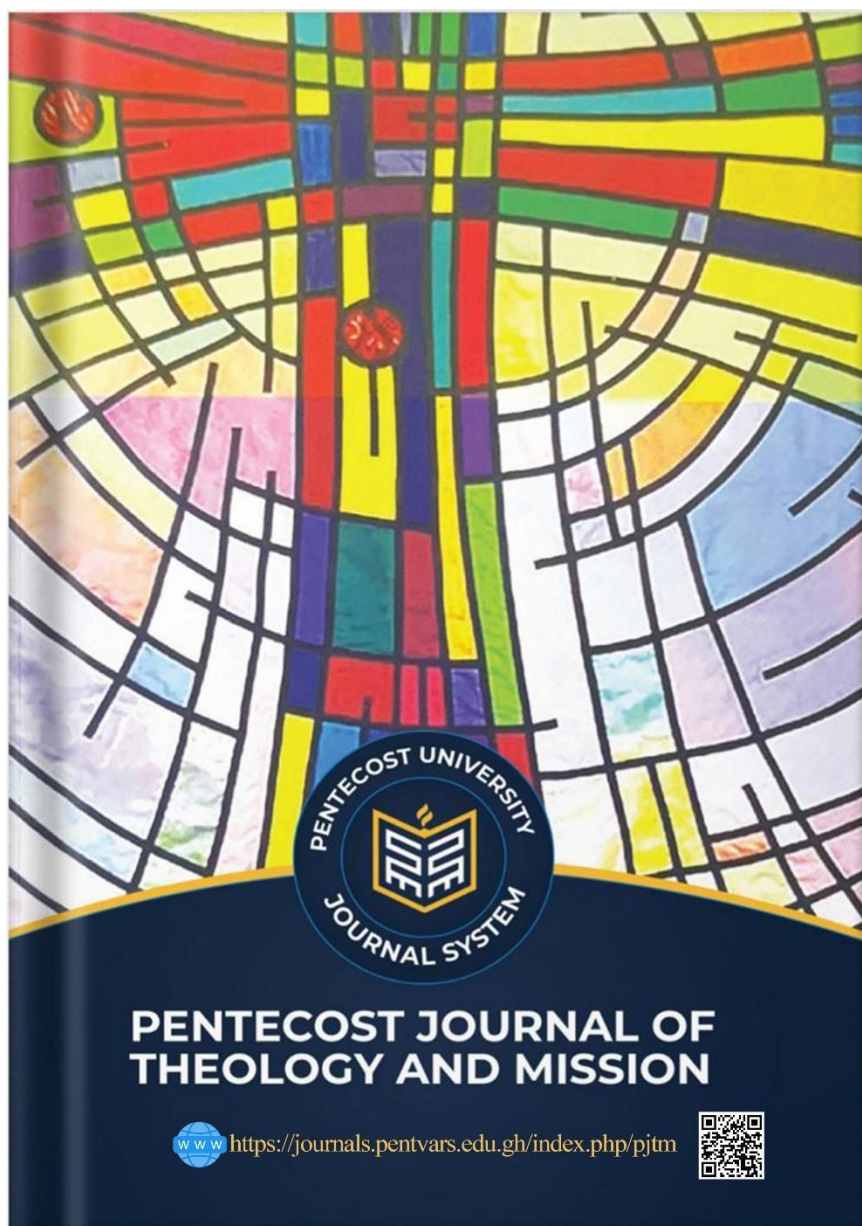
¹³ Andy Stanley, "March 2015: Managing Tension," Andy Stanley Podcast, March 10, 2015, accessed April 17, 2022, <https://andystanley.com/podcast/managing-tension/>.

emphasize the desire for unity between the fractured kingdom of Israel that God seeks to reunite? Or did Jesus use Samaria as a filter to purify the church to accomplish his mission? I understand it as all three, not simply one option. Jesus did, in fact, use the progression of Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the rest of the world as the roadmap that the book of Acts follows. I believe he did that to show the progression of Christianity, starting first with the dogma of traditional Christianity influenced by Judaism, next to the Samaritan church, seemingly halfway between the tradition of Jerusalem and the hedonism of Rome, serving as a middle ground between Jew and Gentile. And finally, to idolatrous Rome as the beginning of the rest of the world. Jesus's words should also be understood in the light of unification for Israel. The Scriptures are clear that the reunification of Judah and Samaria was the hope of Israel, and that hope still exists today throughout the Jewish and Christian worlds. Unity is always the hope over division.

Lastly, to purify the church and to deal with the issues of prejudice and racism, Jesus sent his future church through Samaria to purify his witness to the world. Jesus's message was clear; the church must deal with its own prejudice and racism if it is going to successfully take the message of Christ to the "ends of the earth."

I don't remember many of my father's sermons as I was growing up, but I do remember a few of his illustrations. He told of a young brother and sister who were fighting as they were playing one day. The father entered the room, and the little sister quickly jumped into the father's arms and gave him a hug. As she told her father she loved him, the little girl stuck out her tongue at her brother across the room. The caption for this scene is, "You can't love your father while hating your brother." How much more should this message be embodied in the life-changing message of the love of Christ and recognized in the church today? Christ did not die on the cross just for the people that we favor or choose, but He died that all may be saved, even our Samaritans.

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“The Church’s Book”: A Pentecostal Engagement with Theological Interpretation of Scripture

Geoffrey Butler

Abstract

Pentecostal biblical scholars and theologians have, in recent decades, increasingly called for their movement to jettison the fundamentalist hermeneutics long popular among adherents, fuelled by the realization that the assumptions of such are incompatible with Pentecostal spirituality. However, a hesitancy to fully adopt the historical-critical method still characterizes the movement, which continues to prize personal experience and Christian community in theological reflection. Meanwhile, driven by concern over the commonplace, strict bifurcation of biblical studies and theology into separate academic disciplines, proponents of Theological Interpretation of Scripture (TIS) have also cautioned against an overreliance on the historical-critical methods that dominate much of the former field. Given that Pentecostals share numerous convictions with TIS proponents—namely, that the Spirit guides the church in biblical interpretation, that Scripture is primarily the church’s book, and that interpretation is not only for information but also for transformation—further dialogue between the movements could prove to be mutually enriching. This paper, therefore, engages TIS from a Pentecostal perspective, reflecting on the advantages and disadvantages Pentecostals might perceive in approaching Scripture from the perspective of theological interpretation.

Keywords: Holy Spirit, Pentecostalism, tradition, hermeneutics

Introduction

Over the two decades, Pentecostal biblical interpretation has undergone an identity crisis of sorts,¹ precipitated partly by the realization that its

¹ An earlier draft of this paper was awarded 3rd place in Wycliffe College’s 2021 Scripture and Theology Essay Contest and later presented at the 2022 Society for Pentecostal Studies. See Geoffrey Butler, “The Church’s Book: A Pentecostal Engagement with Theological Interpretation of Scripture,” *The*

core commitments are starkly at odds with the fundamentalist-dispensational hermeneutical method that has long been popular within the movement.² Several monographs have addressed various interpretive issues. For example, Kenneth Archer calls for a threefold approach,³ Bradley Noel engages postmodern hermeneutics,⁴ and Chris E.W. Green praises “the best of ancient and medieval readings of Scripture”.⁵ All in essential agreement that the Pentecostal movement requires a fresh approach to biblical interpretation that is true to its original vision and also honors the wider Christian tradition.

Meanwhile, there has arisen a movement popularly known as Theological Interpretation of Scripture (hereafter referred to as TIS), largely in response to an academic bifurcation between biblical studies and theology that proponents of TIS feel is not only inappropriate but inconsistent with the Great Tradition of Christian exegesis. Challenging the supposed superiority of the historical-critical method, Joel Green notes, “For most of the history of the church, theology itself was primarily an exegetical enterprise.”⁶ Nonetheless, TIS has proven difficult to define, given the diverse ecclesial commitments of individuals associated with it, evoking hesitancy on the part of some evangelicals to invest in the TIS project. In an apparent mixture of intrigue and skepticism, for example, D.A. Carson labels TIS “partly disparate movement, partly a call to reformation in biblical interpretation, partly a disorganized array of methodological commitments in hermeneutics, partly a serious enterprise and partly (I suspect) a fad.”⁷

Society for Pentecostal Studies, Vanguard University, Costa Mesa, CA, March 26, 2022.

² See Gerald T. Sheppard, “Pentecostalism and the Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism: Anatomy of an Uneasy Relationship,” *Pneuma* 6.2 (Fall 1984): 5-33.

³ See Kenneth J. Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Spirit, Scripture, and Community* (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2009), 142.

⁴ Bradley Truman Noel, *Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics: Comparisons and Contemporary Impact* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 10.

⁵ See Chris E. W. Green, *Sanctifying Interpretation: Vocation, Holiness, and Scripture*. 2nd ed (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2020), xiv.

⁶ Joel B. Green, *Practicing Theological Interpretation: Engaging Biblical Texts for Faith and Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 3.

⁷ D.A. Carson, “Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Yes, But . . .” in *Theological Commentary: Evangelical Perspectives*, ed. R. Michael Allen, (London: T&T Clark, 2011), 187.

Perhaps this burgeoning alternative to historical-criticism could be enriched by further engagement with the Pentecostal tradition in particular—and vice versa. Amos Yong, for example, observes that despite the diversity of proponents, “there is little objection to TIS being governed in some significant sense by the early Christian rule of faith ... of God as Father, Son, and Spirit, as creator, redeemer, and sanctifier, encapsulated in the Nicene confession, and such has come to be widely recognized as providing the theological scaffolding for TIS.”⁸ For the purposes of this essay, TIS will be understood as reading Scripture in and for the Christian community, past and present, resembling the definition proposed by Gregg Allison, who defines TIS as those “interpretive approaches that privileges theological readings of the Bible in due recognition of the theological nature of Scripture, its ultimate theological message, and/or the theological interests of its readers.”⁹ Although TIS has attracted little attention from Pentecostals thus far, Joel Green suggests they are well positioned to adopt it, given their “coming to the table of biblical studies rather late, when the rules of the game of critical scholarship had been somewhat loosened, allowing for critical reflection on the Enlightenment project.”¹⁰ This is especially true given that Pentecostalism, by its very nature, resists certain principles upon which historical-critical exegesis rests.

This paper seeks to address this deficit by engaging TIS from a Pentecostal perspective with the dual aim of encouraging Pentecostal interaction with TIS while enriching the wider conversation surrounding it with the best of the movement’s biblical interpretation. It argues that such a dialogue is natural, given that certain assumptions of early Pentecostal exegesis include the idea that the Holy Spirit guides the church in interpretation, the Scripture is primarily the church’s book, and that interpretation is not only for information but transformation. It is necessary to understand that Scripture must be interpreted in an explicitly theological sense. In addition, certain pitfalls that Pentecostals would do well to avoid in the engagement of TIS will be highlighted in

⁸ Yong, *The Hermeneutical Spirit*, 3-4. Amos Yong, *The Hermeneutical Spirit: Theological Interpretation and Scriptural Imagination for the 21st Century* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 3-4.

⁹ Gregg R. Allison, “Theological Interpretation of Scripture: An Introduction and Preliminary Evaluation,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 14.2 (2010), 29. Allison’s definition builds off Vanhoozer’s work, which is also commended in Yong’s introduction, perhaps hinting at a growing evangelical consensus definition of TIS.

¹⁰ Green, *Practicing Theological Interpretation*, 11.

the latter portion of the essay. Though addressing the advantages and disadvantages Pentecostals may perceive in approaching interpretation through a theological framework is impossible within a few pages, the goal is to encourage a conversation that seems ripe for development, which may benefit both the TIS movement and Pentecostal tradition.

The Church's Book

While Carson highlights bridging the gap between biblical studies and theology as a particularly commendable feature of TIS, it would scarcely occur to many Pentecostals to separate them in the first place.¹¹ Pentecostal interpretation, after all, did not originate in academia; Frank Macchia claims Pentecostals have historically been “wary of critical approaches to the biblical text that alienate the readers from a life-transforming participation in the world of the scriptures,”¹² in a nod to the critical view of enlightenment thinking that Green acknowledges.¹³ Archer observes that the historical-critical method's approach to the text from an assumed neutrality emphasized “a ‘scrupulous objectivity’” the required biblical scholars to remain “accountable to their ‘academic peers’ instead of the Christian communities to which they once belonged.”¹⁴ The idea that biblical exegetes might be accountable first to the academy rather than the church is a principle that early Pentecostals adamantly rejected, given their conviction that Scripture is the church's book. That notion, that biblical exegetes might be accountable first to the academy rather than the church, is also one that TIS proponents wish to counteract.

This conviction did, unfortunately, generate considerable anti-intellectualism among first-generation Pentecostals. William Durham, for instance, dismissed formal theological education altogether; he and his contemporaries felt that “Within the artificial context of the Bible school, too many Christians came to think of themselves too highly,” becoming concerned with “theological innovation” rather than advancing the Pentecostal mission.¹⁵ However, this should not be taken as a denigration of biblical knowledge altogether but a rejection of approaches that neglected an explicitly theological interaction with the

¹¹ Carson, “Theological Interpretation of Scripture,” 192-93.

¹² Frank D. Macchia “The Spirit and the Text: Recent Trends in Pentecostal Hermeneutics,” *Spirit and Church* 2.1 (May 2000), 54.

¹³ Green, *Practicing Theological Interpretation*, 11.

¹⁴ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 49.

¹⁵ Douglas G. Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 150.

text essential to their ecclesial communities. Lee Roy Martin explains that “for Pentecostals, the Bible functioned to form and equip the Church for its mission of evangelization, and it functioned as the content of their message to the world.”¹⁶ The earliest “formal” examples of Pentecostal theology were found in denominational newsletters and church tracts, explicitly stating their purpose to equip God’s people for mission.¹⁷ Resisting the “professionalization” of exegesis, they were convinced that interpretation was a task for the entire people of God; as Chris Green writes, “Pentecostals have always encouraged one another to search the Scriptures for themselves.”¹⁸ This appears natural, as shown in Gerald Sheppard’s early Pentecostals viewed all of Scripture “as a literal address to the Christian Church and to the contemporary arena in which Pentecostals did their theology.”¹⁹

Ironically, it seems early Pentecostals simply assumed the inherently theological nature of biblical interpretation, given their conviction that it was first and foremost the task of the church rather than the academy. In his assessment of TIS, Carson makes the intriguing suggestion, “One might even argue that some people who offer the best theological interpretation of Scripture (note the lowercase letters) have very little connection with the movement known as TIS.”²⁰ He points to John Calvin as an example of a competent exegete often overlooked by TIS proponents.²¹ Even more consequential for our purposes, however, is the fact that Carson’s description could just as easily fit many Pentecostal interpreters. Perhaps Pentecostals, in a sense, have been committed to this project for longer than they themselves have realized.

¹⁶ Lee Roy Martin, “Characteristics of Pentecostal Biblical Hermeneutics,” *Pharos Journal of Theology* 99 (2018), 7, [https://www.pharosjot.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article_1_vol_99\(2018\).pdf](https://www.pharosjot.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article_1_vol_99(2018).pdf).

¹⁷ See the *Canadian Pentecostal Testimony* 1.1 (December 1920), for instance.

¹⁸ Green, *Sanctifying Interpretation*, 68.

¹⁹ Gerald T. Sheppard, “Word and Spirit: Scripture in the Pentecostal Tradition, Part II,” *Agora* (Summer 1978), 16.

²⁰ Carson, “Theological Interpretation of Scripture,” 187.

²¹ An intriguing choice, given that Leulseged Philemon discusses the reformer’s views of inspiration and illumination in his monograph on the Holy Spirit’s role in theological interpretation. See Leulseged Philemon, *Pneumatic Hermeneutics: The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Theological Interpretation of Scripture* (Cleveland: CPT Press, 2019), 106-110.

The Spirit's Voice

Since pneumatology has always been at the core of Pentecostal identity, it is curious that many adherents have, in recent decades, adopted a dispensational hermeneutic that is antithetical to its very essence;²² regarding the Holy Spirit's influence in interpretation, Archer claims that in the movement's infancy, "Pentecostals said yes to both the authority of Scripture and the authority of experience."²³ Meanwhile, Yong claims that "TIS proponents have insisted on the import of pneumatology in scriptural interpretation,"²⁴ identifying another area for potential dialogue with Pentecostals.

Several within the former camp have explicitly mentioned the Spirit's role in theological interpretation; Kevin Vanhoozer, Yong contends, "has done more than anyone to think about 'interpretation after Pentecost,' and this as a Reformed and evangelical theologian."²⁵ The former explains, in his "thesis...that ethical interpretation is a spiritual exercise and that the spirit of understanding is not a spirit of power, nor of play, but the Holy Spirit."²⁶ Stephen E. Fowl asserts, "We cannot expect to be transformed into communities of wise readers of Scripture apart from the work of the Holy Spirit," appealing to Paul's exegesis of the Old Testament for support.²⁷ Finally, Daniel Treier argues:

Today, there are greater opportunities for lay participation in Scripture reading and theological discernment than in the premodern period. However, the temptation is also very real to pursue individualistic and idiosyncratic interpretation. Thus, we need to discern how the Holy Spirit leads members of the Christian community to discover the meaning of Scripture, and in particular how different parts of the body of Christ connect with each other in that process.²⁸

Treier's proposal especially seems immediately compatible with a Pentecostal approach. Its call for the interaction of the text, the

²² See Sheppard, "Pentecostalism and the Hermeneutics," as this conviction forms the basis of the author's essay.

²³ Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 87.

²⁴ Yong, *The Hermeneutical Spirit*, 5.

²⁵ Yong, *The Hermeneutical Spirit*, 8.

²⁶ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?: The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009, eBook), Ch. 1.

²⁷ Stephen E. Fowl, "The New Testament, Theology and Ethics," in *Hearing the New Testament*, ed. Joel B. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), eBook, 72.

²⁸ Daniel J. Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 43.

community, and the Spirit's work bears a striking similarity to Yong's proposal for a theological hermeneutic²⁹ and aligns perfectly with Noel's synthesis of the movement's exegesis. "Pentecostals," Noel explains, "invite the Holy Spirit to be involved in the hermeneutical process and then dedicate themselves to properly hearing his voice."³⁰ Surely, if the goal of TIS is to develop an alternative to historical-criticism that is grounded in and for the church, this aspect of Pentecostal exegesis could serve it well—and vice-versa.

Beyond Information to Transformation

One of the great benefits of the emerging TIS movement has been to remind the church of the richness of pre-critical interpretation, which offers considerable appeal to Pentecostals through the conviction that exegesis is not just concerned with information but personal transformation. Chris Green claims, "Pentecostals fully agree with Origen and the Patristic hermeneutical tradition: the reading of Scripture has a purpose, and that purpose is the making-present of the works of God."³¹ Indeed, a rather obvious but frequently overlooked question that must be asked in approaching biblical interpretation is for whom the text is intended. The answer, of course, is for the church, as TIS proponents would quickly assert. This view is not different from Pentecostals' position.

Archer's documentation of how some Pentecostals employed "threefold interpretive approach,"³² sounds like the fourfold method employed by many patristic exegetes. The principle that the very process of biblical interpretation itself is meant to form the Christian should be even further emphasized among Pentecostals. A recent example of such is Chris Green, who claims, "I am convinced... that reading Scripture is meant to be at least sometimes difficult, soul harrowing, purgative."³³ Lamenting the adoption of fundamentalist approaches to Scripture by Pentecostals as "failed attempts to solve once-for-all the epistemological problems raised by post-Reformation churchly controversies,"³⁴ he suggests that Scripture is not intended to be a simple source of information, but a means by which our hearts and

²⁹ Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2002).

³⁰ Noel, *Pentecostal and Postmodern Hermeneutics*), 139.

³¹ Green, *Sanctifying Interpretation*, xiii-xiv.

³² Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic*, 142.

³³ Green, *Sanctifying Interpretation*, xii.

³⁴ Green, *Sanctifying Interpretation*, 1-2.

minds are sanctified. Demonstrating the deep roots this concept enjoys within the Christian tradition, Byassee asserts that from Origen's perspective, "to be open to the words of scripture is to have one's own soul laid bare, operated on, and returned to wholeness,"³⁵ lending support to Green's claim that reading Scripture ought to be "soul harrowing, purgative."³⁶

This patristic legacy has been carried over into the TIS movement; as Treier argues, "The story that shapes a community's self-understanding should shape the character of its members,"³⁷ the implication being that the scriptural narrative must form the members of the body of Christ. Vanhoozer, likewise, claims those who "have been shaped by the biblical story and by the other types of communicative action will develop a Christian habitus... To read with understanding is to develop a Christian worldview, a spiritual orientation, and a loving way of life."³⁸ Within Pentecostalism, Archer too argues that being shaped by one's engagement with Scripture "is vital to the reader's ability to comprehend ... a Pentecostal would read the Bible as she would any other text... formed in the Pentecostal community by means of its narrative tradition and with her ears open to the Spirit."³⁹ Given how similar this sounds to the works of TIS proponents, that Pentecostals have largely yet to engage TIS substantially seems puzzling.

A Caution to Pentecostals

Before concluding, a word of caution might be in order. For all the potential that a dialogue between the TIS and Pentecostal movements may hold, there are several pitfalls that Pentecostals should perhaps avoid in the process. Pentecostals, for example, must be careful not to separate the history behind the text from the disciplines of theology and biblical studies, a problem that Carson mentions in addressing the TIS movement's suspicion of historical criticism. He claims, "This emphasis in TIS is often cast in terms of the conflict between history and theology, with history made out to be the villain,"⁴⁰ an ironic observation. Should Pentecostals, in bridging a gap between theology

³⁵ Jason Byassee, *Surprised by Jesus Again: Reading the Bible in Communion with the Saints* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2019), 29.

³⁶ Green, *Sanctifying Interpretation*, 1-2.

³⁷ Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation*, 45.

³⁸ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning*, Ch. 7.

³⁹ Kenneth J. Archer, "The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness" (Eugene: Pickwick, 2011), 75.

⁴⁰ Carson, "Theological Interpretation of Scripture," 189.

and biblical studies, construct a new one between theology and history? Wisdom would seem to dictate otherwise—especially if the movement is to remain true to its own evangelical roots.

A second caution is to avoid assuming that a given theological interpretation of a text is correct merely because it is ancient. Granted, unmerited suspicion toward the Great Tradition that characterizes some Pentecostal churches must be rejected; however, standing downstream from the Reformation, it must remain insistent that Scripture, not tradition, is the ultimate authority. For example, though Chris Green looks to Origen as a potentially fruitful dialogue partner for Pentecostals since he held, “like Pentecostals do, that Scripture is a coherent whole and that the meanings of Scripture are inexhaustible,”⁴¹ few sober-minded exegetes would assume the Alexandrian’s approach wholesale. While approaching Scripture Christologically is a noble goal, at points, Origen’s exegesis is rather speculative, avoiding the literal sense entirely.⁴²

The final caution is to avoid adopting assumptions that cause Pentecostals to abandon their distinctive approach of interpreting Scripture altogether. While much has been said concerning Pentecostalism’s need to recover an approach that is not unduly influenced by fundamentalism or even mainstream evangelicalism, engaging TIS substantially would require Pentecostals to retain awareness of their unique identity if this is to aid their hermeneutical project, rather than undermine it. In light of Yong’s recognition that “TIS advocates depend on the ecumenical consensus of the early Christian centuries even if they might find themselves located in the Roman Catholic Church or any of the confessional Protestant traditions,”⁴³ the goal would be to encourage Pentecostal participation, rather than assimilation into such an ecumenical conversation.

Conclusion

Certainly, some Pentecostals might feel uncomfortable with too closely identifying with TIS, given its own relative novelty on the one hand and a general skepticism toward ecumenism from Pentecostals on the other.

⁴¹ Green, *Sanctifying Interpretation*, xiv.

⁴² One example is in his exegesis of Exodus 2, where he takes Pharaoh’s daughter as representative of the Gentile church, Moses in the river as a reference to Christ, and Egypt as referring to the world. See Origen, *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, trans R.E. Heine. Fathers of the Church, 71 (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1982), 246.

⁴³ Yong, *The Hermeneutical Spirit*, 3.

Yet, as Jason Byassee writes, while many contemporary Christians view tradition as a set of foregone conclusions, “a tradition is actually a running argument conducted by those who care about the goods that the tradition gives to humanity through time.”⁴⁴ Given the substantial common ground between primitive Pentecostal exegesis and the aims of TIS, it is time that Pentecostals engage that running argument more seriously, both for what it may offer the wider Christian tradition and for what the tradition might, in turn, offer it.

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⁴⁴ Byassee, *Surprised by Jesus Again*, 90.

Worldviews beneath Cosmological Kerygma: Demons as a Case Study¹

Sanna Urvas and Markus Nikkanen

Abstract

Pentecostal communities believe in the power of the Holy Spirit in a healthy and empowering way. However, beliefs in the power and influence of demons, especially in the case of illnesses, generate unhealthy practices for the ministries of deliverance and exorcism. This paper explores the underlying worldviews that inform such beliefs in the field of demonology, especially where they appear to distort the biblical emphasis on God's love and sovereign care for his people. The analysis focuses on the theological worldview of Derek Prince and the hermeneutical approach of Michael Heiser, particularly his Divine Council worldview. Within the aforementioned worldviews, the aim is to provide observations of theological conclusions that do not rest on a biblical base. This study aims to highlight theological conclusions within the aforementioned worldviews that lack a sound biblical foundation.

Key Words: Derek Prince, Michael Heiser, demons, worldview, divine council worldview, Gen 6:1–4, biblical hermeneutics

Introduction

Europe was once, half a millennium ago, a monocultural entity with one dominant religion, Western Catholic Christianity. Since the eras of Reformation and Enlightenment, that has changed, and today Europeans live amidst religious diversity impacted by secularization as well as many faith traditions other than Christianity. According to several studies, the importance of religion has diminished in Western Europe more than in any other continent. Peter Berger argues that the main reason could be found in Europe's distinctive political and

¹ The original version was presented at the Europe-Asia Pentecostal Summit at City Harvest Church, Singapore, May 2025, and will be published in *Pentecostal Voices Across Continents*, ed. Kong Hee, Byron Klaus, and Douglas Petersen (Regnum Books, 2025). Used by permission.

educational history; however, he notes that Europe is an exception, and the earlier theories of inevitability of secularization should be revised as they fail to accurately reflect the role of religion and religiosity in other continents.²

Jorge Botelho Moniz has engaged with theories of secularization that aim to understand this phenomenon in the context of Europe. One remark by Moniz is the diversity of worldviews—religious, irreligious, or nonreligious, and the mutual fragilization of these worldviews. This diversity is assumed to be a result of contact and interpenetration between different understandings of the world, truth, and the concept of a good life. Furthermore, this will lead to the fragmentation of religious truths in general. Secularization can become accelerated, per Moniz, when the relativization of beliefs is a result of the diversity of and competition between religious worldviews.³ Therefore, it is difficult for any one of them to be declared as the true one.⁴ As a consequence of this competition of worldviews, it is increasingly challenging to maintain the kerygma of a Christian biblical worldview even within a Christian context.

This study focuses on the importance of a healthy biblical worldview in relation to preaching and practices within church communities. Biblical worldview is challenged by other non-Christian worldviews and secularization, but an additional threat emerges from within a group of Christian religious worldviews.

James Sire explains worldview as a commitment, expressed as a set of presuppositions—true or false—but that form the foundation on which a person lives and understands reality. Worldview answers the questions of what is real—material and spiritual realities, humanity, and how relationships between all these should be understood.⁵ No singular Christian biblical worldview remains entirely free from contextual influences. Therefore, when evaluating worldviews within a Christian framework, it is essential to discern the cultural, ideological, or other

² Peter L. Berger, “Secularization and De-secularization,” in *Religions in the Modern World: Traditions and Transformation*, ed. Linda Woodhead (Psychology Press, 2002), 336–44.

³ Jorge Botelho Moniz, “Secularization in Europe: Causes, Consequences, and Cultural Diversity,” *Religion, Quo Vadis? Secularization in the Modern World* 2023 14, no. 3 (March 2023), 8. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14030423>.

⁴ Botelho Moniz, “Secularization in Europe,” 8.

⁵ James W. Sire, *The University Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog* (InterVarsity Press, 2020), 4–9.

contextual elements that may compromise structural foundations for sound theology. Likewise, it is important to create a profound understanding of dogmas that form a robust foundation for Pentecostal theology and praxis—a strong Christology, pneumatology, and missional-trinitarian understanding of the church as the body of Christ. However, due to the limits of this essay, these dogmas are not elaborated further.

This paper focuses specifically on cosmology and demons within the cosmic order. The aim is to present examples that have challenged or potentially will challenge traditional Pentecostal teaching on demonology, as well as practices of deliverance and exorcism. It is not easy to argue why these practices have gained a platform in European Pentecostalism,⁶ but it is possible to observe some key elements behind the phenomenon.

Keith Warrington writes that Pentecostals generally accept the existence of demons and see exorcism as part of the gospel commission. He describes the characteristics of common assumptions among Pentecostals:

Some argue [that] it is helpful to think of demonic activity directed toward the Christian as on a sliding scale of intensity from temptation, through persistent oppression of the mind, to total control of a specific area of one's life. However, demonic influence in the lives of Christians should be differentiated from the dominating influence [that a] demon may have over a non-Christian, given that Christians are believed to have considerable supernatural resources available to combat demonic influence, as delegated to them by God.⁷

Classical Pentecostals reject the possibility of demon possession of Christians.⁸ However, various trends within global Pentecostalism contain features other than those confirmed within Classical Pentecostal doctrinal traditions. The possibility of the acceptance of a variety of

⁶ There are no consistent studies available. However, there are remarks from local communities such as Finnish Pentecostal Church or Evangelical Free Church of Finland and how these demonological practices gained platform.

⁷ Keith Warrington, "Exorcism," in *Handbook of Pentecostal Christianity*, edited by Adam Stewart (Northern Illinois Cornell University Press, 2012), 81–84. Warrington provides also a helpful journey to the key biblical texts relative to this topic.

⁸ Sanna Urvas, "Theology of Sin and Evil in Classical Pentecostalism. Two Case Studies" (Doctoral diss., University of Helsinki, 2020), 81–86, <https://helda.helsinki.fi/items/e07f61f4-250f-480c-aeb7-f4cc8adb5c94>.

cosmologies within Pentecostal beliefs is embedded within the usual acceptance of an enchanted worldview as an umbrella term for more specific expressions of cosmological views, structures, and hierarchies of immaterial beings and agents.

David Garrard describes the strong demonology and practical challenges of these beliefs in Central African Pentecostal communities. Garrard focuses on the question of the possibility of demon possession in believers within the groups he names as New or Neo Pentecostals.⁹ The African traditional worldview with a rich cosmology is inevitably one of the main causes for the growth of such views and practices. Nevertheless, Opoku Onyinah has demonstrated in his research that this emphasis on deliverance and the excessive need for exorcism were imported to Akan Pentecostalism from outside of Ghana.¹⁰ Therefore, an enchanted worldview does not directly generate a cosmological hierarchy in which demons have exaggerated loci, status, and agency. The Church of Pentecost in Ghana, and globally, has produced an entire educational program to train its pastors against harmful theological beliefs that generate unhealthy praxis for Pentecostal and charismatic communities. These same harmful but influential voices have been recognized behind Afro-European Pentecostal communal life, as noted by Garrard.¹¹ Additionally, these voices and their influence have been recognized also in the Finnish Pentecostal Movement and other charismatic communities, for example, the Evangelical Free Church of Finland. This paper is part of a larger project to provide sound theology together with solid biblical exegetics for the theology of sin and evil.

Derek Prince and the Worldview behind His Deliverance Ministry

Derek Prince (1915–2003) was an international and influential speaker, author, and teacher. Derek Prince Ministries has spread to almost all corners of the globe.¹² While Prince and his ministry are well known for numerous commendable charitable initiatives, this study focuses on the more controversial and problematic aspects of his teaching—particularly

⁹ David Garrard, “Witchcraft and Deliverance: An Exaggerated Theme in Pentecostal Churches in Central Africa,” *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 37, no. 1 (2017): 52–53.

¹⁰ Urvas, “Theology of Sin and Evil,” chap. 4.

¹¹ Garrard, “Witchcraft and Deliverance,” 54.

¹² Derek Prince, “Home Page,” accessed July 23, 2025, <https://www.derekprince.com/>.

the emphasis on the demonization of Christians and the perceived need for deliverance within believing communities. Several studies have raised concerns about these practices, especially regarding the implied causal link between health, illness—particularly mental health—and demonic activity. Of particular concern is the potential for such teachings to lead to the rejection of medical science and professional care, even in cases involving life-threatening conditions.¹³

Derek Prince was born in India to an upper-class British family. Prince recounts the early influence of his nanny, from whom he learned to adore the esoteric wisdom of India.¹⁴ Another significant source shaping his worldview was his studies of Greek philosophy at Cambridge University, with a particular focus on Platonism. Reflecting on this period, Prince writes, “As I gained further insight into the way people become exposed to demons, I saw that my admiration for Socrates and Plato kept open a door in my personality that made me vulnerable to demonic influence.”¹⁵ Additionally, his time living in Western Kenya exposed him to African worldviews, which also left a lasting impression.¹⁶ Taken together, these diverse influences contributed to the formation of his theological outlook.

¹³ Jean Mercer, “Deliverance, Demonic Possession, and Mental Illness: Some Considerations for Mental Health Professionals,” *Mental Health, Religion & Culture* 16, no. 6 (2012): 595–611, doi:10.1080/13674676.2012.706272; see also Michael J. Sersch, *Demons on the Couch: Spirit Possession, Exorcism and the DSM-5* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019); and Annah Paraffin, “Pentecostal Healing and Schizophrenia,” in *Pentecostalism and Human Rights in Contemporary Zimbabwe*, edited by Francis Machingura et al. (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018), 96–109. Additionally, Nathanael J. Homewood provides an ethnographic study: *Seductive Spirits: Deliverance, Demons, and Sexual Worldmaking in Ghanaian Pentecostalism* (Stanford University Press, 2024). Extreme belief can result also death, as in the case of parents who refused to give their daughter insulin: Talissa Siganto, “Instead of Giving Her Life-Saving Insulin, Elizabeth Struh’s Parents Prayed over Her Dying Body,” ABC News, January 29, 2025, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-01-30/elizabeth-struhs-religious-group-guilty-manslaughter/104859334>.

¹⁴ Derek Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons: What You Need to Know about Demons—Your Invisible Enemies* (Derek Prince Ministries International, 2020), 124–5. See also Stephen Mansfield, *Derek Prince: A Biography* (Derek Prince Ministries, 2005), 20–33.

¹⁵ Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 125.

¹⁶ Brian Stanley, “From Plato to Pentecostalism: Sickness and Deliverance in the Theology of Derek Prince,” in *Studies in Church History* 58 (Cambridge University Press, 2022), 401–2. See also Mansfield, *Derek Prince*, 191.

Prince published multiple volumes in which he teaches and explains his theology at a practical level. The key volume is *They Shall Expel Demons*. This is the most reliable source to understand his worldview according to the primary source principle. Prince was not a systematic theologian or systemic thinker. However, he describes his view of the cosmos, demons, and the relationships between the unseen world and humanity, occasionally on a theoretical level but mostly as narratives from his life experience.

Despite naming Greek philosophers as a causal factor for his own demonic influence, Prince utilized the Platonist cosmology in several ways. First, he refers directly to Socrates as one source for the capacity and agency of demons.¹⁷ Additionally, he derives the system and hierarchy of demonological spheres by utilizing Greek words *daimon* and *daimonion* in the New Testament text without referring to wider cosmological insights given within an entire revelation of God, both Old and New Testaments, or the exegetical context of the terms in question.¹⁸ This does not follow the key exegetical rule that safeguards the authority of the text; the Bible should provide the context for its interpretation, not an outside source.

Prince combines the primary meaning of the assumed Greek concept of demons from words that can be found in New Testament texts and applies it as an interpretation to the Old Testament.¹⁹ This is an anachronistic way to read and relate these two texts together. This type of either narrative or symbolic hermeneutical reading was common during the Patristic Era, but early Greek church Fathers were renowned apologists who safeguarded their theology from Hellenistic syncretistic errors. The main concern for the church Fathers was to defend Christian proclamation of Christ and salvation, not to create an alternative worldview that would utilize the exact errors they were fighting against. Therefore, it is not possible to defend Prince's views by finding similarities in the patristic material.²⁰

Another problem adopted from the Platonist worldview is a strong dualism, evident in two ways. First, dualism appears in a dichotomy of God and Satan in which Satan, as devil and his demons receive a major sphere and power to influence all aspects of life. Per Prince, "Satan's

¹⁷ Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 147.

¹⁸ Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 14–18.

¹⁹ Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 152–53.

²⁰ See Urvas, *Theology of Sin and Evil*, chap. 2, for further information about views of demonology during the patristic era.

headquarters and permanent residence are still in ‘the heavenlies’.”²¹ Prince continues to explain this by referring to the Greek Platonist system and uses that to interpret Ephesians 6:12 and Matthew 12:43–44. It is problematic to divide the world into two spheres under different dominances and to neglect the sovereign power of the Creator of all. Cosmos is part of the created sphere. Therefore, the presence of the Holy Spirit should be one of the ruling aspects to understand the world, both naturally and spiritually. This is part of the Pentecostal pneumatological kerygma. The presence of Satan’s headquarters in the heavenlies is not a primary principle to interpret any natural or supernatural phenomena. Instead, the pneumatological reading of the theology of creation provides a better insight into observing the cosmos.

This can be viewed as a one-sided and dominant relationship between God and his creation, but also as a relationship of mutuality and interaction through the Holy Spirit.²² Most importantly, there is no dualistic reality with the two competing forces of good and evil. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen frames spirits in general as created, subjected under Christ’s lordship, and if fallen, then parasitic.²³ Furthermore, a system that treats Greek sources as primary and the Bible as secondary remains highly problematic. However, Prince does not create a definite systemic explanation for the origin of demons.²⁴

Prince applies the principles of the Platonic dualism that elevates the immaterial realm above material reality. That is yet another problematic adoption from the Platonic worldview into his cosmological system. Prince writes,

A lot of people imagine that what we see, touch, hear and taste are the only truly real items. Down through the ages, however, philosophers have come to the conclusion that what we see, touch, hear and taste are not truly real; they are temporary, and they are very often deceptive. These philosophers have warned us that you cannot rely on your senses.

And the Bible agrees! Paul said that the things that are seen are fleeting; the things that are not seen are eternal. In other words, our sensory

²¹ Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 149.

²² See, for example, Jürgen Moltmann, *God in Creation. A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God* (Fortress Press, 1993), 14.

²³ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Spirit and Salvation*, vol. 4 of *A Constructive Christian Theology for the Pluralistic World* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 107–10.

²⁴ Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 145–52.

world is passing away, and therefore only partly real because it does not endure.²⁵

This view on matter was a major concern of early apologists who defended the Christian witness against pagan Greek metaphysics. Irenaeus was one of those voices, and today we have a strong and robust Christology grounded in the theology of the Incarnation that proclaims the good news for all creation.²⁶ The importance of the positive view of matter was precisely what distinguished early Christians from their pagan neighbors and fostered the development of caritative love towards all human life and wellbeing. Otherworldly orientation within early Pentecostalism generated a neglect of social and societal awareness, especially among White Pentecostals during the early development of Classical Pentecostalism.²⁷ Fortunately, global Pentecostal communities exhibit a wide range of social engagement in today's world.²⁸

Strong dualism between the material and immaterial world also promotes the denial of scientific knowledge. This is especially dangerous in relation to medical science. Prince creates an opposition between psychology and psychiatric science, and an interpretation of related phenomena with demonic origin. Two layers of interpretive errors can be identified. First, the mental dimension of a person is explained with dualism, considering all negative emotions, feelings, and thoughts as harmful and alien to humanity. Second, those aspects in a person's mental health are assumed to originate from demons, and any sources pointed out in psychiatric evaluation are claimed as false. It can prove exceedingly dangerous for a suffering person if a diagnosis for mental illness is claimed to only cloak the real cause, assumed to be a demon or something from a demonic origin.²⁹

One must always critically evaluate the hermeneutical principles of any given theological construction. Prince describes his theological

²⁵ Derek Prince, *The Devil's Plan to Destroy Your Life*, rev. ed. (Derek Prince Ministries, 2007), 12.

²⁶ See more about Irenaeus' contribution to the theology of the Incarnation in Hans Urs von Balthasar, "Introduction," in *The Scandal of the Incarnation: Irenaeus against Heresies*, trans. John Saward (Ignatius Press, 1990), 1–11.

²⁷ Progressive Pentecostalism pronounces the change in this paradigm; see Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (University of California Press, 2007), 1–5.

²⁸ Allan H. Anderson, "Pentecostalism and Social, Political, and Economic Development," *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology* 5, no. 1 (Spring, 2020), 121–36.

²⁹ See Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 94, 101, 169, 173–6.

method in both theoretical and narrative ways. Obviously, the base is in the experiences of his own life story, which encouraged him to seek answers from the Bible. Rather than keeping the biblical text as an authority in itself, though, he merely used the Bible to confirm his own experiences. Prince tells how he was delivered from demonic presence in his life, and he fluently utilizes this personal experience as a key method for constructing his theology. He writes, “Now, as I studied the gospel accounts in the light of my new experiences ...”³⁰ Additionally, this was transformed into theological claims that were then preached in the church. Prince served only a short period within a Pentecostal denomination; due to the criticism of his methods and teaching, he left to form an independent deliverance ministry.³¹

Prince does not utilize explicitly any biblical sources nor any analytical method to draw observations from the Bible. This opens a door to an unconscious application of unbiblical worldviews. Pentecostals must construct their view of the world with a strong biblical base but also rely on a vivid pneumatological understanding of cosmos and humanity. This includes a thorough investigation of the Pentecostal principles of theological anthropology and the biblical basis for sound theological proposals to understand humanity. A robust Pentecostal theology of sin requires the acknowledgement of human problems residing primarily in the sinfulness of the human heart.³² Second, the use of sciences such as psychology, psychiatric diagnostic techniques, and a sociological understanding of communities are required as a basis for healthy churches. It is also necessary to create a precise terminology for a ministry of deliverance and exorcism, to clearly communicate the meaning of the various levels of influence, harassment, or possession of demons. This needs both observations and clarifications at the ontological level, both in the fields of theological anthropology and demonology.³³

Pentecostal theological enterprise requires dialogue with communal experiences and contextual interpretations, but these things cannot override the Bible. Therefore, it is crucial to construct one’s cosmological insights based on knowledge available in Scripture. The

³⁰ Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 94.

³¹ Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons*, 107. See also Mansfield, *Derek Prince*, 194–5.

³² Urvas, “Theology of Sin and Evil,” chap. 2.6.

³³ Sean M. Tobin’s thesis presents a helpful collection of studies of exorcism and related sciences: Sean M. Tobin, “Exorcism, Deliverance, and Psychotherapy from a Catholic-Christian Perspective: A Critical Literature Review,” Doctoral diss. (Azusa Pacific University, 2019).

following section examines the exegetical methodology and current academic discourse related to demonology and cosmology.

Michael Heiser and the Divine Council Worldview³⁴

Michael S. Heiser (1963–2023) was a North American evangelical biblical scholar best known for his books,³⁵ podcasts,³⁶ and documentary films³⁷ that explore the unseen realm and the divine council worldview. His work sought to reintroduce readers to the supernatural framework of the Bible, particularly as it relates to the interplay between the seen and unseen realms and the roles of both human and nonhuman agents in the biblical narrative.

Heiser's theological journey was shaped by a movement away from the "selective supernaturalism" of his non-charismatic background toward a more comprehensive embrace of the Bible's supernatural worldview.³⁸ Despite this shift, he remained committed to the doctrines of biblical inspiration and inerrancy. His project was not an embrace of speculative mysticism but an attempt to allow the text of Scripture to speak on its own terms—without the interpretive filters imposed by later theological traditions, creeds, or denominational frameworks.³⁹

Central to Heiser's approach was the conviction that many of the Bible's more obscure and neglected passages are not peripheral, but

³⁴ I wish to thank Nathan French (personal communication) for his insights on Heiser and Genesis 6:1–4.

³⁵ Michael S. Heiser: *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* (Lexham, 2015); Michael S. Heiser, *Supernatural: What the Bible Teaches about the Unseen World and Why it Matters* (Lexham, 2015); Michael S. Heiser, *Reversing Hermon: Enoch, the Watchers, and the Forgotten Mission of Jesus Christ* (Defender, 2017); Michael S. Heiser, *Angels: What the Bible Really Says about God's Heavenly Host* (Lexham, 2018); Michael S. Heiser, *Demons: What the Bible Really Says about the Powers of Darkness* (Lexham, 2020). Heiser's dissertation and academic articles focus on the question of YHWH's divine council and seek to invalidate the idea that Israelite religion progressed from polytheism to monotheism. See Michael S. Heiser, "The Divine Council in Late Canonical and Non-Canonical Second Temple Jewish Literature" (PhD Diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2004). See also Heiser's resumé at <https://drmsb.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Cumulative-Resume-2020.pdf>.

³⁶ Michael S. Heiser, "The Naked Bible Podcast," accessed July 22, 2025, <https://nakedbiblepodcast.com>.

³⁷ See Heiser's films at Faithlife TV, accessed July 23, 2025, <https://faithlifetv.com>.

³⁸ Heiser, *Unseen Realm*, 17–18.

³⁹ Heiser, *Unseen Realm*, 14–15, 18–20.

integral, to its overall message. He argued that these so-called strange texts help to construct a sweeping metanarrative that “informs *every* Bible doctrine in significant ways.”⁴⁰ This metanarrative is laid out most fully in Heiser’s major work, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, where he traces a cosmic conflict involving God’s imagers—both human and divine—some of whom rebel and corrupt creation.

According to Heiser, the biblical narrative unfolds through three divine rebellions. The first occurs in Eden, where the serpent—a divine throne guardian—rebels and seduces humanity into sin (Gen 3). The second involves the sons of God fathering the Nephilim with human women (Gen 6); Heiser links this to Mesopotamian and Second Temple traditions, arguing that these beings become the demons of the New Testament. The third rebellion follows the Tower of Babel (Gen 11), when God disinherits the nations and assigns them to lesser divine beings (Deut 32:8–9). These beings subsequently rule unjustly, provoking divine judgment (Ps 82) and initiating God’s plan to reclaim the nations, beginning with the call of Abraham and culminating in the mission of Christ. Through Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension, he disarms the rebellious divine powers and restores redeemed humanity as the true sons of God. The Great Commission thus becomes not only a call to evangelism but a cosmic mission to recover the nations.

Critical Evaluation

As an exegete, Heiser deserves recognition for elucidating the Mesopotamian traditions that underpin some of the most obscure passages of the Bible. However, his theological interpretations of these obscure texts often appear forced and exceed what the biblical author was claiming precisely because of his heavy reliance on extrabiblical material. Heiser’s interpretation of Genesis 6:1–4 demonstrates this: “Genesis 6:1–4 describes an event where divine beings (‘sons of God’) intentionally violated their proper domain by fathering offspring with human women. This episode, in turn, leads to great wickedness and judgment, underscoring that supernatural rebellion was an active force in human depravity.”⁴¹ Three key moves in Heiser’s interpretation stand out: (1) the identification of the sons of God with the members of God’s divine council, (2) the emphasis placed on their contribution to

⁴⁰ Heiser, *Unseen Realm*, 13.

⁴¹ Heiser, *Unseen Realm*, 102.

human sin and the ensuing judgment (the Flood), and (3) the use of extrabiblical sources. In the following, these will be discussed in order.

Several exegetes largely concur with Heiser that sons of God should be identified with the members of God’s divine council.⁴² While alternative interpretations have been proposed in the past, the evidence supporting the divine council interpretation is comparatively stronger, as seen in the table below:

(1) Biblical authors employ the phrase “sons of God” to describe God’s entourage.	4QDeuti/LXX Deut 32:8; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Pss 29:1; 82:6; 89:7
(2) Many biblical texts either refer to the divine council or presume its existence.	Gen 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; 1 Kgs 22:19–22; Isa 40:1–2; Dan 7:9–10
(3) Second Temple texts interpret Genesis 6:1–4 as referring to a fall of God’s angels.	1 Enoch 6-11, 15–16; Jub. 4.15; 5.1; 7.21–22; Sir. 16.7; Wis. 14.6; Bar. 3.24–28; T. Reub. 5.5–6; T. Naph. 3.5; 1 QapGen ^{ar} II.1; CD II.16b-19; 2 Bar. 56.12–15; 3 Bar. 4.10; Josephus, <i>Ant.</i> 3.1.73; Philo, <i>Gig.</i> 2.6; 13.58; <i>Quest.</i> 1.92; Jude 6, 14-15 cf. 2 Pet 2:4
(4) Early Church Fathers endorse this interpretation.	Justin, 2 <i>Apol</i> 5; Irenaeus, <i>Haer.</i> 4.36; Pseudo-Clementine, <i>Homilies</i> 7.12–15; 8.11–15; Clement of Alexandria, <i>Paed.</i> 3.2; Tertullian, <i>Virg.</i> 7

⁴² For a recent review of evidence, see Ronald Hendel, *Genesis 1–11*, Yale Anchor Bible (Yale University Press, 2024), 265f. Heiser, *Unseen Realm*, 94–97, builds his case on Amar Annus, “On the Watchers: A Comparative Study of the Antediluvian Wisdom in Mesopotamian and Jewish Traditions,” *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 19, no. 4 (2010): 277–320, and Helge Kvanvig, “Primeval History: Babylonian, Biblical, and Enochic: An Intertextual Reading,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement* 149 (Brill, 2011); Helge Kvanvig, “The Watcher Story and Genesis: An Intertextual Reading,” *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 18, no. 2 (2004): 163–83. See also Annette Yoshiko Reed, *Fallen Angels and the History of Judaism and Christianity: The Reception of Enochic Literature* (Cambridge University Press, 2005). Christoph Auffarth and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, eds., *The Fall of the Angels*. Vol. VI of *Themes in Biblical Narrative. Jewish and Christian Traditions* (Brill, 2004). For critical evaluation, see John H. Walton and J. Harvey Walton, *Demons and Spirits in Biblical Theology: Reading the Biblical Text in Its Cultural and Literary Context* (Cascade, 2019), 113–20, 177–86.

Jewish exegesis of the passage remained unchanged until the mid-second century, at which point “sons of God” is reinterpreted as humans.⁴³ In early Christian circles, this shift occurred even later: the human interpretation emerged in the third century, while the traditional angelic interpretation persisted until the fifth century.⁴⁴

Accordingly, Heiser seems to have the correct exegetical insight: the author of Genesis views the sons of God in Genesis 6:1–4 as angelic beings, not humans. This does not mean, however, that one should adopt Heiser’s theological interpretation of the passage. One must ask what the author of Genesis is doing through the text and what the Bible is claiming.

A Subtle Critique of Seth’s Lineage

Heiser’s reading of Genesis 6:1–4 betrays a lack of attention to the structure and detail of the text itself, for he treats the events mentioned in Genesis 6:1–4 as the reason for the Flood, a kind of tipping point after which there is no return. According to his reading, evil is not solely the result of human sin but also of supernatural rebellion—an idea that is a significant deviation from traditional interpretations of the Flood account but foundational throughout his work.⁴⁵

Genesis 6:1–4 is part of a broader narrative showing how human actions threaten God’s cosmic order.⁴⁶ After the fall in Eden, this growing disorder is evident in Cain’s lineage, marked by violence and the establishment of human culture apart from God (4:1–24). In contrast, Seth’s descendants pursue communion with God, though not without inconsistencies (4:25–6:4). These appear in the mixed unions of Genesis 6:1–4, which, while notable to the original audience, are not described as sinful.⁴⁷

⁴³ Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude–2 Peter*. Word Biblical Commentary 50 (Zondervan, 1983), 51.

⁴⁴ Bauckham, *Jude*, 51. See John Chrysostom, *Serm. Gen.* 22.2; Augustine, *Civ.* 15.23.

⁴⁵ Heiser, *Reversing Hermon*, 105ff.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of the Flood narrative, see Hendel, *Genesis*, 283–345; and Tremper Longman III and John Walton, *The Lost World of the Flood: Mythology, Theology, and the Deluge Debate* (IVP Academic, 2018).

⁴⁷ Lev 19:19; 20:16 and Deut 7:3; 22:9–11 prohibit the mixing of two unrelated substances, and it is often suggested that ancient readers/hearers would have picked this up. See Hendel, *Genesis*, 265. Walton and Walton, *Demons and Spirits*, 119, 180 argue that the text does not view the actions of the sons of

Genesis 6:5–8, the prologue to the Flood account, explains the reason for God’s ensuing judgment. While a connection between verses 1–4 and 5–8 is indicated through repeated key words,⁴⁸ the text attributes moral culpability exclusively to humans and makes them the sole recipients of the judgment. The sons of God are not in view. Walton and Walton even argue that the placement of Genesis 6:1–4 in a different *toledot* than the Flood narrative indicates that “the sons of God and Nephilim are not actually associated with the flood at all.”⁴⁹ In any case, Genesis 6:1–4 is best understood as a sophisticated critique of Seth’s lineage rather than as the final justification for the Flood.⁵⁰

The Book of Watchers as an Interpretive Lens

In his effort to read the Bible without filters, Heiser has, paradoxically, adopted a new, extrabiblical interpretive lens. His interpretation of Genesis 6:1–4 is rooted in his close reading of the Book of Watchers (1 Enoch 1–36), a third-century BCE pseudepigraphal text that includes a peculiar retelling of the Flood narrative (1 Enoch 6:1–10:22).⁵¹ According to this retelling, the Flood was caused by the fall of the Watchers—angels who violated divine boundaries by descending to earth, taking human wives (6:1–2), producing gigantic demonic offspring (15:9–12), and imparting forbidden knowledge (8:1–2). In essence, the Book of Watchers attributes the origin of evil to an angelic rebellion against God rather than to the sin of Adam.

According to Heiser, Genesis 6:1–4 and the Book of Watchers draw from a common Mesopotamian material, implying that they share the

God as morally culpable. Ronald Hendel, “The Nephilim Were on the Earth: Genesis 6:1–4 and Its Ancient Near Eastern Context,” in *The Fall of the Angels*, Themes in Biblical Narrative, ed. Christoph Auffarth and Loren T.

Stuckenbruck (Brill, 2004), 12, takes a slightly different view while ascertaining that it is humans who are held accountable.

⁴⁸ Hendel, “The Nephilim,” 12. These include “*humans* began to *multiply*,” “the wickedness of *humans* was *great*,” “the sons of God *saw* that,” and “the Lord *saw* that.”

⁴⁹ Walton and Walton, *Demons and Spirits*, 179–80. See Chris de Jong, “Adam and Humanity: Meaning and Consequences of the Use of the Word *Toledot* in Genesis 2:4 and 5:1” (MTh diss., University of Utrecht, 2015) for a view of the use of the *toledot* that keeps them separate and yet belonging together.

⁵⁰ Similarly, Longman and Walton, *Lost World*, 126.

⁵¹ See Susan Docherty, *The Jewish Pseudepigrapha: An Introduction to the Literature of the Second Temple Period* (Fortress Press, 2015), 125–37.

same worldview.⁵² While the parallels are notable, the relationship is more nuanced than Heiser suggests. After reviewing the evidence, Walton and Walton acknowledge that while Mesopotamian material may have informed 1 Enoch's reading of Genesis, this does not necessitate that Genesis 6:1–4 itself shares the same interpretive framework.⁵³ Indeed, even if Genesis incorporates earlier Mesopotamian motifs, its theological message is distinct. The author was free to reuse common material from the “cultural river”⁵⁴ of Mesopotamia for a distinct theological purpose, differing from the interpretive trajectory of the Book of Watchers.

This is demonstrably true with questions pertaining to the origin of evil: while the Book of Watchers attributes the origin of evil to an angelic fall, biblical texts, and many other Second Temple texts link it to human disobedience.⁵⁵ In fact, the Book of Watchers' theological divergence in this key matter likely contributed to its decline in influence within the Early Church,⁵⁶ which did not adopt its theological framework but held onto the one found in her own Scriptures.

The key to interpreting Genesis 6 lies within the text itself—not in equating its worldview with that of the Book of Watchers. Thus, citing the widespread influence of 1 Enoch within Second Temple Judaism and the Early Church does not justify the conclusion that its interpretation of Genesis 6:1–4 was (or should be) universally accepted or authoritative.⁵⁷ The same is true about the New Testament authors who refer to or even cite the Book of Watchers (1 Pet 3:19–20; 2 Pet

⁵² Heiser, *Unseen Realm*, 102. Heiser suggests that the genealogies in Gen 4 and 5 reflect the Sumerian King List, where early kings ruled with divine sages called *apkallu*. These beings taught humanity culture and knowledge, and later kings claimed descent from them, implying a divine-human lineage. See especially Annus, “On the Watchers,” Kvanvig, *Primal History*, and Kvanvig, “The Watcher Story and Genesis.” For a critical evaluation of this material, see Hendel, *Genesis*, 259–62, and Walton and Walton, *Demons and Spirits*, 115–20.

⁵³ Walton and Walton, *Demons and Spirits*, 116–17.

⁵⁴ Longman and Walton, *Lost World*, 6. See John H. Walton, *New Explorations in the Lost World of Genesis: Advances in the Origins Debate* (InterVarsity, 2025), 18ff, for an explanation of the term, “cultural river.” Similar river imagery is used by Hendel, *Genesis*, 278.

⁵⁵ See 4 Ezra 3:20–26; 4:30; 7:118; 2 Bar 23:4; 48:42–43; 54:15; 56:5–8; Gen 3:1–24; Rom 5.

⁵⁶ Bauckham, *Jude*, 51.

⁵⁷ Contra Heiser, *Unseen Realm*, 99–100.

2:4–10, and Jude 6–15). Their use of the Book of Watchers is not a wholesale endorsement of its views.⁵⁸

Biblical Worldview

Heiser’s attempt to allow the text of Scripture to speak on its own terms is commendable, but his execution of the project runs into problems. His reading of the text is predicated on an assumed worldview of the biblical author—a worldview he pieces together through extrabiblical sources and expects modern readers to adopt.⁵⁹

This is unfortunate, since the author’s assumed worldview is not the same as a biblical worldview. Biblical inspiration does not pertain to the worldview of its authors. Rather, it pertains to the text itself (locution), which was accommodated to a high-context, ancient Israelite audience.⁶⁰ Similarly, biblical authority does not rest on the beliefs of its authors. Rather, biblical authority “is tied to the message the author intends to communicate as an agent of God’s revelation” (illocution).⁶¹ Thus, as Kevin Vanhoozer argues, interpretation is an act of justice—of correctly ascribing to an author the illocutionary acts actually performed.⁶² Heiser, by contrast, overlooks the author’s illocutionary act by disregarding

⁵⁸ On the question of Jude calling Enoch a prophet, see Titus 1:12, John 11:51, and Acts 17:28. Peter H. Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*, PNTC (Eerdmans, 2006), 75, suggests that the idea of prophecy combined with the quotation formula is an indication of Jude’s belief in “divinely inspired speech.” Bauckham, *Jude*, 90, agrees with Davids on divine inspiration of 1 Enoch’s prophecy but denies that Jude has elevated *1 Enoch* to scriptural status.

⁵⁹ See Heiser, *Unseen Realm*, 99–100, on the adoption of an interpretive framework.

⁶⁰ Longman and Walton, *Lost World*, 5.

⁶¹ Longman and Walton, *Lost World*, 9.

⁶² Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “From Speech Acts to Scripture Acts: The Covenant of Discourse and the Discourse of the Covenant,” in *After Pentecost: Language and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Craig Bartholomew et al. (Paternoster, 2001), 25. John H. Walton and D. Brent Sandy, *The Lost World of Scripture: Ancient Literary Culture and Biblical Authority* (IVP Academic, 2013), 200, suggest that scriptural authority lies precisely in what “the communicator was actually asserting in his illocutions.” Walton and Walton, *Demons and Spirits*, 18, go as far as to argue that all biblical statements about demons (including those in the New Testament) are references, not affirmations. Their position is too restrictive. See Thomas J. Farrar, review of *Demons and Spirits in Biblical Theology: Reading the Biblical Text in Its Cultural and Literary Context*, by John H. Walton and J. Harvey Walton, *Journal of Theological Studies* 72, no. 1 (2021): 364–8. See Walton, *New Explorations*, 17–69, for clarification and methodological discussion.

questions of genre, literary structure, and the text's role within the broader narrative. This is why the shortcomings of Heiser's exegesis should not be underestimated. While Heiser himself was cautious in terms of praxis, those who read him may not be.

Concluding Thoughts

This study examines two influential authors within Christian communities: Derek Prince and Michael Heiser. While they write in different fields, both have developed significant followings that shape how people perceive reality and form their worldviews. Pentecostal and charismatic communities approach the world with a deep trust in an all-powerful God and in our Savior, Jesus Christ. Whether in secularized Europe or elsewhere, all believers and churches are called to study the Word of God within its own context—while also humbly acknowledging that they are not immune to the influence of their surrounding culture and prevailing worldviews. We need the guidance of the Holy Spirit to develop sound doctrine and healthy principles for church practices—especially when ministering to those afflicted by the burdens of earthly life.

We propose that the following principles be applied. First, the Bible does not provide specific information about the origin or creation of demons. This fact alone should be seen as an indication that such knowledge is not beneficial to humans, as our attention should be directed primarily and unwaveringly toward Christ and the sovereign rule of the ever-loving triune God. Second, we are not encouraged to seek deeper knowledge of evil beyond what is revealed in Scripture and the visible world. Therefore, one should neither invent origin narratives nor rely on knowledge derived from sources outside the Bible. Third, all theological hermeneutics should keep Christ as the primary focus. Fourth, when interpreting the Bible, we should respect its message and avoid adding ideas or systems that do not belong. Finally, we must define clear terminology (deliverance, exorcism, possession, etc.) to have a fruitful dialogue between pastors, theologians, and those serving in the deliverance ministry.

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Response to Sanna Urvas and Markus Nikkanen’s “Worldviews Beneath Cosmological Kerygma: Demons as a Case Study”

Chiong Xiao Ting

Abstract

This article responds to Urvas and Nikkanen’s examination of Pentecostal demonology, emphasizing four foundational principles: avoiding speculation on demon origins, limiting the nature of evil to the Bible, the centrality of Christ in demonology, and maintaining biblical boundaries. It discusses how the authors critically examine Derek Prince’s influence, highlighting strengths in biblical exorcism models while addressing concerns about overemphasis on the immaterial realm and dualistic worldview. The article also discusses the authors’ view on Michael Heiser’s divine council perspective, advocating for a Scripture-based understanding of demons. This article also responds to the ongoing debate on whether Christians can be demonized or merely influenced, citing biblical evidence and global Pentecostal practices, especially in the Global South. The role of experiential theology is affirmed, provided it aligns with Scripture. Finally, the importance of balanced deliverance ministry is emphasized, calling for contextualized, ethical practices that integrate psychological and medical care, fostering a holistic approach to spiritual freedom within Pentecostal communities.

Key Words: Pentecostal demonology, spiritual deliverance, biblical exorcism, holistic spiritual warfare

Introduction

According to Sanna Urvas and Markus Nikkanen, “Pentecostal communities believe in the power of the Holy Spirit in a healthy and empowering way,” and they firmly aim to uphold this in their understanding of demonology. Urvas and Nikkanen highlighted four principles in constructing a healthy doctrine of demonology. Firstly, since the Bible does not reveal the origin or creation of demons, this is not a subject we should be fixated on. Secondly, we must avoid exploring the nature of evil beyond what the Bible reveals. Thirdly, Christ must remain the focus of our demonology. Lastly, all theological

reflections must stay within the boundaries of the biblical framework. I fully agree with these four principles, as they are essential and foundational to a sound understanding of demonology.

On Derek Prince's Demonology

Urvas and Nikkanen's main critique of Derek Prince is how he has been influenced by Greek philosophy and mythology. However, we must note that while Prince does speculate on the nature of demons, he models his exorcism after the deliverance ministry of Jesus. For example, he highlights Jesus casting out demons in a Capernaum synagogue (Mark 1:21-26), after the Sabbath (Luke 4:40-41), and from the man in Gadara with a legion (Mark 5:9). Prince also draws from the Early Church, referencing Philip's deliverance ministry in Samaria (Acts 8:6-7) and Paul's ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19:11-17).¹ Although the Bible is not explicit on the origin of demons, there is no denying that deliverance is one of the "most obvious and important aspects" of Jesus' ministry, which implies that this ministry cannot be neglected in the life of the church.² In the Gospels and the Great Commission, Jesus commands His disciples and believers to cast out demons in His name (Matt 10:1; Mark 16:17).

Urvas and Nikkanen highlight the extremes in Prince's teaching that overemphasize the immaterial world, which may lead to a denial of genuine psychological and medical conditions and to diagnosing them as demonic instead. They also criticize Prince's Platonist dualistic worldview. Some of these critiques are valid, showing the need to restore balance to demonology within Pentecostal churches. Nevertheless, Scripture affirms that while God is sovereign, Satan still "rules over a hierarchy of evil spirits in the heavenly realms"³ (cf. Dan 10:13, 20-21). It is vital to acknowledge that the Christian life involves "wrestling with principalities and powers" (Eph 6:12), which most scholars agree as hostile demonic powers, and this implies that spiritual warfare is still a normal part of the Christian life. Even in the Lord's Prayer, Jesus teaches believers to pray, "deliver us from the evil one" (Matt 6:13), making spiritual vigilance part of our daily walk. At the same

¹ Derek Prince, *They Shall Expel Demons* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2020), Chapter 3, ebook.

² Graham Twelftree, *In the Name of Jesus: Exorcism Among Early Christians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 46.

³ Opoku Onyinah, "Principalities and Powers" in *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, ed. Wonsuk Ma, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen & J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books, 2014), 153.

time, He assures us that we have been given authority over the spiritual realm, including the demonic (Luke 9:1; 10:19).

On Michael Heiser's Divine Council Worldview

In addition, Urvas and Nikkanen challenge the divine council worldview proposed by Michael Heiser, who uses Ancient Near Eastern traditions and pseudepigraphal texts to present theories on the origins of demons and evil. I agree that we should not build our theology on such theories, especially those developed outside the framework of the Bible, though they can provide helpful references and context for studying the Bible.

Do Christians Need Deliverance?

Beyond Urvas and Nikkanen's critique of Prince and Heiser, one crucial question arising from their paper is this: do some Christians need deliverance? She highlights that classical Pentecostalism does not believe that Christians can be demon-possessed. The Assemblies of God position paper rejects the possibility that a believer can be possessed by demonic forces. While it affirms that "believers will engage in spiritual warfare and will be oppressed," it stops short of saying that Christians may need deliverance.⁴ Despite this, an increasing number of Assemblies of God ministries are now exploring the possibility that Christians can be influenced by demons and may require deliverance.⁵

It is important to note that many in the Global South agree that while Christians cannot be owned or possessed by a demon, they can be subject to demonic influence or even infestation.⁶ In the Gospels, the

⁴ "Spiritual Warfare and the Believer," Assemblies of God, accessed April 25, 2025, <https://ag.org/Beliefs/Position-Papers/Spiritual-Warfare-and-the-Believer>.

⁵ Doug Lowenberg, "Demonisation and the Christian Life: How the Devil Influences Believers", *Enrichment Journal* (Summer 2013): 87-97, <https://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/Issues/2013/Summer-2013/Demonization-and-the-Christian-Life>.

⁶ American biblical scholar Merrill Unger defines demonic influence as "the action of demonic powers working to corrupt a person." (see Merrill Unger, *What Demons Can Do to Saints* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1991), 50); African scholar Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu differentiates between demonic possession and oppression, defining oppression as "malevolent supernatural powers [that] influence a person's life for ill," while possession takes place when spirits "take over the executive faculties of a person." (see J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "Signs, Wonders, and Ministry: the Gospel in the Power of

Greek term *daimonizomai* (e.g., Matt 4:24; Mark 5:15-16, 18; Luke 8:36; John 10:21), often transliterated as “demonized,” does not imply “ownership” but rather suggests a form of “temporary control” or influence by demons.⁷ In other cases, the Bible simply states that some had a demon or unclean spirits (Mark 1:23; Luke 4:33; 6:18; 13:12). Though Scripture may not state it explicitly, the Gospels show that demonization can vary in degree—from the daughter of Abraham bound by a spirit of infirmity to the Gerasene man possessed by *many* demons (Luke 13:10-16; Mark 5:1-9). This suggests that while a believer may not be fully possessed, they can still be bound by Satan, as seen in the case of the bent-back woman in Luke 13.

One common argument against the idea that Christians can have demons is this: if our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19), how can a demon and the Holy Spirit dwell in the same place?⁸ However, it is difficult for this argument to withstand scrutiny. Paul speaks of the Christian having two natures warring between us—the desire to do good and the presence of sin at work in our bodies (Rom 7:21-23). At conversion, the Holy Spirit indwells within us, but the process of salvation is yet to be completed. Christians still sin against God, and this can be a plausible reason for demonic strongholds to remain in their lives. After all, Paul warns believers not to “give the devil a foothold” (Eph 4:27), implying that it is indeed possible for Christians to do so. The term “foothold” can mean a “place, position or opportunity”⁹—suggesting that ongoing sin can give Satan access to areas of our lives. The Scripture warns us against the “wiles of the devil” (Eph 6:16) and Peter admonishes believers to stay alert, as Satan “prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Pet 5:8). Sadly, some believers may have failed to withstand his flaming arrows and succumbed as casualties in this spiritual battle.

the Spirit,” *Evangelical Review of Theology* 33, no 1 (2009): 41, <https://theology.worldidea.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/ERT-33-1.pdf>

⁷ A. Scott Moreau, “Demon,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, electronic ed., Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), 164, Logos.

⁸ The General Presbytery of the Assemblies of God, *Can Born-Again Believers Be Demon Possessed?* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1972), 2.

⁹ H. Daniel Zacharias, *Biblical Greek Made Simple: All the Basics in One Semester* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 285, Logos.

On Spiritual Experiences

Urvas and Nikkanen caution against building our theology on subjective experiences, which is a major critique they have of Prince. While their concerns are legitimate, experience has always played an important role in Pentecostal theology, as long as it does not go against the teachings of Scripture. Theologian William MacDonald describes Pentecostal theology not as “experience-centred” but “experience-certified.”¹⁰ William Menzies and MacDonald regard experience as a crucial element in theology, and its role is “certifying or verifying the theological enterprise.”¹¹ Roger Stronstad goes a step further to propose that Pentecostals bring an “experiential presupposition” to the Scripture that validates it and helps us understand it better.¹² The Wesleyan quadrilateral also suggests that our Christian faith is revealed in Scripture but “vivified in personal experience.”¹³ As such, experience does not replace Scripture but helps us understand and apply it in real life. In addition, it is important to note that although Prince started off with his own journey, his experience is not unique; it echoes the stories of innumerable believers throughout history and around the world, particularly in the Global South.

The Early Church

Research into Early Church literature reveals that exorcism was very much part of the baptismal rites of believers. In the third century, baptismal candidates had to have hands “laid upon them daily in exorcism” and anointed with the “oil of exorcism” during baptism.¹⁴ It was not assumed that a believer would no longer have demons within them after conversion or baptism; instead, extra steps were taken to

¹⁰ William G. MacDonald, “Pentecostal Theology: A Classical Viewpoint,” in *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism*, ed. Russell Spittler (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1976), 64, quoted in Roger Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology, 2nd Edition: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2019), 42, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹¹ Stronstad, *Spirit, Scripture and Theology*, 42.

¹² Ibid, 43.

¹³ Ming Shun Chiang, “The Wesleyan Quadrilateral: What Is It and Is It Relevant Today?” *Methodist Message*, February 1, 2023, <https://www.methodist.org.sg/methodist-message/the-wesleyan-quadrilateral-what-is-it-and-is-it-relevant-today/>.

¹⁴ Antipope Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus: Translated Into English with Introduction and Notes*, trans. Burton Scott Easton (Great Britain: Cambridge, 1934), 44-45.

ensure that evil spirits were driven out of a believer. In the *Apostolic Constitutions* of the fourth century, candidates who “hath a demon” could not become a clergyman and had to be cleansed and freed from the demon. Once again, it shows the possibility that even a believer could be possessed by a demon.¹⁵ In Roman Catholicism, exorcism has always been part of the church’s ministry, and even the “faithful” can be demonically afflicted.¹⁶ During the Protestant Reformation, although Martin Luther rejected many Catholic practices, he still retained the rite of exorcism in his baptismal handbook for Christians.¹⁷

Pentecostalism in the Twentieth Century

At the turn of the twentieth century, the Azusa Street revival was characterized by signs and wonders, which included healings and deliverance from demons.¹⁸ Even William Seymour himself believed that the body of believers can be afflicted by demons.¹⁹ Although classical Pentecostalism did not believe that Christians need deliverance, British professor Stephen Hunt argues that “the growth and appeal of

¹⁵ Philip Schaff, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers Volume 7* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1885), 1102. CCEL PDF.

¹⁶ “Exorcism,” United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, accessed April 25, 2025, <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/sacramentals-blessings/exorcism>

¹⁷ Paul L. King, “A Historical Survey of Belief and Practices regarding Deliverance of Demonized Christians,” *Refleks* 3 no. 1 (2004): 53-65, <https://pentecostalarchives.org/?a=d&d=REF2004-Issue3-1.1.55&e=en-201img-txIN>.

¹⁸ Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street* (New Kensington: Whitaker House, 1982), 64.

¹⁹ See William Seymour, “Pentecost with Signs Following,” *The Apostolic Faith Mission*, December 1906, https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/5e17afe412fc21ddcb6e961c/5fab0c0e25a290e51f211641_Azusa-Paper-Original-04.pdf, who writes, “Can a man have salvation and yet his body be afflicted, which is the work of demons? Yes, we may have salvation and yet disease of the body for, ‘though our outward man perisheth, inward man is renewed day by day.’ Job said when Satan had afflicted his body, ‘I know that my redeemer liveth. And though after my skin worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.’ (Job 19:26, 27) So though demons were in his flesh, he had Christ within his soul. The demons had afflicted his body with sickness, but yet his soul was free from sin. But did he send for a doctor? No, his trust was in his God, and God delivered him and gave him twice as much as he had before. God has always been the healer of His people, for He says, ‘I am the Lord, thy God that healeth thee.’”

deliverance has come with the expansion of the ‘classical’ Pentecostal movement at the beginning of the twentieth century.”²⁰ Across the Global South—in Africa, Latin America, and Asia—countless believers have experienced powerful deliverance and freedom from demonic oppression.

In Africa, where witchcraft is widespread, it is commonly believed that even Christians can be demonized and require deliverance from witchcraft, demonic spirits, generational curses, or diseases. African theologian Opoku Onyinah writes about the Church of Pentecost in Ghana, which establishes prayer centers for the sick, where “deliverance becomes a major activity.”²¹

In Latin America, Argentinian evangelist Carlos Annacondia’s revival meetings are characterized by deliverance ministry for both believers and non-believers alike.²² Pablo Bottari, Annacondia’s crusade director, compiled and systematized these deliverance materials, influencing movements like G12.²³ Founded by Colombian pastor Cesar Castellanos, the G12 movement encourages believers to attend an “Encounter” retreat, where they receive ministry, including deliverance from past sins and trauma.²⁴

²⁰ Stephen Hunt, “Managing the Demonic: Some Aspects of the Neo-Pentecostal Deliverance Ministry,” *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 13, no. 2 (1998): 216, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13537909808580831>.

²¹ Opoku Onyinah, “Deliverance as a Way of Confronting Witchcraft in Modern Africa: Ghana as a Case History,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 5, no. 1 (2002): 122, https://www.academia.edu/63615905/Opoku_Onyinah_Deliverance_as_a_Way_of_Confronting_Witchcraft_in_Modern_Africa_Ghana_as_a_Case_History_pp_109_136_; It is believed that generational curses manifest in hereditary diseases, mental breakdowns, and repeated unnatural deaths, supported by Scriptures like Exodus 20:4-6 and Deuteronomy 28.

²² Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford

University Press, Incorporated, 2006), 106, ProQuest Ebook Central; Carlos Annacondia writes about Christians being spiritually oppressed (see Carlos Annacondia, *Listen to Me, Satan* (Lake Mary: Creation House, 2008), 46).

²³ Fernando Adolfo Mora-Ciangherotti, “Latin American Megachurches in a Changing Culture: An Integrative Review and an Exploration of Future Research Directions,” *Religions* 13, no. 843 (2022): 12, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13090843>.

²⁴ Philip Wingeier-Rayo, “The Transculturalization and the Transnationalization of the Government of 12: From Seoul to Bogoto to

In Asia, at the world's largest church, Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul, there are testimonies of both believers and non-believers experiencing deliverance from demons.²⁵ One Yoido Full Gospel Church member shared how “a demon which caused sickness in her for ten years, was driven out” when Dr Yonggi Cho laid hands on her and prayed.²⁶ Research into the religious climate of Singapore reveals that many Pentecostal/Charismatic pastors emphasize deliverance ministry, often requiring new converts to sever ties with past dedication to idols or demonic associations.²⁷ For many in the Global South, these experiences with the diabolical and demonic are genuine, and deliverance is not automatic at conversion. Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge these realities and thoughtfully consider the role of deliverance ministry in the local church.

Restoring Balance in Deliverance Practices

In Pentecostal communities, it must be acknowledged that there are abuses and extremes in some deliverance practices. For example, deliverance patients have undergone beatings, chaining, and long fasting in some African prayer centers, and this has brought about a stigmatization of deliverance practices.²⁸ However, these extremes do not represent the whole and should not invalidate the importance of deliverance ministry in our churches today.

Charlotte, North Carolina,” in *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, ed. Younghoon Lee, Wonsuk Ma with Kuewon Lee (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books, 2014), 261.

²⁵ Dr Cho's mother-in-law, Choi Jasil frequently encountered demon-possessed cases. One example is described in Julie C. Ma & Wonsuk Ma, *Mission in the Spirit: Towards a Pentecostal/Charismatic Missiology* (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books, 2010), 252.

²⁶ Myung Soo Park, “Korean Pentecostal Spirituality as Manifested in the Testimonies of Believers of the Yoido Full Gospel Church,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 7, no. 1 (2004): 42, https://www.academia.edu/63604223/Myung_Soo_Park_Korean_Pentecostal_Spirituality_as_Manifested_in_the_Testimonies_of_Members_of_Yoido_Full_Gospel_Church_pp_35_56_

²⁷ Jean DeBernardi, “Global Christian Culture and the Antioch of Asia,” in *Religious Diversity in Singapore*, ed. Lai Ah Eng (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008), 137.

²⁸ Moses Kumi Asamoah, “Leveraging the Deliverance Phenomenon: Penteco/Charismatic Vista,” *Journal of Religion and Health* 55 (2016): 1659, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-016-0209-8>.

In a 2012 think tank on *Magic, Witchcraft, Demon Beliefs and Deliverance* held in Asia and Africa, it is proposed that “deliverance ministry should be one of the forms of a contextualized ministry in Asia.” They affirm that Christians, even pastors, may need deliverance because “they can be possessed, traumatized, and oppressed.” Pastors Jaharianson Saragih and Parulihan Sipayung propose a holistic ministry approach called “Psycho-Del-Si”, which integrates psychology, deliverance, and spirituality in diagnosing problems.²⁹ This is a fine example of how we can redeem deliverance practices instead of rejecting them, putting them back at where they belong in the church. Onyinah suggests that this ministry should not be “suppressed” or “pushed to the periphery,” but our theology of the spirit-world should complement it. Experientially, we should allow the Holy Spirit to lead us into exorcism in our services when the need arises.³⁰

In conclusion, Urvas and Nikkanen correctly argue for sound hermeneutics, which will influence our beliefs, in this case, beliefs about demons—especially over Christians. I propose that deliverance can have a rightful place in the church when situated in sound theology and good praxis. By avoiding extremes and not forsaking the genuine need for psychological and medical care for those suffering from mental and physical illnesses, we can redeem the deliverance ministry and make it a healthy, empowering part of Pentecostal life, helping believers live in freedom and fullness.

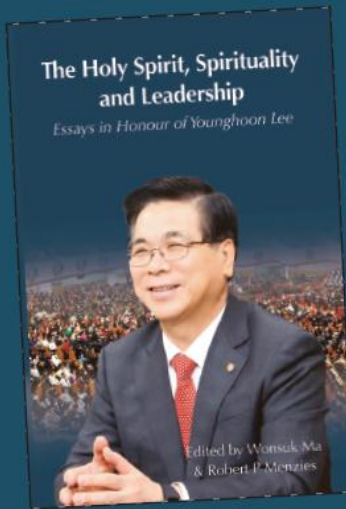
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²⁹ Jaharianson Saragih & Parulihan Sipayung, “Deliverance, Mental Health, and Prosperity:

A Holistic Diaconial Perspective from Indonesian Context,” in *International Handbook on Ecumenical Diakonia*, ed. Godwin Ampony et al (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books, 2021), 492-494.

³⁰ Onyinah, “Deliverance,” 134; Onyinah, “Principalities and Powers,” 160.

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Second Chance Theory in Japanese Mission

Noriyuki Miyake

Abstract

This paper examines the “Second Chance Theory” (SCT) in Japanese missions, which proposes that unbelievers may hear the gospel after death. Emerging in the 2000s through Tsugumichi Okawa and supported by Arimasa Kubo, SCT distinguishes between Hades and hell, suggesting that those in Hades may receive post-mortem evangelization. The theory resonates in Japan, where ancestor veneration is deeply rooted and the idea of ancestors condemned to hell creates a major obstacle to Christian faith. While SCT offers pastoral comfort and contextual relevance, biblical support remains unclear. Evangelical tradition affirms that unbelievers go to Hades, not hell, before judgment, but the Bible is largely silent on opportunities for salvation after death. The paper concludes that rather than emphasizing SCT, Japanese missions should engage ancestral concerns by honoring parents and ancestors within biblical frameworks, thus building cultural bridges without compromising doctrine.

Key Words: second chance theory; Japanese missions; ancestor veneration; post-mortem evangelization; Hades and hell; cultural barriers to Christianity

Introduction

A controversy over the “second chance theory” (hereafter SCT) arose in some parts of the Japanese evangelical church in the 2000s. “Second chance” refers to the opportunity for conversion after death for those who missed their first chance during their earthly lives. Unlike universalism (salvation for all without exception) and the Roman Catholic Church’s doctrine of purgatory, proponents of SCT believe everyone will have the opportunity to hear the gospel and be converted.¹

¹ Other Christian thinkers have espoused theology akin to the SCT. For instance, Z.A. Dörner articulates a doctrine regarding the renewal of all things

SCT first came to prominence through the influence of Tsugumichi Okawa. His church originally belonged to the Japan Holiness Church, but after Okawa experienced the Holy Spirit, specifically Pentecostal and the charismatic baptism in the Holy Spirit, he left the Holiness Church, and his church became independent. Controversy arose when Okawa preached about his “second chance theory” in a televised Sunday service. Some Christian leaders, such as Pastor Kubo Masayoshi, who publishes the Christian magazine *Remnant*, immediately embraced Okawa’s theory. Kubo authored a book titled “The Biblical Theory of a Second Chance After Death,”² stating, “A second chance after death is not an obstacle to evangelism; it is also a biblical teaching.” Furthermore, he declared, “The Second Chance Theory is the key to Japan’s revival.”

On the other hand, many people have argued against this theory. For example, William Wood, a missionary who has worked in Japan for a long time, published a book entitled *Is There Really a Second Chance? Over the Afterlife Salvation of Unbelievers*³ and argued against Arimasa Kubo’s book. After the initial fervor sparked by Okawa in the early 2000s, the controversy seemed to abate. However, in recent years, Okawa’s 2020 book, *Eternity and Resurrection*, has rekindled the controversy.⁴

This paper begins by considering SCT with special reference to Japanese missions and the issue of ancestors in Japan. Having considered SCT from this perspective, I would then like to consider SCT’s compatibility with the biblical tradition. Finally, I will turn to the challenges of Japanese missions and how to overcome them.

and posits the theory of soul extinction. Both Longfellow and Whittier supported the latter view. The former thought it was all-encompassing, and the latter believed that it would only apply to those who repented after death; Henry Clarence Thiessen, *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949), 502-503.

² Arimasa Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory for the Dead: Eight Scriptures Showing Opportunities for Afterlife Conversion [Seishoteki Sekando Chansuron-Shigono Kaishin no Kikai wo Shimesu Yattsu no Seiku]* (Tokyo: Remnant Publishing, 2006).

³ William Wood, *Is there really a second chance? Over the Afterlife salvation of unbelievers* [Sekando Chansu was Hontoni Arunoka Mishinja no Shigono Sukuiwo Megutte] (Tokyo: Life Words Publishing, 2007).

⁴ Tsugumichi Okawa, *Eternity and Resurrection [Eien to Fukkatsu]* (Tokyo: Gentosha, 2020).

Japan and Ancestor Veneration

Any discussion of missions in Japan must address the crucial issue of ancestors and their role in Japanese culture. Although Buddhist teachings do not intrinsically include ancestor worship, the version of Buddhism indigenous to Japan strongly emphasizes ancestor worship and deeply permeates the lives and hearts of the Japanese people.⁵ In August, every Japanese family holds private Buddhist ceremonies in their homes and commemorates their ancestors' return to their homes. This ceremony follows the customary visitation of graves in March and September and the gatherings on the anniversary of the death of one's grandparents. Many Japanese people consider ancestor veneration to be very important. Even those interested in Christianity feel confused and dislike Christianity when they hear that those who have died without hearing the gospel, especially their ancestors, are in hell. Xavier, the Catholic missionary who first introduced Christianity to Japan in the 16th century, wrote to the Holy See about this very issue saying:

One of the things that bother the Japanese is that we teach that hell is a place that will never be opened, and there is no way out of it. They weepingly think of the sad fate of their deceased children, their parents, and relatives and ask if there is a way or hope to save the unfortunate dead forever by prayer. I have no choice but to answer that there is no way or hope, but their sadness when they hear this is incredible. That makes them run out.... They often ask if God can't deliver their ancestors from hell and why their punishment never ends.... They cannot help mourning the misfortune of their relatives. Sometimes I can't control my tears when I see my beloved people unable to hide such grief.⁶

Thus, what bothered missionaries most was not that the Japanese did not open their hearts to the gospel. Even if they accepted the gospel, they could not easily accept that their parents and grandparents who died without hearing the gospel were suffering in hell.

Many Japanese people point out how the issue of ancestors becomes an obstacle when Japanese people believe in Christianity. Ryunosuke Akutagawa (1892-1927), one of Japan's most famous writers, serves as a prominent example. He wrote extensively about 16th and 17th century Roman Catholic missions work in Japan and the era of persecution

⁵ Chiken Kato, *The Religious Spirit of the Japanese Reconsidering* [Mitsumenaosu Nihonjin no Shukyoshin] (Tokyo: Hara Shobo, 2006), 129.

⁶ Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory*, 42; Takeo Doi, *Bible and Sweetness* [*Seisho to Amae*] (Tokyo: PHP Institute, 1997), 107.

during which the government had banned Christianity known as “Kirishitan Mono.” In one of these writings, he tells the story of “Ogin.” A family of three secretly held to the Christian faith during the strict ban. A Christian couple had adopted a young girl, Ogin, whose parents had died. One day, the authorities discovered the family’s Christian faith, and the three were sentenced to death by crucifixion. Before the executioner carried out their sentence, he gave them a way out saying, “If you confess that you abandon your faith now, you will cancel the death penalty.” The three immediately rejected this offer asking, “How can we abandon our faith when holding fast to it to the point of death guarantees us entrance into heaven of our dreams?” However, just before the execution, Ogin recanted her faith. Her surprised parents asked her, “Why?” Ogin replied, “I saw the grave of my true parents over this hill. Even at this time, my parents are suffering in hell. I’m sorry that I’m the only one going to heaven, leaving my parents alone. I will also go to hell to be with my real parents.” Afterwards, all three of them abandoned their faith.⁷

Their decision had nothing to do with a lack of belief in Christ or the gospel message. The stumbling block lay only in their anguish over the sad fate of their relatives who must suffer the torture of hell while they enjoy the rewards of heaven. This type of concern represents a significant obstacle to the Christian faith. Yasuhiro Owa, a literary researcher, finds insight into Japanese religious sensibilities in Akutagawa’s work. He articulates it in this way:

I think Akutagawa’s work best represents the god the Japanese want. In other words, for the Japanese, living naturally as a human being is the most important thing. If a god does not allow such a way of life, the Japanese will see no value in this god. Furthermore, if adherence to a religion precludes a “natural” way of life, the Japanese people will reject it notwithstanding the promise of heaven. Without the life they want, heaven means nothing. However, this does not mean that the Japanese are denying god. Instead, the Japanese way of thinking is that so long as god watches over humans, god should not force them to live in an unnatural way. They must have an authentic existence, and god must be pleased with it.⁸

⁷ Ryunosuke Akutagawa, *Death of a Serviceman* [Hokyonin no Shi] (Tokyo: Shincho Bunko, 1968), 151-162.

⁸ Yasuhiro Owa, “Natural Thoughts in the Japanese,” in *Japanese and Christianity*, edited by Kiroku Echizen and Itsuko Saito (Tokyo: Daughters of St. Paul, 1980), 102-103.

For the Japanese, believing in the Christian God is contrary to loving and respecting their parents. This feels unnatural to them and poses an obstacle to faith for many.

For the Japanese, though invisible, their ancestors watch over them. As faithful descendants, they in turn must dutifully memorialize their forefathers and foremothers every summer according to Buddhist traditions. In following these traditions, the Japanese people feel a strong bond with and connection to their ancestors. Thus, Christian teaching, which ignores relationships with ancestors, seems exclusive and self-righteous to many Japanese. The exigencies of this cultural and religious context help to explain the advent of SCT.

Second Chance Theory

In this section, I consider SCT as articulated by its chief proponents—Okawa and Kubo. Both emphasize two main points: (1) Hades is different than hell, but Christians often confuse them; (2) those in Hades will have a chance to hear the gospel before the last judgment.

At the beginning of his *Biblical Second Chance Theory for the Dead: Eight Scriptures Showing Opportunities for Afterlife Conversion*, Arimasa Kubo argues that Christians often confuse Hades and hell, although they are different. According to him, the only destination for the dead in the Old Testament era was Hades. Thus, everyone, whether righteous or unrighteous, went to Hades or *Sheol* in Hebrew. Accordingly, all the Old Testament saints, including such luminaries as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, descended to Hades after death.⁹ The New Testament authors employ the Greek word “Hades” when speaking of the same concept of the afterlife. For instance, Luke chapter 16 contains the story of “Lazarus and the Rich Man.” In the story, the rich man calls out to Lazarus from Hades. According to Kubo, many have mistakenly thought this pericope concerns heaven and hell,¹⁰ but Hades differs from hell. In Kubo’s words: “Hades is not a place of final punishment like hell, but a place to give people time to look back on their lives before the court of the Last Judgment.”¹¹ In sum, many Christians wrongly believe those who die without believing in Christ go to hell immediately. (This is especially true of their view of those who have died following the resurrection of Christ.)

Okawa had long taught that those who die without believing in Christ go to hell immediately after death. Thus, all unbelieving ancestors

⁹ Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory*, 19.

¹⁰ Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory*, 26.

¹¹ Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory*, 28.

must now be in hell.¹² But he had long wondered, “Is this what my dear God does?”

All my ancestors went to hell, but I am happy to be in heaven because Jesus Christ forgave my sins.” If anyone could smile and say such a thing, I wouldn’t be alone in feeling it to be a frightful thing.¹³

In describing this, Okawa references Ryunosuke Akutagawa’s character, Ogin, whom we discussed earlier. He asserts, “The one who mercilessly throws dead souls into hell even though they had no opportunity to know Christ cannot be the God I have given my life to for 70 years.”¹⁴

Okawa and Kubo unequivocally denounce the teaching that “unbelievers go to hell as soon as they die.” They trace the error to just after the Middle Ages. In their view, at this time, the Christian understanding of the afterlife became confused, and people began to believe that “human beings are divided into either heaven or hell immediately after death.”¹⁵ They also implicate the King James translation, which rendered the Greek “Hades” with the English “hell” for its role in exacerbating the confusion.¹⁶ Finally, the missionaries who came to Japan transmitted the false understanding.

Based on this argument, both Okawa and Kubo see room for post-mortem conversion. Nonetheless, Kubo does emphasize the importance of conversion during one’s lifetime. However, he points out that not everyone has an opportunity to hear the gospel during life, and he argues that “the Bible clearly states that the gospel also exists for those who have gone to Hades.”¹⁷ Okawa also says, “Humans do not go to hell right away because God loves us and does not want one soul to perish. So people avoid going to hell until the very end. Hades is the place where people prepare for being saved.”¹⁸ He thinks in Hades God grants its denizens another chance to go to heaven.

Jesus went to Hades after his death on the cross and did something in Hades until his resurrection on the third day—he preached. The basis for this is the following two scriptures.

¹² Tsugumichi Okawa, *Eternity and Resurrection* [*Eien to Fukkatsu*] (Tokyo: Gentosha, 2020), 73.

¹³ Okawa, *Eternity and Resurrection*, 76.

¹⁴ Okawa, *Eternity and Resurrection*, 81.

¹⁵ Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory*, 35.

¹⁶ Okawa, *Eternity and Resurrection*, 131.

¹⁷ Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory*, 45.

¹⁸ Okawa, *Eternity and Resurrection*, 112-113.

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits (1 Peter 3:18-19).¹⁹

But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit (1 Peter 4:5-6).

At this time, Christ preached the gospel to “those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah” (1 Peter 3:20). Kubo thinks that at this time, some were converted and saved and went to heaven (Eph 4:8), but others did not respond.²⁰

This raises some important questions. Between Noah’s day and the final judgment, will those in Hades have a chance to hear the gospel? When would it be? Two “witnesses” appear in chapter 11 of Revelation. They prophesy in the city but are killed. However, after three and a half days, they rise from the dead and God calls them to heaven (Revelation chapter 11). According to Kubo, they must have been in Hades to preach the gospel during those last three and a half days.²¹ Therefore, just before the Last Judgment, everyone will be given a second chance to hear the gospel. Okawa does not specify when and how the gospel will be proclaimed in Hades, but he believes Jesus will come back to Hades and preach the gospel again. He says, “Don’t worry. There is time for everyone in Hades to receive the gospel from Jesus. Until then, we can pray for them to receive the gospel.”²² Kubo insists it is wonderful to believe the gospel while alive on the earth, but he also believes that even those in Hades who have never heard the gospel can hear the gospel and be saved. And he cites eight scriptures as the basis for his conviction.²³

Kubo states as follows:

¹⁹ Scripture quotations are from NIV, unless indicated otherwise.

²⁰ Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory*, 58.

²¹ Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory*, 61.

²² Okawa, *Eternity and Resurrection*, 143.

²³ Ruth 2:20; Jer 18:8; John 5:25-28; 1 Peter 3:18-4:6; Phil 2:10; Rev 5:13; Rev 20:11-15; Rom 14:9. William Wood refutes each of these verses. William Wood, *Is there really a second chance? Over the Afterlife salvation of unbelievers*, [Sekando Chansu was Hontoni Arunoka Mishinja no Shigono Sukuiwo Megutte] (Tokyo: Life Words Publishing, 2007).

The Bible speaks very clearly about the second chance affirmation. We have long confused Hades with hell. We believed that “dead unbelievers (your ancestors and parents) are now in eternal hell and have no hope of being saved.... But this unbiblical teaching is extremely harmful and will continue to extinguish the fire of Japan’s revival as long as it exists.”²⁴

Theological Consideration of Second Chance Theory

In the previous section, I examined the two main claims made by Okawa and Kubo, namely, (1) Christians have often confused Hades and hell and (2) there is a chance to hear the gospel after death.

I generally agree with the first claim. I will establish my reasons by first considering the concept of the afterlife taught in the Old Testament. In the English translations of the Old Testament, translators often render sheol (שְׁאוֹל) as “death,” “grave,” or “hell.” For example, in the case of Deut 32:22, the NIV reads “death”; the NLT reads “grave”; the NAS reads “sheol”; and KJV reads “hell.”²⁵ In two prominent places where the New Testament addresses the afterlife of unbelievers, we find the Greek words ᾗδης and γένων. Matthew 16:18 illustrates well the various translations of ᾗδης. The NIV, BSB, BLB, ESV, NKJV transliterate with “Hades” while the KJV, NLT, ESV, etc. prefer “hell.”²⁶ In the case of γένων which appears in Matthew 5:22, the NIV, NLT, ESV, BSB, KJV, NKJV, and NASB render it “hell.”²⁷ In sum, translators of the Old Testament render “sheol” variously, and likewise translators of the New Testament often render variegated Greek words as “hell.” Thus, when one reads an English Bible such as the KJV, it is difficult to distinguish between Hades and hell in the New Testament. Therefore, readers naturally assume the existence of only one afterlife. Beyond issues of translation, one may approach this question from

²⁴ Kubo, *Biblical Second Chance Theory*, 147.

²⁵ In Japanese, there are three typical translations: the verbal translation “陰府 Yomi,” the new translation “よみ Yomi,” and the New Interconfessional Translation “陰府 Yomi.”

²⁶ In Japanese, there are three typical translations: the verbal translation “黄泉 Yomi,” the new translation “Hadesu” (as pronounced),” and the New Interconfessional Translation “陰府 Yomi.”

²⁷ In Japanese, there are three typical translations: the verbal translation “地獄 Jigoku,” the new translation “Gehena” (as pronounced),” and the New Interconfessional Translation “地獄 Jigoku.”

another angle, *viz.*, systematic theology and the understandings of the afterlife it produces.

The evangelical understanding has no concept of a post-mortem location common to the righteous and unrighteous dead. Instead, those who die immediately find themselves in one of two locales: heaven or hell. Believers do not go to Hades but to God. As Jesus said to the thief who was crucified with him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). Many see this text as warrant for the direct ascent of believers to the world of God upon death. However, the person in question would not have a physical body yet. Thus, he/she cannot be said to have ascended to the ultimate heaven. Moreover, at the final Judgment before the Lord, the righteous judge will determine whether or not the believer’s name has been written in the “Book of Life.” Then, the believer will receive a perfect body that will never experience decay. Therefore, we must conclude that believers reside in an intermediate place/state before facing judgment and advancing to their final destination—heaven.

On the other hand, according to the standard evangelical view, unbelievers go to Hades after death. This view finds support in the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)). “Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.” Here, Jesus describes a hot place full of suffering.²⁸ Those in Hades will stay there until the final Judgement. Millard J. Erickson, a leading evangelical systematic theologian, states as follows: “We conclude that upon death believers go immediately to a place and condition of blessedness, and unbelievers to an experience of misery, torment, and punishment.”²⁹ So, Hades is not hell, but it is still a place of suffering. And at the Last Judgment, both those in Paradise and those in Hades are given physical bodies and stand before the throne of judgment (Rev 20). As it says, “we will all stand before God’s judgment seat” (Rom 14:10). And everyone who is not named in the Book of Life will be thrown into the “Lake of Fire” (Rev 20:15). Eventually, both death and Hades themselves will be

²⁸ There are two theories. One is that Lazarus is in a paradise where he is with Abraham, and the other is a theory that both Lazarus and the rich man are in Hades, but even in the same Hades, there are places of blessing and places of suffering depending on the way of life in life. Kubo is taking the latter. Arimasa Kubo, “Chapter 5: Counterargument to Second Chance Negation,” June 8, 2021, <http://www2.biglobe.ne.jp/~remnant/secoch05.htm>.

²⁹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 1189.

thrown into the Lake of fire (Rev 20:14). This lake of fire is said to be the second death (Rev 21:8). This lake of fire is hell.³⁰

From the above, I agree that at this point, non-believers go to Hades, not hell, after death. Strictly speaking, there is no hell right now. Hell will only begin to exist after the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus and following the Last Judgment when God throws “the one whose name was not found written in the book of life” (Rev 20:15) into hell. In Christian history, these two words have been confused, and this confusion has influenced the teachings of the church and the translation of the Bible after the Reformation. Therefore, I can agree with Okawa and Kubo on this point: “our ancestors who were unbelievers are not in hell. They are in Hades.”

Next, I would like to consider whether the gospel will be/has been preached to those in Hades and whether those there might have a chance for conversion. The theory begins with Jesus’ location following his crucifixion and prior to his resurrection and appearance to his disciples (Friday afternoon to Sunday morning). Peter testified to Jesus’ messianic identity on the day of Pentecost after he had received the Holy Spirit’s empowerment. In his sermon, he declares the following:

Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it (Acts 2:31-2).

This testimony, citing Psalm 16:19, implies that Jesus went to the underworld after his death and was then subsequently resurrected. A similar parallel account also appears in chapter 4 of Ephesians.

But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: “When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.” (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? (Eph 4:7-9)

The term “descended to the lower, earthly regions” here is thought to mean that he descended to Hades after the cross. Further passages which express the same thought appear in chapters 3-4 of First Peter quoted earlier.

³⁰ Akira Izumida, Susumu Uda, Yoshiaki Hattori, Makoto Funaki, and Noboru Yamaguchi, eds., *Bible Dictionary* (Tokyo: Words of Life, 1985), s.v. “Gehenna.”

After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits (1 Peter 3:19).

... or this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit (1 Peter 4:6).

From these verses, I can agree that the Early Church believed that Jesus had gone to Hades after his death on the cross. And I can admit that this is reflected in the Apostles' Creed.³¹

But there is a problem here. Even if I admit that Jesus went to Hades after the cross, does the Bible teach, as SCT does, the possibility that Jesus will go to Hades again and preach the gospel?³² As mentioned earlier, Kubo argues that the "two witnesses" in John's Revelation chapter 11 preach the gospel in Hades for three and a half days after death, and those who hear the gospel will be saved just before the Last Judgment. Okawa believes that Jesus himself will preach the gospel in Hades before the final Judgment. I cannot find strong support for this theory in the Bible. Certainly, the place where non-believers go after death is not hell but Hades. Those in Hades have respite until the final judgment declares and executes their ultimate punishment. But it seems that the Bible does not explicitly teach that those who once went to Hades may be able to go to paradise from there. Evangelical theologians traditionally understand there to be only one exit to Hades, as Reiji Oyama, a renowned evangelical minister in Japan, states:

Those who died without believing in Christ were immediately put into the suffering of Hades because of their natural sins. And eventually, they will be put into hell. It is forever under the curse of God. In this way, the state of a human being after death is determined by the way he or

³¹ The Apostles' Creed confesses as follows: "...He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell, rose again from the dead on the third day..." In other words, Jesus is said to have fallen into hell after he died. However, Hades seems to be a more appropriate expression rather than hell. Again, the use of the words Hades and Hell seems to be confusing. According to the Japanese Apostles' Creed, it is called "Yomi" which means Hades.

³² In fact, in 1 Peter 3:19, there is also a debate about whether Jesus spoke the gospel. As translated in NIV, the idea is that in Hades Jesus "made proclamation," not "preach the Gospel." This discussion is also important, but due to the number of words, it will not be dealt with further here.

she is in life, and cannot be changed by the wishes of living people after death.³³

As Kubo and Okawa say, there seems to be little evidence for the notion of receiving an opportunity to hear the gospel and for conversion once a person enters Hades. William Wood says, “If those in Hades are able to be saved, such an important doctrine would have been more clearly asserted throughout the Bible.”³⁴ This logic has persuasive power.

But at the same time, can we say that there is absolutely no chance that those in Hades will be saved when they die without ever hearing the gospel? To me, the Bible seems to be silent about those who have died without hearing the gospel. God is the only one who has the authority to decide who will be saved and who will not be saved. We humans must not enter into the realm of God and violate God’s authority. The Bible clearly teaches that those who hear the gospel and refuse to believe it will be judged (e.g., Mark 16:16; John 3:18). We must not hesitate to tell the gospel to the living. Many who oppose the second chance say, “Accepting the second chance may reduce our motivation to evangelize.” But we should not weaken our will to share the gospel with as many people as possible in our lives, even if the unbelievers can be saved after death, because it is the Great Commission of the Lord.

However, the Bible has no clear statement as to whether the dead will have the opportunity to be saved without listening to the gospel. Human beings cannot assert that they will never be saved. Therefore, the most prudent stance seems to be agnosticism. We don’t know because the Bible doesn’t teach it clearly.

A Suggested Strategy of Ancestors in Japanese Missions

This final section considers the treatment of ancestors in Japanese missions. As we saw in the previous chapter, our unsaved ancestors are in Hades, not in hell. The Bible does not explicitly tell us whether those there will hear the gospel and be given a chance to be converted. Sovereignty lies with God. But it is possible to teach that becoming a Christian does not break our relationship with our ancestors. As I wrote initially, for the Japanese, their ancestors are invisible but not “non-

³³ Reiji Oyama, *I want to know the truth about the afterlife* [Shigo no kotonitsuite Hontono kotowo Shiritai] (Tokyo: Sheep Group, 2011), 100.

³⁴ William Wood, *Is there really a second chance? Over the Afterlife salvation of unbelievers* [Sekando Chansu was Hontoni Arunoka Mishinja no Shigono Sukuiwo Megutte] (Tokyo: Life Words Publishing, 2007), 77.

existent” and connected to the living. Traditionally, the Christian message to the Japanese is, “If you become a Christian, don’t think of your ancestors. Don’t get involved with your ancestors.” The intent of this message aims at stopping the Japanese from worshipping their ancestors through Buddhist ceremonies. However, it creates a major obstacle to Christian missions.

Importantly, we must not deny such feelings of connection to our ancestors. What I would like to suggest is that it is not a bad thing for those who have become Christians to remember those who died without believing and that they may wish for and pray for God’s mercy. Kunio Yanagida, a well-known Japanese folklore scholar, wrote in his book *The Story of Ancestors* that many Japanese people think that they “have to be worshiped by those who divided their blood, to obtain happiness after death.”³⁵ In Japanese Buddhism, it is important to hold regular rituals and gather for dead family members. Generally, special rituals are held one year, three years, seven years, thirteen years, seventeen years, twenty-three years, twenty-seven years, thirty-three years, and fifty years after death. According to one survey, the following reasons are cited as the main reasons for these memorial services. Here I present the reasons arranged in descending order: (1) a memorial service for the deceased, wishing for a Buddhahood; (2) for our own peace; (3) fellowship with relatives and old friends (from the standpoint of fulfilling one’s responsibilities to the family); and (4) remembering the dead.³⁶ The results of this survey show that only (1) requires Buddhist beliefs, but (2) to (4) do not require any particular beliefs. If Christianity can accept these Japanese feelings, the role that the church can play will expand. Is Christianity a religion that does not value its ancestors? The following evangelical affirmations appear to be valid.

Despite being often mentioned in the Bible, “ancestors” are not said to be or should be worshiped, nor are they implied. Therefore, it can be said that there is no fact that ancestor worship or rituals for the dead were held in Israel.³⁷

However, not being the subject of worship does not deny the simple desires of human beings to “respect” and “cherish” their ancestors. The

³⁵ Kunio Yanagida, *The Story of Ancestors [Senzo no Hanashi]* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Gakugei Shuppan, 2013).

³⁶ Masami Katsumoto, *How to Respond to Japanese Religious Events [Nihonno Shukyogyojini Doutaiousuruka]* (Tokyo: Life Words, 1990), 135.

³⁷ Akira Izumida, Susumu Uda, Yoshiaki Hattori, Makoto Funaki, and Noboru Yamaguchi, eds., *Bible Dictionary* (Tokyo: Words of Life, 1985), s.v. “Ancestor.”

Bible frequently depicts persons “mourning” when they lose their family members (e.g. Genesis 38, 50; Deuteronomy 26, 34; 2 Samuel 19; 2 Chronicle 35). It is taken for granted that the bereaved will mourn for a period of time. The Old Testament also contains several genealogies, and the New Testament also begins with the genealogy from Abraham to Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. This genealogy of Christ has implications beyond just introducing Jesus as the protagonist of Matthew’s Gospel. The genealogy also includes the names of Gentiles such as Rahab and Ruth, as well as the name of Manasseh, who is said to have offended God by committing a terrible sin in the books of Kings. However, they were all indispensable lives for the birth of Christ. The Bible never takes an attitude of having no feelings towards ancestors. Rather, the Bible has a very respectful attitude towards ancestors. Abraham’s efforts to purchase the tomb of his wife Sarah (Gen 23) and the scene where Moses brought out Joseph’s corpse when they left Egypt (Exodus 13) reveal cultural similarities between the Japanese and the ancient Israelites with respect to family and ancestors. One of the Ten Commandments “Honor your father and your mother (Ex. 20:12)” is a concept that is easy for Japanese people with a Confucian background to understand. Of course, the meaning of this sentence is not exactly the same as Confucianism. Kichisaburo Yasuda explains as follows.

People value their parents because they are the source of human life, just as they value God because they are the Lord of life. The parent-child relationship is a natural relationship and a blood relationship, but it is the fifth Commandment that gives it a religious meaning.³⁸

Even if one’s parents do not have Christian faith, they are still the “source of life.” Therefore, expressing gratitude to our ancestors on our own does not deviate from biblical norms. Having a special time for a family who wants to remember their deceased parents and reaffirming the meaning of God’s life through their parents would be a great ministry. I suggest using “Mother’s Day” and “Father’s Day” as an opportunity to remember and thank the parents who died in the church. In Japan, Mother’s Day is the second Sunday in May, and Father’s Day is the third Sunday in June. Both were introduced by American missionaries and gradually spread within Japanese society after the war. What is usually done in the church today is to thank and bless the

³⁸ Kichisaburo Yasuda, “Exodus,” in *Commentary on the New Bible* (Tokyo: Words of Life, 1995).

fathers and mothers of the church. We can thank “outside the church,” that is, unbelieving parents, and even deceased parents too. For example, a church member may invite his lost parents’ old friends and their siblings to the church. It can be a time for the whole family and acquaintances to remember and thank their deceased parents and at the same time warm up their old relationships. Mother’s Day and Father’s Day are now pervasive not only in Christian churches but throughout Japanese society. Originally, it was said to be a commercial reason for department stores to increase sales, but the same is true for Christmas. If Christmas is a great opportunity to invite unbelievers to church, we could aim for Father’s Day and Mother’s Day to be such days.

Conclusion

The issue of ancestors is very important in Japanese missions. It is one of the major obstacles for the Japanese to accept the gospel. The emergence of ministers advocating SCT can be understood as a cry for Christians to break the blockage that limits Japan’s Christian population to less than 1% of the total population even after 150 years of evangelical ministry. However, we cannot find a clear basis in the Bible for hearing the gospel after death and for the chance of being saved. And even if I should argue that the second chance is proper, I wonder if more people would open their hearts to the gospel. It would be a comfort and encouragement to Christians who have lost their unbelieving families, if they hear about the possibility that their dead unbelieving family members could be saved in Hades. But we cannot be confident in this. Rather, I think that the image of Christianity can be changed by holding an event in the church to actively remember and give thanks for deceased family members without advocating a second chance. I hope that the door to mission will be opened little by little by actively tackling this problem that the Japanese church has ignored and avoided.

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The Pentecostal/Charismatic Denominations of the United States: A Master List and Directory

J. Gordon Melton

Introduction

The Pentecostal/Charismatic community in the United States has been on a growth trajectory since its emergence at the beginning of the twentieth century. As signs of that growth, religious demographers and social scientists have looked primarily at the growth experience by a relatively few of the larger and more well-known Pentecostal denominations and the proliferation of independent charismatic megachurches over the last generation.

The growth of the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement has also been accompanied by its fragmentation and the proliferation of new denominations. This proliferation has been somewhat obscured amid the popular disdain for “denominationalism” found in many segments of the Pentecostal community. It is also accompanied with the relative unfamiliarity of the many newer areas of Pentecostal/Charismatic growth in recent decades, including some continued disinterest within the more established centers of Pentecostal scholarship in the proliferation of the movement in both the African American and Mexican American communities.

This directory is the product of more than forty years of monitoring the Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations by the Institute for the Study of American Religion results of which have periodically been published in the successive editions of the *Encyclopedia of American Religions* [MEAR], the 9th and most recent edition of which was published in 2017. That monitoring has shown the continued organizational fluidity that characterizes the major religious communities in America, to which the Pentecostal Charismatic community is no stranger. While the older, more-established Pentecostal denominations have continued to grow even as the population of the United States has exploded in the decades since World War II, around the edges, hundreds of new denominations have appeared, a few of which have come and gone amid the shifting needs of the burgeoning community.

As of 2023, there are more than 500 Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations active in the United States. They constitute between a fourth and a third of all of the denominations operating across the country (which is now home to some 1200+ Christian denominations). While many of these denominations are relatively small, reporting less than 25 affiliated congregations, others are more substantive, reporting the number of affiliated congregations in the hundreds.

Not included in this list, with a few exceptions, are several hundred new Pentecostal/Charismatic organizations that have appeared and offered their new organizational model—the apostolic network—as an alternative to denominationalism. In addition to the 400+ denominations listed below, some 200+ such apostolic networks have appeared and represent a segment of the Pentecostal/Charismatic community still in a very fluid initial stage of development. To outside observers, such networks appear to be proto-denominations. As a whole, they are not included in this directory, though certainly forming an additional substantive segment of the larger Pentecostal/Charismatic world.

Pentecostal Denominations

Given the popular discussion and critique of denominations, some definition of what is meant by “denomination” in this directory is appropriate. Since the founding of Pentecostalism, numerous leaders (many of whom came to Pentecostalism from previous membership in one of the older denominations) have voiced their opposition to forming new denominations, particularly those that seek some level of control of local congregations by central headquarters or from a hierarchical authority. This is not a new idea, anti-denominationalism being a source of new Christian communities since the early nineteenth century. It has also been the case that in the wake of governmental acceptance of the separation of church and state, and more recently, the tax-exempt status granted to non-profit religious organizations, denominationalism has become the common mode of organization within the Christian community in free societies. Attempts to enact alternatives have generally met with failure.

A denomination is herein defined as an association of congregations that hold the primary religious affiliation (week-in and week out) of its members. The association may (or may not) provide a variety of services/activities including among others: a pan-congregational fellowship; an articulation of common beliefs (most often in the form of a statement of faith); the promotion of ministerial recruitment,

education and credentialling; the assignment of ministers to local churches; the sponsoring of pan-congregational missionary activity; and the financing of the publication of materials expressive of the association's faith and life. Denominations commonly recruit and ordain clergy and found, charter, and/or provide "cover" (i.e., vouch for) local congregations (and oversee assets in case of dissolution).

Denominations have traditionally been organized on one of four models—episcopal, presbyterian, congregational, or ultra-congregational, the ultimate model being determined by who owns the property of individual congregations and/or the ownership of non-congregational organizations founded, sponsored, and/or privileged by the denominational association (schools, missionary agencies, publishing houses, etc.).

Denominations stand in contrast to ecumenical (aka intrafaith) organizations whose members are primarily denominations. Such intrafaith organizations do not meet regularly for worship. Denominations also stand in contrast to various independent parachurch organizations which undertake a limited and focused function (evangelism, missionary endeavors, social service, social action, publishing, etc.) but do not meet for regular weekly worship nor otherwise compete with the congregations and their members who financially support the organization's particular ministry.

The denominations in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Family are grouped below under the following sub-families:

Intrafaith Organizations

- White Trinitarian Holiness Pentecostals
- White Trinitarian Finished Work Pentecostals
- Healing/Deliverance Pentecostals
- Oneness Pentecostals
- African American Trinitarian Pentecostals
- Churches of African Origin
- Signs Pentecostals
- Spanish-Speaking Pentecostals
- Messianic Jewish Groups
- Charismatic Denominations
- Convergence/Liturgical Pentecostals
- Latter Rain Pentecostals
- Word of Faith/Prosperity Gospel

- Contemporary Apostles and Prophets—Apostolic Networks
- Pro-LGBT
- Additional Unclassified Groups

The list below was developed from those Pentecostal-Charismatic denominations included in the 9th edition of *Melton's Encyclopedia of American Religions*, published in 2017. Those denominations listed in the 2017 MEAR are indicated by the inclusion of the four-digit entry number in brackets attached to their name [0653].

Some denominations cited in the 9th edition have become problematic, and the contact established in previous years has been lost. Unless contact is reestablished, these will be dropped from the projected 10th edition of MEAR. Unless it is known to have been abandoned, the last-known address has been retained, but in all cases, recent verification has not been secured, and no Internet presence has been found. The status of these groups is presently unknown. The many denominations listed below that were not included in the 9th edition will appear in the 10th edition.

Abbreviations:

“AA” following the name of a denomination indicates that its leadership and membership are predominantly African American.

Intrafaith Organizations

Intrafaith organizations differ from denominations in that they are associations of denominations and/or ministers/leaders from different denominations. As a rule, they gather no lay membership and do not hold weekly worship gatherings on the Sabbath.

Apostles Prophets Net of East Texas

C/o Andy and Irene Madding.
Restoring His Kingdom Ministries
Lindale, TX 75771
<http://www.apostlesprophetsnet.com/index.html>

Coalition of Spirit-filled Churches

Rev. David B. Plummer, Executive Director
PO Box 6606, Newport News, VA 23606

<https://www.spirit-filled.org/index.html>

Communion of Apostolic Churches (aka Communion of Apostles and Churches)

Apostolic Ministries and Churches International
3131 Isser Lane
Jacksonville, FL 32257
gekouri@mac.com
<http://cac.publishpath.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/amcintl>
<https://www.comunionofapostolicchurches.com/>

Congress of Apostles and Bishops (AA)

C/o Archbishop Thomas F. Henry Jr.

Christian Life Cathedral Ministries
2962 Ember Drive, Ste. 109
Rear of Building 1
Decatur, GA 30304
<https://www.coaab.org/>

Covenant Fellowship Alliance

C/o Bishop H. Curtis Douglas,
Presiding Prelate
218-38 98th Avenue
Queens Village, NY 11429
<https://www.cfaonline.org/>

Dunamis International College of Bishops and Apostles (AA)

Senior Bishop A. Ralph Johnson
303 Everleigh Ct.
Marietta, GA 30064
<https://dunamiscollegeofbishops-andapostles.weebly.com/>

Ecumenical Convergence of Christian Ministries (AA)

C/o Bishop H. Clemon Smith, II,
Metropolitan-Bishop and President
6132-34 West Jefferson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19151
<https://eccmglobal.org/>

Ecumenical Council of Bishops and Apostolic Leadership (AA)

C/o Archbishop Devin Owens, Sr.,
Presiding Prelate
594 Howard Ave.
Brooklyn, NY 11212
<http://www.ecobal.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/EmpowermentChurchNYC>

Federated Pentecostal Church International (AA)

C/o Dr. Richard Taylor, Chief Apostle
14250 SE 13th Place
Bellevue, WA 98007
<https://federatedpci.org/>

Federation of Ministers and Churches International [0658]

PO Box 380894 Duncanville, TX 75138
<http://www.fmci.org>

Global Conference of Bishops and Leaders (AA)

C/o Archbishop Dennis M. Golphin
6325 Falls of Neuse Rd. Ste. 35-333
Raleigh, NC 27615
<https://globalconferencebishops.org>

International Coalition of Apostolic Leaders

PO Box 164217
Fort Worth, TX 76161
Or
US Coalition of Apostolic Leaders
P. O. Box 1132
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
<http://www.coalitionofapostles.com>

International Coalition of Prophets (ICOP)

C/o Apostle Russ Moyer
P.O. Box 164217
FT Worth, TX 76161
<https://www.icaleaders.com/icop-international-coalition-of-prophetic-leaders>

International Communion of Charismatic Churches [0434]

C/o Archbishop Kirby Clements,
President
260 Peachtree Street, NW, Ste. 2200
Atlanta, GA 30303

<http://www.theiccc.com>.

**Joint College of African American
Pentecostal Bishops [0435]
(AA)**

c/o Bp. David M. Copeland
Pentecostal Church of Christ
10515 Chester Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44106
<http://collegeofbishops.org/>.

**National Apostolic Fellowship
(AA)**

Bishop Major Foster, President
Philadelphia Pentecostal Holiness
Church
13724 South Old State Rd.
Ellendale, DE 19941
<https://www.nationalapostolicfellowship.com/>

**Pentecostal/Charismatic
Churches of North America
[0436]**

c/o Chairman Jeff Farmer
8408 131st St. Ct. E
Puyallup, WA 98373
<http://www.pccna.org>.

**Pentecostal World Fellowship
[0437]**

International Office
7777 S. Lewis Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74171

<https://www.pwfellowship.org/>

**United Fellowship Convention of
the Original Apostolic Faith
Mission**

Current address unavailable
Current status unknown

**United Pentecostal Holiness
College of Apostles and
Bishops (AA)**

170 N. Sharpsville Ave.
Sharon, Pennsylvania 16146
<https://www.facebook.com/UPHCOAB/>

**World Assemblies of God
Fellowship**

WAGF North America
1445 N. Boonville Ave.
Springfield, MO 65802
<http://worldagfellowship.org/>.

**World Link of Churches and
Ministries, Inc.**

C/o Intl. Prelate Apostle Dr. Lloyd
Benson, Sr.
Life Cathedral Worship Center
2103 S Philippe Ave.
Gonzales, LA 70737
<https://www.wlcm.org/>
<https://www.lifecwc.org/>

White Trinitarian Holiness Pentecostals

Holiness Pentecostals are generally distinguished by their roots in the nineteenth-century Methodist Holiness movement and its teaching that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is generally the third experience of God's grace that follows justification (or salvation) and sanctification.

**The Apostolic Faith Church
[0439]**

6615 SE 52nd Ave.
Portland, OR 97206-7660

<http://www.apostolicfaith.org>.
<https://www.facebook.com/ApostolicFaithChurchPortland>.

**Carolina Evangelistic Association
[0440]**

C/o Greater Life Church
7700 Wallace Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28212
<http://www.garrchurch.com>.
<https://www.facebook.com/garrchurch>

**Church of God (Cleveland,
Tennessee) [0442]**

2490 Keith St. NW
PO Box 2430
Cleveland, TN 37320-2430
<http://www.churchofgod.org>.
<https://www.facebook.com/COGHQ>.

The Church of God

Alexander Jackson Sr. General
Overseer
5565 Runway Dr.
Cleveland, TN 37312
<https://www.tcgonline.org/en/home>

**The Church of God in Divine
Order [0443]**

C/o Apostle Ted Carr
P.O. Box 787
Lone Grove, OK 73443
<https://tcogido.wixsite.com/tcogido>
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Church-of-God-in-Divine-Order-World-Headquarters/272777429402280>.

**Church of God, International
Offices**

Stephen E. Smith, General Overseer
197 Tillie Rd.
Cleveland, TN 37312
<https://www.thechurchofgod.org>

**Church of God (Jerusalem Acres)
[0444]**

Bishop Lavell Craig, Presiding
Bishop
PO Box 1207
1826 Dalton Pke. SE
Cleveland, TN 37364-1207
<http://www.thechurchofgodntj.org/>

**Church of God, Mountain
Assembly [0445]**

C/o Rev. James Walden, Jr., General
Overseer
256 N. Florence Ave.
PO Box 157
Jellico, TN 37762
<http://mycgma.com/>

**Church of God of the Apostolic
Faith, Inc. [0446]**

Rev. Jack Richey, General
Superintendent
399758 W. 3100 Rd.
Ramona, OK 74061
<http://www.cogaf.org/>

**Church of God of Prophecy
[0447]**

Rev. Sam N. Clements, General
Overseer
PO Box 2910
Cleveland, TN 37320-2910
<http://www.cogop.org>.
<https://www.facebook.com/cogop>.

**Church of God of the Union
Assembly, Inc. [0448]**

2211 South Dixie Hwy.
PO Box 1323
Dalton, GA 30720-1323
<http://thechurchofgodua.org/>

**Church of God (Homer
Tomlinson) [0449]**

C/o Roger L. Centers
East Willow Street Church of God
403 E. Willow St.
Scottsville, KY 42164

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious-organization/The-Church-of-God-USA-Headquarters-101164174888717/>

Door of Faith Church and Bible School [0450]

1161 Young St.

Honolulu, HI 96814

<http://www.dooroffaithhawaii.com>

Emmanuel Holiness Conference [0451]

5272 Lyngate Ct

Burke, VA 22015-1688

<https://emmanuelholinessconference.com/>

Emmanuel Tabernacle Baptist Church, Apostolic Faith Inc. [0452]

331 N Garfield Ave.

Columbus, OH 43203

<https://www.facebook.com/EmmanuelChillicothe293/>

First Interdenominational Christian Association [0453]

Calvary Temple Church

1061 Memorial Dr. SE

Atlanta, GA 30316

Current status unknown.

Free Will Baptist Pentecostal Faith Conference [0454]

Rev. Stacey Floyd, Conference Superintendent

3868 Puddin Swamp Rd.

Tuberville, SC 29162

<http://www.fwbpfpc.com>.

Full Gospel Church Association [0455]

413 S Fillmore St.

Amarillo, TX 79101

Current status unknown.

General Conference of the Evangelical Baptist Church [defunct?]

Current status unknown.

Holiness Baptist Association

Bro. Edsel Young, General Superintendent

Current address not obtained.

<https://www.holinessbaptist.com/home>

Holiness Church of God

Current status unknown.

Holy Church of God [0456]

707 Little Neck Rd.

Savannah, GA 31419

<https://www.holychurchofgod.org/>

<https://www.heritagebible.college/our-school>

<http://holinessmessenger.com/churches.html>

International Pentecostal Church of Christ (IPCC) [0458]

2343 U.S. 42 SW

London, OH 43140

<https://ipcoc.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Pentecostal-Church-of-Christ-IPCC/258756331587>

International Pentecostal Holiness Church [0459]

Dr. Doug Beacham, General Superintendent

7300 NW 39th Expressway

Bethany, OK 73008

or

PO Box 12609

Oklahoma City, OK 73157-2609.

<http://www.iphc.org>

National Church of God, Inc. AA

977 NW 17th Ave.

Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33311
<https://www.facebook.com/NationalChurchofGodInc/>

(Original) Church of God, Inc. [0460]
Bishop Randy Taylor, General Overseer
P.O. Box 412
Pulaski, TN 38478
<http://www.theocogfellowship.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/theocog>
g

Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church [0461]
PO Box 1568
Dunn, NC 28335
<http://www.pfwb.org>.

<https://www.facebook.com/pfwbchurch>.

Praise Chapel International [0462]
Aka PC Global
PO Box 1769
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91729
<https://www.pcglobalnetwork.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/PraiseChapelInternational>.

Zion Assembly Church of God
C/o Bishop Wade H. Phillips
International Ministries Complex
5512 Waterlevel Hwy
Cleveland, TN 37323
<https://zionassemblychurchofgod.com/>

White Finished-Work Trinitarian Pentecostals

Finished Work Pentecostals generally dissent from the Holiness Pentecostal position that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is a third experience of grace made available to those who have been experienced sanctification. They teach that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is available immediately to any Christian.

American Indian Evangelical Church [0463]
1823 Emerson Ave N
Minneapolis, MN 55411
Current status unknown

<http://www.originalapostolicfaith.org>.
<http://www.apostolicbiblecollege.org>.

Anchor Bay Evangelistic Association [0464]
PO Box 406
Maryville, IL 62062
<http://www.thebay.cc/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Anchor-Bay-Evangelistic-association/114125638616654>

Association of Related Churches (ARC) [0433]
1201 Lee Branch Lane
Birmingham, AL 35242
<https://www.arcchurches.com/>.
Note: ARC functions both as a denomination and an intra-faith fellowship.

Apostolic Faith (Kansas) [0465]
335 W 10th St.
Baxter Springs, KS 66713

Bethany Ministerial Fellowship
C/o Jack Picataggi, President
Bethany Bible Training Center
3177 Virginia Beach Blvd.
Virginia Beach, VA 23452

<https://www.bethanybtc.org/bmf.html>

**Bethel Temple/Bethel
Fellowship International
[0466]**

PO Box 4676
Federal Way, WA 98063
<http://www.bfi-online.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bethel-Fellowship-International/200091786677378>

Calvary Chapel [0468]

3800 S. Fairview Rd.
Santa Ana, CA 92704
<http://www.calvarychapel.com>.
<https://www.facebook.com/CalvaryChapelPage>.
<https://bereanresearch.org/calvary-chapel-association-announces-complete-separation-brian-cheryl-brodersen-cc-costa-mesa-cc-global-network/>

Calvary Chapel Global Network

C/o Brian Brodersen, President
No central address
<https://calvarychapel.com/resources/article/view/calvary-global-network>
<http://calvarycca.org/updates/>

**Christian Fellowship Ministries
[0472]**

(aka Potter's House, Victory Chapel, The Door)
C/o Potter's House Christian Center
5195 N. Hwy 89
Prescott, AZ 86301
<http://www.worldcfm.com/>.

Christian Ministries International

C/o Rev. Mark D. Boykin,
President
2234 N Federal Highway #458
Boca Raton, FL 33431

<https://cmifellowship.org/>

Churches of the Kingdom of God

Current status unknown

CMI Global [0473]

PO Box 11228
Fort Wayne, IN 46856-1228
<http://cmiglobal.org/>
<https://www.cmiglobal.info/>

**Congregational Bible Churches
International**

Current status unknown

Crossroads [0474]

Terry Phillips, Director
3500 Madison Pl.
Cincinnati, OH 45209
<http://www.crossroads.net/>.

Evangel Fellowship International

C/o Rev. Phillip Miles - Chairman
PO Box 326
Conway SC 29528
<https://efiglobal.org/>

**Faith Christian Fellowship
International (FCFI) [0476]**

C/o Senior Bishop William Hildreth
3611 N. State Rd. 19
Sharpville, IN 46068
<https://fcfifellowship.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Faith-Christian-Fellowship-International/165839533609697>.

**Fellowship of Christian
Assemblies [0477]**

4909 East Buckeye Rd.
Madison, WI 53716
<https://www.fcaministers.com/>

**Fellowship of Churches and
Ministers, International
(FCMI) [0478]**

Rev. Mike Murray, President

P.O. BOX 1240
Statesboro, GA 30461
[https://www.fcmonline.com/
index.html](https://www.fcmonline.com/index.html)

Free Gospel Church, Inc. [0479]
PO Box 477
Export, PA 15632
<http://www.fgbi.org>.
[https://www.fgbi.org/free-gospel-
church-of-export.html](https://www.fgbi.org/free-gospel-church-of-export.html)

**Full Gospel Churches
International**
Rev. Amy Patrick General
Secretary/Treasurer
2101 East 34th Place
Joplin, MO 64804
<https://fgci.us/>

**Freedom Covenant Global
Ministries**
Bishop Sam Leigh, Presiding Bishop
1518 9th St.
Marysville, WA 98270
<https://www.freedomcovenant.org/>
<https://fcgmwest.org/home.htm>

**Full Gospel Evangelistic
Association (FGEA) [0480]**
Dr. Galen Pearcy, FGEA President
2702 E 81st St.
Tulsa, OK 74137
<http://www.fgeaonline.org>.
[https://www.facebook.com/
FullGospel
EvangelisticAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/FullGospelEvangelisticAssociation).

Full Gospel Truth, Inc. [0481]
C/o iCelebrate Church
613 4th St.
East Jordan, MI 49727
[https://www.facebook.com/
iCelebrateChurch/about](https://www.facebook.com/iCelebrateChurch/about)

**General Assemblies and Church
of the First Born [0483]**

200 N. Lawrence Ave.
Fullerton, CA 92832
Current status unknown.

**General Council of the
Assemblies of God [0484]**
1445 N Boonville Ave.
Springfield, MO 65802-1894
<http://www.ag.org>.

Grace Family of Churches
1400 Dogwood Rd.
Snellville, GA 30078
[https://www.gracefamilyof
churches.com/](https://www.gracefamilyofchurches.com/)

Grace International [0485]
40 Cypress Creek Pkwy W., PMB
391
Houston, TX 77090
<http://grace-international.tv/>.

**Household of Faith Fellowship of
Churches [0487]**
7325 NE Imbrie Dr., #256
Hillsboro, OR 97124
<http://www.hofcc.org/index.html>

**International Assemblies of God
Fellowship**
P.O. Box 851
Martinsburg, WV 25402-0851
<http://www.iaog.org/>

**International Assemblies of the
First-Born, Inc. [0488]**
Rev. Ben Refuerzo, General
Superintendent
798 West 3rd St.
Stockton, CA 95206
<http://iafirstborn.org/>.
[https://www.facebook.com/
pages/FAFB-IAFB-Historical-
Archives/287819341250668](https://www.facebook.com/pages/FAFB-IAFB-Historical-Archives/287819341250668).

**International Church of the
Foursquare Gospel [0489]**

C/o Rev. Randy Remington, President
PO Box 26902
1910 W Sunset Blvd., Ste. 200
Los Angeles, CA 90026-0176
<http://www.foursquare.org>

**International Fellowship of
Christian Assemblies [0471]**
(formerly The Christian Church of
North America)
605 Shirls Ave.
Washington, PA 15301
or
1294 Rutledge Rd.
Transfer PA. 16154
<http://www.ccnafamily.org>.
<http://ifcaministry.org/>

International Gospel Fellowship
Bishop LaDonna C. Osborn
555 S. Memorial Drive
Tulsa, OK 74112
[https://osborn.org/about/
international-gospel-fellowship](https://osborn.org/about/international-gospel-fellowship)

Lamb of God Church [0490]
612 Isenberg St.
Honolulu, HI 96826-4532

**Logos Christian Fellowship
[0491]**
8839 CR 44
Leesburg, FL 34788-9201
<http://www.logoschristian.org>.

Open Bible Churches [0492]
2020 Bell Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50315-1096
<http://www.openbible.org/>.
[https://www.facebook.com/
GlobalMinistriesOpenBible
Churches](https://www.facebook.com/GlobalMinistriesOpenBibleChurches).

Pentecostal Church of God [0493]
2705 Brown Trl.
Bedford, TX 76021
or

PO Box 211866
Bedford, TX 76095
<https://www.pcg.org/>

**Pentecostal Church of New
Antioch**
Current status unknown

**Pentecostal Evangelical Church
[0494]**
C/o Dr. Edna Overstreet, General
Bishop
PO Box 2078
Moses Lake, WA 98837
<https://www.pec.today/>

**Pentecostal Evangelical Church
of God, National and
International**
Current status unknown.

**Tony Alamo Christian Ministries
[0496]**
PO Box 2948
Hollywood, CA 90078
<http://www.alamoministries.com/>
[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
TONY-ALAMO-Christian-
Ministries/729439147079523](https://www.facebook.com/pages/TONY-ALAMO-Christian-Ministries/729439147079523).

United Evangelical Churches
P. O. Box 1000
San Juan Bautista, CA 95045-1000
<http://www.uecol.org/>

**United Full Gospel Ministers and
Churches [0497]**
Current status unknown.

**United Fundamentalist Church
[0498]**
Current status unknown

**United Gospel Tabernacles
[0499]**
PO Box 1235
Galliano, LA 70354-1235

<http://gospel-tabernacles.net/>.
<http://www.sabine-tabernacle.com/>

Vine Fellowship Network

C/o Greg Lancaster
40 W. Nine Mile Road, #2
PMB 360
Pensacola, FL 32534
<https://vinefellowshipnetwork.org/>

Vineyard USA [0500]

PO Box 2089
Stafford, TX 77497
<http://www.vineyardusa.org>.
<https://www.facebook.com/vineyardusa>.

World Evangelism Fellowship [0501]

C/o Evangelist Jimmy Swaggart
8919 World Ministry Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70810-1600

https://www.jsm.org/fwc_world_evangelism

World Harvest Church [0502]

4595 Gender Rd.
Canal Winchester, OH 43110
or
Breakthrough with Rod Parsley
PO Box 100
Columbus, OH 43216-0100.
<http://www.whclife.com/>.
<http://whma.rodparisley.com/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/whclife>.

World Healing Fellowship [0503]

C/o Rev. Benny Hinn
Box 163000
Irving, TX 75016-3000
<http://www.healingfellowship.com/>
.
<http://www.bennyhinn.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/BennyHinnMinistries>

Healing/Deliverance Pentecostals

The healing and deliverance Pentecostal churches emphasize both the healing ministry and the ministry of deliverance from demonic obsession and possession. Most of these denominations grew out of the Healing revival of the 1950s.

Branham Tabernacle and Related Assemblies [0505]

c/o The William Branham
Evangelistic Association and the
Branham Tabernacle
PO Box 950
Jeffersonville, IN 47131
<http://www.themessage.com>.
<http://branham.org/>.

Christ Gospel Churches International, Inc. [0470]

Rev. Berniece R. Hicks
2614 E 10th St.
Jeffersonville, IN 47131

<http://www.christgospel.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/ChristGospelChurches>.

Deliverance Evangelistic Church [0506] (AA)

Senior Pastor Glen Spaulding
2001 W. Lehigh Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19132
<http://www.decministry.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/decministry>

Don Stewart Ministerial Association

**(aka Miracle Life Fellowship
International) [0507] (AA)**

Apostle Don Stewart
PO Box 21004

Tulsa, OK 74121

[http://www.donstewartministerial
association.org/](http://www.donstewartministerialassociation.org/).

[https://www.facebook.com/DonSte
wart MinisterialAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/DonStewartMinisterialAssociation)

[https://www.facebook.com/Don-
Stewart-International-College-of-
Bishops-346955815398352/](https://www.facebook.com/Don-Stewart-International-College-of-Bishops-346955815398352/)

**The Fellowship Network
(formerly the Full Gospel
Fellowship of Churches and
Ministers Int.) [0510]**

1000 N Belt Line Rd., Ste. 201

Irving, TX 75061-4000

http://www.thefellowshiptoday.com
/.

[https://www.facebook.com/FGFC
MI](https://www.facebook.com/FGFCMI).

<https://thefellowshipnetwork.net/>

**First Deliverance Church of
Atlanta [0509]**

65 Hardwick St. SE

Atlanta, GA 30315

Current status unknown

**Full Gospel Fellowship of
Churches and Ministers
International of Oregon**

P. O. Box 584

Terrebonne, OR 97760

<http://worldwidefellowship.org/>.

**Full Gospel Restoration Ministers
and Churches**

PO BOX 1344

Sedalia, MO 65302-1344

[http://www.fullgospelrestoration.co
m/](http://www.fullgospelrestoration.com/).

**Gospel Ministers & Churches
International**

3233 West Peoria Ave., Ste. 101

Phoenix, AZ 85029

<https://www.gmci.org/>

**Hall Deliverance Foundation
[0511]**

C/o The International Healing
Cathedral

9840 N. 15th St.

Phoenix, AZ 85020

or

Box 9910

Phoenix, AZ 85068

[https://www.facebook.com/
halldeliverance/](https://www.facebook.com/halldeliverance/)

<https://www.gloryknowledge.com/>

[http://www.internationalhealing
cathedral.org/](http://www.internationalhealingcathedral.org/).

[https://www.facebook.com/
hallfoundation](https://www.facebook.com/hallfoundation).

International Apostolic Council

C/o Curry R. Blake

John G. Lake Ministries

P.O. Box 742947

Dallas, TX 75374

<https://www.iglm.org/>

[https://www.lifemission.org.za/
international-apostolic-council-
iac/](https://www.lifemission.org.za/international-apostolic-council-iac/)

**Leroy Jenkins Evangelistic
Association [0513]**

P.O. Box 24897

Tampa, FL 33623

<http://www.leroyjenkins.com/>

[https://www.facebook.com/
RevLeroyJenkins](https://www.facebook.com/RevLeroyJenkins).

**Salvation and Deliverance Church
[0516] (AA)**

C/o Apostle Jerome King

37 W. 116th St.

New York, NY 10026

[https://www.facebook.com/
SalvationandDeliverance
Headquarters](https://www.facebook.com/SalvationandDeliveranceHeadquarters).

<https://www.sndhq.org/>

**Spoken Word Deliverance
Ministry and Ministerial
Fellowship [0517]**

PO Box 951

Lowell, NC 28098

[https://www.facebook.com/
spokenworddeliveranceministry](https://www.facebook.com/spokenworddeliveranceministry)

**Trendsetters Church
International
(formerly Miracle Life Revival,
Inc.) [0517]**

4633 E. Shea Blvd.

Phoenix, AZ 85028

Current status unknown

Oneness/Apostolic Pentecostals

Oneness Pentecostals affirm a non-trinitarian theology that emphasizes the Oneness of God and the practice water baptism in the God's name—Jesus. Through the mid-twentieth century the use of the term Apostolic shifted from the entire Pentecostal movement being called the “Apostolic Faith” to the use of the term “Apostolic” largely as an adjective describing Oneness churches.

**Alliance of Apostolic Churches of
Jesus Christ (AA)**

C/o Apostle Perry Maples, Presiding
President

Apostolic Deliverance Temple

Church of Jesus Christ

1369 Norris Rd.

Memphis, TN 38106

<http://www.aaccj.org/history.html>

[http://asambleaapostolica.org/engli
sh/](http://asambleaapostolica.org/ingles/)

**Apostolic Brotherhood
International**

C/o Rev. Perry Cathey

24455 East Terrace

Porter, TX 77365

<http://apostolicbrotherhood.org/>

**Apostolic Assemblies of Christ,
Inc. [0519] (AA)**

C/o Bishop Bramlett Cooper,
Presiding Bishop

8425 Fenkell Ave.

Detroit, MI 48238

[http://www.apostolicassembliesofch
rist.com](http://www.apostolicassembliesofchrist.com).

Apostolic Church of Christ [0521]

2044 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr.

Winston-Salem, NC 27107

Current Status unknown

**Apostle Church of Christ in God
[0522]**

c/o Dr. J. C. Richardson, Presiding
Bishop

Mt Sinai Apostolic Church

7 Peters St.

Martinsville, VA 24112

[https://www.facebook.com/
ApostleChurchofChristinGod/](https://www.facebook.com/ApostleChurchofChristinGod/)

**Apostolic Assembly of the Faith
in Christ Jesus [0520]**

C/o Bishop John Fortino, President

5401 Citrus Ave.

Fontana, CA 92336

<http://www.apostolicassembly.org/>
[https://www.facebook.com/
officialapostolicassembly](https://www.facebook.com/officialapostolicassembly)

Apostolic Church of Jesus (AA)

C/o Chief Apostle, Dr. Preston
Rolle, Sr.

National Business Office
P.O. Box 293
Safety Harbor, FL 34695
<http://www.theacojinc.org/>

**Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ
[0523]**

C/o Bishop Lonnie Smith, National
Chairman
P.O. Box 521
Smackover, AR 71762
<https://www.acjci.org/>

Apostolic Faith (Hawaii) [0524]

C/o Head Pastor William M. Han,
Jr.
1043 Middle St.
Honolulu, HI 96819
<http://www.jesuscomingsoon.org>

Apostolic Faith Fellowship

C/o Nathaniel Stutzman
229 N. Main
Seminole, OK 74868
[http://apostolicfaithfellowship.org/
index.html](http://apostolicfaithfellowship.org/index.html)

**Apostolic Faith Fellowship
International (AA)**

C/o Bishop Charles E. Johnson
1700 Ritchie Marlboro Rd.
Largo MD 20774
<https://www.affinc.org/>

**Apostolic Faith Mission Church
of God [0525] (AA)**

C/o Bishop Donice Brown
3344 N Pearl Ave.
Birmingham, AL 36101
[https://www.facebook.com/Nation
al-Revival-of-the-Apostolic-
Faith-Mission-Church-of-God-
530475273795845/](https://www.facebook.com/National-Revival-of-the-Apostolic-Faith-Mission-Church-of-God-530475273795845/)

Apostolic Light Fellowship [0526]

PO Box 311
St. Albans, VT 05478-0311

Current status unknown.

**Apostolic Ministerial Alliance
[0527]**

c/o Fountain of Life Apostolic
Church
1530 E Arizona Ave.
Las Cruces, NM 88001
Current status unknown.

**Apostolic Ministry Fellowship,
Inc.**

P O Box 342622
Bartlett, Tennessee 38184
<https://theamfinc.net/>

**Apostolic Overcoming Holy
Church of God, Inc.
[0528](AA)**

C/o Mother Lydia William, National
Secretary
Phillip Temple AOH Church of
God
2257 St. Stephens Rd.
Mobile, AL 36617
<http://www.aohchurch.com/>.
[https://www.facebook.com/
AOHChurch](https://www.facebook.com/AOHChurch)

Apostolic Pentecostal Fellowship

C/o Bishop Leonard Worley
Bible Way Christian Training Center
3340 Bruce Randolph Ave.
Denver, CO 80205
<http://apfofchurches.org/>

**Assemblies of the Lord Jesus
Christ, Inc. (ALJC) [0529]**

C/o Kenneth Carpenter, General
Superintendent
875 N White Station Rd.
PO Box 22366
Memphis, TN 38122
<http://alj.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/aljcorg>.

**Associated Brotherhood of
Christians [0530]**

C/o Pastor Herb Ellis
PO Box 37
McDougal, AR 72441
<http://www.abofc.org/>.

**Bethel Born Again Church of
Jesus Christ Apostolic Inc.**

527 Huxford Court
Lake Mary, FL 32746
or
2500 Silver Star Rd.
Orlando, FL 32808
[https://www.bethelunited.com/
our-affiliates](https://www.bethelunited.com/our-affiliates)
Int. hqtrs.: 3 Oakland Rd, Kingston,
Jamaica
[https://www.facebook.com/login/
?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.
facebook.com%2Fbethelapost%2F](https://www.facebook.com/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fbethelapost%2F)

Beth-EL Churches of Christ (AA)

C/o Bishop Bernard N. Bragg
3910 West Rogers Ave.
Baltimore, MD. 21215
<https://www.bethelchurches.org/>

**Bethel Ministerial Association
(BMA) [0531]**

6899 Scottsville Navilleton Rd
Floyds Knobs, IN 47119
[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
Bethel-Ministerial-
Association/198394663667139](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bethel-Ministerial-Association/198394663667139).
[http://www.daveweb1a.com/bma/i
ndex.html](http://www.daveweb1a.com/bma/index.html)

**Bible Way Church of Our Lord
Jesus Christ World Wide, Inc.
[0532] (AA)**

C/o Apostle Michael J. Rogers,
Presiding Bishop
3820 Stoneshore Rd.
Virginia Beach, VA 23452
<http://www.biblewaychurch.org>.

**Bible Way Pentecostal Apostolic
Church of Christ [0533] (AA)**

501 13th St NW
Roanoke, VA 24017
[https://www.facebook.com/biblewa
ypacoc/](https://www.facebook.com/biblewaypacoc/)

**Biblical Apostolic Organization
(BAO) [0534]**

716 S Maple St.
Siloam Springs, AR 72761
or
PO Box 88
Lancaster, TX 75146.
Current status unknown.

**Cainhoy Miracle Revival Corp.
(AA)**

C/o Apostle Larry Brown
Summerville Miracle Revival Center
208 Simmons Ave.
Summerville, SC 29483
<https://summervillermc.com/>

**Church in the Lord Jesus Christ
of the Apostles Doctrine
[0535] (AA)**

2449 Calvary Rd.
Hartsville, SC 29550-7167
<http://www.thechurchin.org/>.

**Church of God Apostolic, Inc.
(COGA) [0536] (AA)**

PO Box 1686
North Wilkesboro, NC 28659
<http://www.cogainc.org/>.

**Church of God in Christ Jesus,
Apostolic, Inc. [0537] (AA)**

c/o Bishop Keith Allen
Rehoboth Church of God
700 Poplar Grove St.
Baltimore, MD 21216
<http://www.rehoboth1.com/>.
[http://www.biblewayhc57.com/the-
church-of-god-in-christ-jesus-
apostolic-inc/](http://www.biblewayhc57.com/the-church-of-god-in-christ-jesus-apostolic-inc/)

**Church of Jesus Christ
(Apostolic) (AA)**

C/o Bishop W. G. McKoy,
Presiding Bishop
Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic
Inc.
135 Lafayette Place
Englewood, New Jersey 07631
<http://cjcenglewood.com/>

**Church of Jesus Christ
(Kingsport) [0538]**

479 Gravely Rd.
Kingsport, TN 37660
<http://www.tcojc.us/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/tcojc>.

**Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ
of the Apostolic Faith [0539]
(AA)**

C/o Apostle James I. Clark
Christ Temple Assembly Church
1317 West 128th St.
New York, NY 10027
<http://www.cooljc.org>.
<https://www.facebook.com/COOLJCorg>.

**Church of the Lord Jesus Christ
of the Apostolic Faith
(Philadelphia) [0540] (AA)**

Bishop Kenneth Shelton, General
Overseer
701 S 22nd St.
Philadelphia, PA 19146
<http://www.tcljc.com/>.

**Churches of Christ in the
Apostles Doctrine [0541]**

c/o Cornerstone Christian
Fellowship in the Apostles
Doctrine
12065 SW 131 Ave.
Miami, FL 33186
<http://www.apostlesfaith.net/>.

**Churches of God and True
Holiness**

C/o Apostle Raymond Faison, Jr.
9709 Leavells Rd.
Fredericksburg, VA 22407
<https://www.cogath.org/>

**Congregational Holiness Church
[0542]**

3888 Fayetteville Hwy.
Griffin, GA 30223
<http://www.chchurch.com/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/83132315672/>.

**Edification Fellowship of
Churches**

C/o Bishop Robert Nichols, Jr.
Word of Faith Deliverance
Ministries
5201 Davis Blvd.
North Richland Hills, TX 76180
or
River of Life Church
p. O. Box 711
DeSoto, TX 75115
<https://www.stepintotheriver.org/about>
<https://www.word-of-faithdm.org/bishop-nichols>

**Emmanuel Tabernacle Baptist
Church of the Apostolic Faith
(AA)**

Edward M. Mitchell, Presiding
Bishop
No address
No website

**Evangelistic Churches of Christ
of the Apostolic Faith (AA)**

1400 S Lake Shore Dr,
Chicago, IL 60605
<https://www.evangelisticchurchesofchrist.org/>

First Born Church of the Living God

C/o Bishop Titus B. Deas, Jr.,
Presiding Bishop
P.O. Box 354
Chattahoochee, FL 32324
<http://www.thefirstbornchurchinc.org/>

First Church of Jesus Christ [0543]

1100 E. Lincoln St.
Tullahoma, TN 37388
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/First-Church-of-Jesus-Christ/172265219481834>.

First Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ (AA)

C/o Apostle Pastor Gino Jennings
5105 N. 5th St.
Philadelphia, PA. 19120
<https://www.truthofgod.com/>

The First United Tabernacle International Ministries, Inc.

C/o Bishop Lloyd L. Faulknor
425 South Jefferson St.
Orange NJ 07050
<https://www.futim.org/history>

Free Gospel Church of the Apostle's Doctrine [0544]

Bishop Antoinette Green Snow
c/o Free Gospel Deliverance Temple
1800 Hazelwood Dr.
Capitol Heights, MD 20743
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Free-Gospel-Deliverance-Temple/353842206162>.
<http://www.restorationfgc.org/Free-Gospel.aspx>

Glorious Church of God in Christ Apostolic Faith [0545] (AA)

c/o Bishop Perry Lindsey Sr.
Glorious Church of God in Christ

1665 10th Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701
<http://www.gcogic.faithweb.com/>.
<https://thegloriouscogic.org/church-history-the-glorious-cogic/>

Glorious Churches of God in Christ (AA)

Bishop Azel C. Colston, Jr.,
Presiding Prelate
236 Hamilton Ave.
Staten Island, NY 10301
<https://thegloriouscogic.org/>

Greater Emmanuel Fellowship Int. of America

C/o Bishop Edward Shouse,
Sr., Presiding Bishop
517 St Clair Ave.
Columbus, OH 43203
<https://gefioh.com/index.php/>

Higher Higher Grounds Always Abounding Assemblies [0546] (AA)

870 St. Clair Ave.
Columbus, OH 43201
<http://www.highergroundaaa.com/>.
or
C/o Bishop T. D. Jakes
Potter's House
6777 W. Kiest Blvd.
Dallas, TX 75236

Highway Christian Church of Christ [0547]

C/o Bishop Herman Ginwright
432 W St. NW
Washington, DC 20001
<https://shytye00777.wixsite.com/highwaychristian/>

Greater Highway Church of Christ International (AA)

Dr. Malachi Haines, Sr., Presiding Bishop
306 West Liberty St.
Marion, SC 29571

<http://ghcoc.net/>
<https://www.greaterhighway.org/>

**Holy Temple Church of Christ
(AA)**

C/o Bishop David Myrick, Sr.
439 12th Street SE
Washington, DC 20003
<https://www.htconline.org/>

**Holy Temple Church of the Lord
Jesus Christ of the Apostolic
Faith [0548] (AA)**

Pastor & General Overseer Bishop
Belton Green
2075 Clinton Ave.
Bronx, NY 10457
<http://www.theholychurch.org>
<http://www.theholychurch.net/>

**House of God International [aka
The Holy Church of the
Living God, the Pillar and
Ground of the Truth, the
House of Prayer for All
People]**

C/o Chief Apostle Thomas E. Clark,
Jr.
866 Georgetown St.
Lexington, KY 40511
<http://www.houseofgod.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/welovehog/>
Sabbatarian Hebrew Pentecostal

**House of the Lord and Church on
the Mount**

Leah D. Daughtry, National
Presiding Prelate
415 Atlantic Ave.
Brooklyn, NY 11217
<https://www.holc.org/>

**International Bible Way Church
of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

C/o Apostle Willie E. Rookard
190 Brock St.
Inman, SC 29349
<https://internationalbibleway.org/>

**International Circle of Faith/Life
Network [0549]**

Bernie L. Wade, President
1901 Prestwick Dr.
La Grange, KY 40031
<http://www.icof.net>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/326348874042913/>

**International Ministerial
Association [0550]**

C/o Rev. Chad Hayes, Chairman
PO Box 242
Shell Lake, WI 54871
<http://www.interma.net>

**Living Witness of the Apostolic
Faith**

Bishop Dr. Merrick D. Jackson
Living Witness Apostolic Faith Temple
4159 N Laramie Ave.
Chicago, IL 60641
<https://www.facebook.com/lwafinc/>
<http://www.lwafinc.com/>

**Ministerial Alliance Association
of the Apostolic Faith**

C/o Bishop Albert L. Malone
P. O. Box 15723
Durham, NC 27704
<https://maaaf.com/>

**Mount Hebron Apostolic Temple
of Our Lord Jesus Christ of
the Apostolic Faith, Inc.
[0551]**

Apostle Jeremiah Ravenell
P.O. Box 789
St. Stephen, SC 29479
or
Mt. Hebron Apostolic Temple
27 Vineyard Ave.

Yonkers, NY 10703
<http://www.lordmakeusone.com>.

Mt. Zion Sanctuary [0552]

21 Dayton St.
Elizabeth, NJ 07202
Current status unknown.

**New Church of Christ Holiness
unto the Lord of the Apostolic
Faith (AA)**

Bishop Dr. Andrew Mole
P.O. Box 201
Varnville, SC 29944
[https://www.bryancountynews.com/
lifestyle/faith/bishop-enjoys-
spreading-good-news/](https://www.bryancountynews.com/lifestyle/faith/bishop-enjoys-spreading-good-news/)
[https://www.facebook.com/freedm
anncoc/](https://www.facebook.com/freedmannccoc/)

**New Covenant Apostolic
Churches International (AA)**

C/o Bishop Derrick H. Smith,
Presiding Bishop
540 E Washington Ave.
Bridgeport, CT 06604
<https://thencacint.org/>
[https://www.facebook.com/New-
Covenant-Apostolic-Churches-
International-107252182941009/](https://www.facebook.com/New-Covenant-Apostolic-Churches-International-107252182941009/)

**New Day Deliverance Holiness
Church (AA)**

C/o Apostle Richard Taylor
9001 Mesa Dr.
Houston, TX 77028
[https://newdaychurch.org/nddhc/h
ome](https://newdaychurch.org/nddhc/home)

**New Jerusalem Churches of God
in Christ Jesus Apostolic Inc.
(AA)**

Bishop Altamont George Blackwood
130 – 08 Springfield Blvd
Springfield Gardens, NY 11413
[http://www.newjerusalemastolic.
org/](http://www.newjerusalemastolic.org/)

**Original Glorious Church of God
in Christ Apostolic Faith
[0553] (AA)**

C/o Dr. Charles M. Laster, Sr.,
General Bishop
7007 Superior Ave.
Cleveland, OH 44103
[https://www.originalgloriouschurch.
com/](https://www.originalgloriouschurch.com/)

**Pentecostal Assemblies of Jesus
Christ [0554]**

Bishop Ronald Warnock, National
General Chairman
127 Church Street
Reesville, OH 45166
<https://www.pajci.org/>

**Pentecostal Assemblies of the
World [0555] (AA)**

International Headquarters Offices
3939 N Meadows Dr.
Indianapolis, IN 46205
<http://www.pawinc.org>.
[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
Pentecostal-Assemblies-of-the-
World-Inc/140708686011747](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pentecostal-Assemblies-of-the-World-Inc/140708686011747).

**Pentecostal Church of God
[Michigan] [0556] (AA)**

9244 Delmar St.
Detroit, MI 48221
[https://www.thepentecostalchurcho
fgod-district1.com/](https://www.thepentecostalchurchofgod-district1.com/)

**Pentecostal Church of Zion
[0557]**

264 N. Orchard Rd.
Salem, IN 47167
<http://pentecostalchurchofzion.net/>
[https://www.facebook.com/Pentec
ostal-Church-of-Zion-
198863526832430/](https://www.facebook.com/Pentecostal-Church-of-Zion-198863526832430/)

**Pentecostal Churches of the
Apostolic Faith International,
Inc. [0558] (AA)**

PCAF Headquarters

Bishop Lambert W. Gates, Sr.,
Presiding Bishop
723 South 45th St.
Louisville, KY 40211
<https://pcafintl.org/>

**Primitive Church of Jesus Christ
[0559]**

c/o Bethel Church of Jesus Christ
1825 SE Hwy. 19 N
Inglis, FL 34449

**Pentecostal Followers of Jesus
Christ Inc. (AA)**

C/o Bishop Winifred B. Hamlet,
International Presiding Bishop
Gospel Lighthouse Apostolic
Church, Inc.
2003 Main St.
Hartford, CT 06120
or
124 Mt. Calvary Church Rd.
Aberdeen, MD 21001
<https://www.pentecostalfollowersofjesuschristnm.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/PEJCI>
[M/](#)

**Progressive Church of our Lord
Jesus Christ [0560]**

Bishop Theodore Jenkins, Sr.,
Presiding Bishop
2222 Barhamville Rd.
Columbia, SC 29204-1203
<http://progressivechurch.org/>.

**Pure Holiness Church of God
[0561]**

Presiding Bishop James P. Waters
P.O. Box 2014
Marietta, GA 30061
<http://phcofgod.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/pureholiness.church>.

**Redeemed Assembly of Jesus
Christ, Apostolic [0562]**

c/o Bishop James F. Harris
2200 Fairfax Ave.
Richmond, VA 23224
https://www.redeemedassembly.org
[/](#)
<https://www.facebook.com/redeemedassembly>.

**Refuge Temple Assembly of
Yahweh (AA)**

C/o Apostle Bishop John W. Pernell
22 E Clay St.
Richmond, VA 23219
<https://www.facebook.com/Refuge-Temple-Assembly-of-Yahweh-106844334297720/about/>

Shiloh Apostolic Temple [0563]

Apostle Derrick L. Williams, Chief
Apostle & Presiding Prelate
1500-34 W. Master
Philadelphia, PA 19121
<https://shilohapostolictemple.org/>

True Holiness Global Churches

C/o Chief Apostle Charles R.
Walker
502 Southampton Ave.
Danville, VA 24541
https://www.trueholinessglobal.org
[/](#)

True Jesus Church [0564]

U.S. General Assembly Office
21217 Bloomfield Ave.
Lakewood, CA 90715
<http://www.tjc.org>.

**True Vine Churches of
Deliverance International**

Apostle Dr. Sylvester Davis
Johnson, Apostolic Primate
500 Kinard Dr. NE
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
<https://www.facebook.com/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2F>

www.facebook.com/%2Ftvcodinternational%2F
<http://macedoniaworshipcenter.holyconnectioninc.com/>

True Vine Pentecostal Churches of Jesus [0565] (AA)

c/o Greater New Bethel Apostolic Church
931 Bethel Ln.
Martinsville, VA 24112
https://martinsvillebulletin.com/lifestyle/religion/martinsville-area-church-briefs-aug-4/article_eff2054a-2d77-57e8-b67a-c5feb5d3af76.html

United Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ

Bishop Joseph Riggs, General Superintendent
1202 East Fifth St.
Greenfield, IN 46140
www.apcgi.org

United Apostolic Church International [0566]

PO Box 1452
Aberdeen, WA 98520
Current status unknown.

United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic, Inc. [0567] (AA)

Apostle James B. Thornton,
934 Gorsuch Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21218
<http://www.unitedchurchofjesuschrist.org>.

United Church of Jesus Christ (Apostolic) [0568] (AA)

Bishop Monroe Saunders, Jr.
5150 Baltimore National Pke.
Baltimore, MD 21229
<http://unitedchurchjc.org/>.

United Churches of Deliverance Apostolic

Melton, "Pentecostal/Charismatic Denominations of the United States" | 261

Bishop Jesse E. Wiley, Presiding Prelate
187 Ragtown Rd.
Henrietta, NC, NC 28076
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious-organization/The-United-Churches-of-Deliverance-Apostolic-Inc-661560594039484/>

United Churches of Jesus, Apostolic [0569] (AA)

1500 N. Dunleith Ave.
Winston Salem, NC 27102
<http://www.ucjaonline.com/>.
<https://www.ucjainc.org/home>

United Pentecostal Church International [0570]

36 Research Park Court
Weldon Spring, MO 63304
<http://www.upci.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/upci.org>

United Way of the Cross Churches of Christ of the Apostolic Faith

C/o Bethel Way of the Cross Church
11560 Mt Cross Rd.
Danville, VA 24540

United World Wide Apostolic Churches In Jesus Name

C/o Senior Bishop James Mitchell
Bethel Temple Pentecostal Church
4014 South Lancaster Rd.
Dallas, TX 75216
<https://www.betheltemplepcoackliff.com/>

Universal Church of Jesus Christ
Current status unknown

Victory Christian Outreach Center Ministries [0571] (AA)

1015 Main St.
Colfax, LA 71417
<http://vcoc1.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/VCOC>
58

**Way of the Cross Church of
Christ International [0572]
(AA)**

C/o Bishop Earley Dikllard,
Presiding Bishop
WOTCC International
Headquarters:
1800 Hazelwood Dr.
Capitol Heights MD 20743
<http://www.wotcc.net>.
<https://www.facebook.com/wotccintl>.

**World Assemblies of Restoration
(AA)**

C/o Bishop James D. Nelson,
Presiding Bishop
PO Box 1862
West Amherst, New York 14226
<https://www.theworldassemblies.org/>

**Worldwide Apostolic Ministries
Church of Jesus Christ, Inc.**

701 N Rockwall Ave.

Terrell, TX 75160
<https://www.wwamcojc.org/>

**Worldwide Pentecostal Church of
Christ [0573]**

Rev. Lemuel Jones Ayudtud
292 Vanduzer St.
Staten Island, NY 10304
<http://www.angelfire.com/ny4/wpc/>.
<https://www.angelfire.com/fl/WPC/Cayudtud/tbl.html>

**Worldwide Pentecostal
Fellowship**

C/o Kenny Godair, Executive
Chairman
2250-2346 E 73rd St.
Tulsa, OK 74136
<https://www.worldwidepf.com/>

**Zion Gospel Churches of the
Apostolic Faith (AA)**

C/o Zion Gospel Church
112-11 Dillon St.
Jamaica, NY 11433
<https://www.facebook.com/ziongospellfe/>

African American Trinitarian Pentecostals

In spite of progress in recent decades, most Black Pentecostals remain segregated in denominations in which both the ministers and members are predominantly African American. It is also the case that several of these denominations are among the largest Pentecostal church bodies in the United States even as their story has remained absent from books surveying Pentecostal and Charismatic history.

**African Universal Church, Inc.
[0574]**

2336 SW 48th Ave.

Hollywood, FL 33023

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/African-Universal-Church/293087117369929>.

African Universal House of Worship, Inc.

Elder Kubina V. Keyes, 'Shepherd' (Pastor) & Overseer
3531 Old Kings Rd.
Jacksonville, FL 32254, USA
www.assemble.auhow.org

Agape Family of Churches

Bishop Lawrence A. Wilkerson
Agape Christian Church
4327 S. First St.
Austin, TX 78745
<https://www.agapetexas.org/about/>

Alpha and Omega Pentecostal Church of God of America, Inc. [0575]

2021 Barclay St.
Baltimore, MD 21218
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Alpha-Omega-Pentecostal-Church-of-America-Inc/117844201564439>.
<https://ipao-missions.org/en/about-us/>

Apostolic Church North America

7930 Boone Rd.
Houston, TX 77072
<https://tacnaministries.org/>

Apostolic Faith Church of America [0576]

Current status unknown.

Apostolic Faith Church of God and True Holiness [0577]

Now listed under "Church of God and True Holiness"

Apostolic Faith Church of Giving Grace [0578]

C/o Bishop Nathan Perry, Presiding Prelate
109 Highway 309
Garysburg, NC 27831
<http://www.afcogg.com/>

Apostolic Faith Church of God Live On! [0579]

Chief Apostle R.H. Cross, Sr.
Presiding Prelate
Live On Ministries
4324 Holland Rd.
Suffolk VA 23437
<https://liveonministries.org/history>

Apostolic Faith Churches of a Living God

Current status unknown

Apostolic Faith Churches of God

608 Oak St.
Franklin, VA 23851
<https://www.facebook.com/login/?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2FApostolicFaithChurchOfGod%2F>

Apostolic Holiness Church of America

Current status unknown

Azusa Interdenominational Fellowship of Christian Churches [0583]

Defunct, formerly led by Carleton Pearson

Beth-El Fellowship of Visionary Churches [0584]

c/o Presiding Bishop F. Josephus Johnson, II,
The House of the Lord
1650 Diagonal Rd.
Akron, OH, 44320
<http://www.bethelchurches.org/>.
<http://www.thotl.org/>.

Bible Days Church

C/o Pastor Anthony Wilcotts, Sr
501 Quitman St.
Houston, TX 77009
<https://bibledayshouston.org/>

Bible Church of Christ [0585]

Bishop Darne Bryan

1358 Morris Ave.
Bronx, NY 10456
<http://www.thebiblechurchofchrist.org>,
<https://www.facebook.com/thebiblechurchofchrist>.

Calvary Alliance of Churches and Ministries [0467]

c/o Calvary Revival Church
5833 Poplar Hall Dr.
Norfolk, VA 23502
<https://crcglobal.org/>

Christ Holy Sanctified Church

C/o Bishop Craig E. Brown,
Presiding Bishop
4859 W. Slauson Ave, #413
Los Angeles, CA 90056
<https://www.chschurch.org/>

Church of Christ Holiness unto the Lord, Inc. [0441]

Bishop Moses A. Lewis, Presiding
Bishop and Chief Apostle
1101 Stiles Ave.
Savannah, GA 31401
<https://www.netministries.org/churches/ch08841>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/126550534066529/>
<https://savannahherald.net/the-church-of-christ-holiness-unto-the-lord-inc-mourns-the-lost-of-bishop-p913-100.htm>
<https://www.facebook.com/people/Church-of-Christ-Holiness-Unto-the-Lord-Inc-Florida-Jurisdiction/100075794745730/?sk=about>

Church of Christ Written in Heaven

C/o Chief Apostle Willie J. Jones
1430 Kings Rd.
Jacksonville FL 32211
<https://www.cocwih.org/>

Church of God in Christ [0587]

Bishop John Drew Sheard, Presiding
Bishop
930 Mason St.
Memphis, TN 38126
<http://www.cogic.org>.

Church of God in Christ, Congregational [0588]

Senior Bishop Robert Smith
918 Bond Ave.
East St. Louis, IL 62201
<https://sites.google.com/site/918bondcogicc/>

Church of God in Christ, International [0589]

Bishop Dr. James C. Watford,
Senior Bishop and Chief Apostle
125 N Fisher St.
Jonesboro, AR 72401
<http://www.cogicinternational.com>.
<https://www.cogic-int.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/cogicinternational/>

Church(es) of God in Christ, International

C/o Bishop J.C. White, Presiding
Prelate
45 Gregory St.
Bridgeport, CT 06604
<https://cogic-international.org/>

Church of God in Christ United

Bishop Arnold Little I, International
Presiding Prelate
7300 Alabama St.
New Orleans, LA 70127
<http://www.cogicuiwc.org/>

Church of God Pentecostal

C/o Senior Bishop Johnny J. Young
International Temple
818 Telegraph Rd.
Mobile, AL 36610

or

109 W. Buckthorn St.
Inglewood, CA 90301
<https://www.thecogp.org/>

Church of the Kingdom of God

Bishop Ira Presley, Jr., Presiding
Prelate
P. O. Box 577
Eustis, FL 32727
<https://www.tcotkog.com/>

**Church of the Living God
(Christian Workers for
Fellowship) [0590]**

Chief Bishop Dr. Rex M. Waddell,
Presiding Prelate
434 Forest Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45229
<http://www.ctlgcwff.org/>
[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
Church-Of-The-Living-God-
CWFF-National-
Brotherhood/147866642573962
4.](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Church-Of-The-Living-God-CWFF-National-Brotherhood/1478666425739624)

**Church of the Living God
International**

Dr. Joseph White, Presiding Bishop
Pool of Bethesda, CLGI
2600 McCutcheon Rd.
Columbus, OH 43219
<https://www.clgi.org/>

**Church of the Living God, the
Pillar and Ground of the
Truth, Inc. [Lewis Dominion]
[0591]**

4520 Ashland City Hwy.
Nashville, TN 37208
<http://www.clpgt.org/>

[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
The-Church-of-the-Living-God-
the-Pillar-and-Ground-of-the-
Truth/370249669500.](https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Church-of-the-Living-God-the-Pillar-and-Ground-of-the-Truth/370249669500)
[http://www.netministries.org/see/c
hurches.exe/ch30084.](http://www.netministries.org/see/churches.exe/ch30084)

**Church of the Living God, the
Pillar, and Ground of the
Truth Which He Purchased
with His Own Blood, Inc.
[McLeod Dominion] [0592]**

PO Box 55090
Indianapolis, IN 46205
<http://www.cotlgnet.org/>

**Deliverance Evangelistic Centers,
Inc. [0593]**

826 S 10th St.
Newark, NJ 07108
[http://www.decministries.net.](http://www.decministries.net)
[https://www.facebook.com/DECte
mple?ref=ts&fref=ts.](https://www.facebook.com/DECtemple?ref=ts&fref=ts)

**Deliverance Jesus Is Coming
Association of Churches
[0594]**

815 Springfield Ave.
Irvington, NJ 07111
<http://djicc.org/>

**Dominion Assembly of Christian
Churches**

C/o Bishop Paul A. Hardin, Chief
Apostle
4865 Gulf Freeway
Houston, TX 77023
[https://www.facebook.com/domini
onchurches/](https://www.facebook.com/dominionchurches/)

**Faith Community Churches
International**

PO Box 69305
Tucson AZ, 85737
<https://fccichurches.com/>

**Faith Tabernacle Council of
Churches, International [0595]**

7015 NE 23rd Ave.
Portland, OR 97211

**Fire-Baptized Holiness Church of
God of the Americas [0596]**

901 Bishop W. E. Fuller Sr. Hwy.
Greenville, SC 29601-4103
<http://www.fbhchurch.org>.

Free Church of God in Christ

C/o God's Pentecostal Temple
150 16th Ave.
Seattle, WA 98122
[http://www.facebook.com/Gods-
Pentecostal-Temple-
1587187141493454/](http://www.facebook.com/Gods-Pentecostal-Temple-1587187141493454/)

**Fire International Fellowship of
Churches
and Ministers**

C/o Bishop Barry McDonald,
Presiding Prelate
9833 Liberty Road
Randallstown, MD 21133
<https://www.fifocm.net/>

**Freedom Worldwide Covenant
Ministries [0597]**

6100 W Columbia Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19151
<http://www.fcbfchurch.org/>.
[https://www.facebook.com/FCBFC
church?ref=br_tf](https://www.facebook.com/FCBFCchurch?ref=br_tf).

**Frontline Covenant Fellowship of
Churches**

C/o Bishop Norman E. Hutchins,
Sr.
Frontline Ministries
516-A Jefferic Blvd.
Dover, DE 19901
<https://www.frontoftheline.org/>

**Full Gospel Baptist Church
Fellowship [0598]**

1691 Phoenix Blvd., Ste. 200
Atlanta, GA 30349

<http://www.fullgospelbaptist.org>.

Full Gospel Holy Temple [0599]

C/o Apostle Herman L. Murray, Jr.
39727 LBJ Fwy.
Dallas, TX 75237
<http://www.fght.org/>.

Full Gospel New Life Association

C/o Apostle J. Ardis Winans-Jones.
Presiding Prelate
1600 Ann Arbor Ave.
Dallas, TX 75216
<http://www.thefgnla.com/>

**Full Gospel Pentecostal
Association [0600]**

1032 N Sumner
Portland, OR 97217
or
C/o Tabernacle of Evangelism
Community Church,
1300 N La Brea Ave.
Inglewood, CA 90302.
***Full Gospel Tabernacle Churches
Inc.***

623 E Woodin Blvd.
Dallas, TX 75216
<https://fgtdallas.org/>

Global United Fellowship

Bishop James R. Woodson,
Apostolic Aide
St. James Home of Fresh Start
PO Box 20925
Greensboro NC, 27420
<https://globalunitedfellowship.org/>
International Headquarters
C/o Neil Clarence Ellis
Willow Tree Ave & Mt. Tabor Dr.
P. O. Box N-9705
Nassau, Bahamas
<https://globalunitedfellowship.org/>

**Greater Mt. Zion Pentecostal
Church of America**

C/o Bishop Lee E. Moore Sr.,
Presiding Prelate
2083 Fulton St.
Brooklyn, NY 11233
or
Episcopal Headquarters
541 E. Allegheny Ave,
Philadelphia, PA 19134
https://www.facebook.com/gmzpe_ntecostalchurch/about/?ref=pag_e_internal

Healing Temple Church [0601]
660 Williams St.
Macon, GA 31217
Current status unknown.

Holy Temple of God, Inc. [0457]
*C/o Bishop Harvey J. Hutchinson Jr.,
Presiding Bishop*
1220 NE 23rd Ave.
Gainesville FL 32609
<http://www.holytempleofgodinc.com/>
<https://htog.org/>

**House of God Which Is the
Church of the Living God, the
Pillar and Ground of the
Truth, Inc. [White Dominion]
[0602]**
C/o Bishop Ivy A. Hopkins,
President General
PO Box 33169
Philadelphia, PA 19142-9998
<http://www.houseofgodclg.org/>
https://www.facebook.com/CLGP_GT.

**House of God Which Is the
Church of the Living God, the
Pillar and Ground of Truth
[0603]**
Current status unknown.

**The House of God, Which is the
Church of the Living God, the**

**Pillar and Ground of the Truth
Without Controversy, Inc.,
Keith Dominion**
C/o Bishop Rebecca W. Fletcher,
5th Chief Overseer
2714 Scovel St.
Nashville, TN 37208
<https://www.hogconline.org/about>

House of the Lord
Current status unknown.

**House of the Lord and Church on
the Mount**
Leah D. Daughtry, National
Presiding Prelate
700 7th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20024
<https://www.holc.org/>

**International Bible Way Church
of Jesus Christ**
C/o Apostle Willie E. Rookard
190 Brock St.
Inman, SC 29349
<https://ibwondemand.org/>

**International Fellowship of
Covenant Bishops and Pastors**
Archbishop Dr. Roberto R. Brown,
Prelate
P. O. Bix 30096
Brooklyn, NY 11203
<http://www.ifcbp.org/>

**International Fellowship of
United Apostolic Churches
[0605]**
PO Box 11763
Louisville, KY 40251-0763

**Kingdom Apostolic Fellowship
International**
Bishop Cedric Kenebrew
15619 Stone Gables Ln.
Houston, TX 77044
https://www.facebook.com/bishop_cedric.kenebrew

Kingdom Destiny Fellowship
C/ Bishop D. Desmond Robinson,
International Presiding Bishop
3559 Brown Rd.
Saint Louis, MO 63114
<https://www.kingdomdestiny.org/>

**Kingdom Life Network of
Ministries [0606] (AA)**
597 Naugatuck Ave.
Milford, CT 06461
<http://www.klcc.us/>.

**King's Apostle Church World
Ministries**
Bishop Wilbert L. Baltimore. Chief
Apostle
135 Stepney's Lane
Edgewater, MD 21037
<https://kingsapostleonline.org/>

**Latter House of the Lord for All
People and the Church of the
Mountain, Apostolic Faith
[0607]**
Current status unknown.

**Monument International Church
Assemblies**
C/o Apostle Mark A. Henton
750 W Columbus Ave.
Chicago, IL 60652
<https://www.facebook.com/micafelowship/>

**Mount Calvary Holy Church of
America [418]**
Bishop Herbert C. Crump, Jr.,
Presiding Prelate
610 Rhode Island Ave. NE
Washington, DC 20002
<http://www.mchca.org>.
<https://www.facebook.com/mchca>.

**Mount Calvary Pentecostal Faith
Church, Inc. [0608]**

Dr. Betty M. Middleton, Presiding
Bishop
1204 Eutaw Pl
Baltimore, MD 21217
[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
Mount-Calvary-Pentecostal-
Faith-Church/109702932399624](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Mount-Calvary-Pentecostal-Faith-Church/109702932399624).

**Mount Sinai Holy Church of
America, Inc. [0609]**
Bishop John Emanuel Holland,
Presiding Prelate
1469 N Broad St.
Philadelphia, PA 19122-3327
<http://mtsinaiholychurch.org/>

**National Fellowship Churches of
God [0610]**
Apostle Ivan S. Grant, Sr, Presiding
Prelate
3545 St Johns Bluff Rd S. Ste. 1-135
Jacksonville, FL 32224
<http://www.nfcog.org/>.

**New Light Christian Center
Church [0611]**
11233 Crown Park Dr., Ste. A
Houston, TX 77067
<http://www.newlight3.org/>.
[https://www.facebook.com/newlight
cc](https://www.facebook.com/newlightcc).

**New Covenant Churches
International**
C/o Larry D. Leonard
14150 Wunderlich Dr.
Houston, TX 77069
[https://www.facebook.com/newcov
enantchurches/](https://www.facebook.com/newcovenantchurches/)

**New Zion Temple Church
Worldwide Fellowship,**
1601 Ruthven Street
Houston TX 77019
[https://www.facebook.com/New-
Zion-Temple-Church-of-the](https://www.facebook.com/New-Zion-Temple-Church-of-the)

WorldWide-Fellowship-
116117951743439/

**Original Church of God
Sanctified**

**BISHOP WARREN E. BOYD,
PRESIDING PRELATE**

1803 County Hospital Rd.
Nashville, TN 37218
<https://www.originalchurchofgod.org/>
[g/
https://www.facebook.com/ocgnational](https://www.facebook.com/ocgnational)

**Original United Holy Church
International [0612] (AA)**

Current status unknown

**Pentecostal Churches of Jesus
Christ**

Pastor Hezekiah Walker
464 Liberty Ave.
Brooklyn, NY 11207
<https://www.pcjconline.org/>

Pentecostal Fellowship Churches

Archbishop Marshal Leo'nard
701 West 8th St.
Sylacauga, AL 35150
<https://pfcchurches.org/>

**Perfecting Fellowship
International**

C/o Bishop Marvin L. Wenans,
Presiding Bishop
Perfecting Church
7616 Nevada St. E.
Detroit, MI 48234
<http://www.pfi.world/mcms/pfi-re-cut-fullwidth/>
<https://www.perfectingchurch.org/wp/>

**Pilgrim Assemblies International
[0613]**

C/o Archbishop William Hudson III
The Powerhouse Chicago.

773-445-7600
944 West 103rd St.
Chicago, IL 69643
<https://www.pilgrimassemblies.org/>
or
Holy Convocation, Central Georgia
Jurisdiction.
<http://pilgrimassemblies.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/PilgrimAssemblies>.

Pure Holiness Church

C/o Bishop James P. Waters,
Presiding Bishop
P.O. Box 2014
Marietta, GA 30061
<https://www.phcofgod.org/>

**Reflections of Christ's Kingdom
World Outreach International
(The R.O.C.K.)**

C/o Dr. Dana Carson, Apostle
9321 Edgebrook Drive
Houston, TX 77075
<https://therockwoi.com/>

**Reformed Churches of God in
Christ International**

Most Rev. K. J. Rogers, Chief
Apostle
5044 Butterfield Drive
Winston Salem, NC 27105
[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
category/Religious-
Organization/Reformed-
Churches-of-God-in-Christ-Intl-
128623773825070/](https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious-Organization/Reformed-Churches-of-God-in-Christ-Intl-128623773825070/)

**Seventh Day Pentecostal Church
of the Living God [0495]**

Overseer Bishop Ira F. Baity
3722 41st Ave.
Brentwood, MD 20722
<http://www.7dpc.org/>

**Sought Out Church of God in
Christ**

344 Village Rd

Sylvania, GA 30467
<https://www.facebook.com/soughtoutchurch/about/>

**Soul Saving Station for Every
Nation Crusaders of America
BISHOP REV. DR. ROBERT DAVIS,
GENERAL OVERSEER**

302 West 124th St.
New York, NY 10027
<https://soulsavingnyc.org/church-history/>
<http://www.soulsavingstationchurch.org/leaders.html>

**Tabernacle of Prayer for All
People [0614]**

165-11 Jamaica Ave
Jamaica, NY 11432
https://www.facebook.com/pages/TABERNACLE-OF-PRAYER-FOR-ALL-PEOPLE-YOUTH/156937899947?sk=timeline&ref=page_internal

**The True Apostolic Church of
Jesus Christ [0615]**

16 Helena St.
Rochester, NY 14605
<http://www.trueapostolicchurchofjesuschrist.org/>

**True Grace Memorial House of
Prayer [0616]**

205 V St. NW
Washington, DC 20001
<https://www.facebook.com/TGMHOP>

**True Vine Churches of
Deliverance International
[0617]**

500 Kinard Dr.
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/True-Vine-Churches-of-Deliverance->

[International/130685120307851?v=info](https://www.facebook.com/International/130685120307851?v=info)

**United Churches of God in Christ
[0618]**

International Headquarters
161 Senoia Rd.
Fairburn, GA 30213
<http://ucogic.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/ucogic>

**United Church of the Living God,
The Pillar and Ground of
Truth [0619]**

11029 S Broadway
Los Angeles, CA 90061

**United Cornerstone Churches
international**

C/o Chief Apostle James H. Carter
1102 Short St,
Thomasville, NC 27360
<https://www.facebook.com/United-Cornerstone-Churches-International-312962272414976/>

**United Covenant Churches of
Christ International**

C/o Bishop G. E. Livingston,
Presiding Prelate
7380 W. Sand Lake Rd., Suite 500
Orlando, FL 32819
<https://uccconline.org/>

**United Crusade Fellowship
Conference**

14250 SE 13th Pl.
Bellevue, WA 98007
Current status unknown

**United Full Gospel Church, USA
[0620] AA**

C/o Bishop Richard E. Taylor
14250 SE 13th Pl.
Bellevue, WA 98007

<https://www.facebook.com/United-Full-Gospel-Church-USA-283168591737848/>

**United Holy Church of America,
Inc [0621]**

5104 Dunstan Rd.
Greensboro, NC 27405
<http://www.uhcoa.org/>.

**The United House of Prayer for
All People of the Church on
the Rock of the Apostolic
Faith [0622]**

601 M St. NW
Washington, DC 20001-3620
<http://www.tuhopfap.org>.

**The United New Testament
Church, International
Ministry Association**

**Rev. Dr. C. Joseph Fifer, Prelate &
President**

24290 Alabama Hwy 99
Elkmont, AL 35620
<https://untci.org/>

**United Pentecostal Council of the
Assemblies of God (UPCAG)
[0623]**

1243 West 87th St.
Chicago, IL 60620
<https://upcag.org/>

**Universal Christian Church
[0624]**

2140 Dr. Andrew J Brown Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
Current status unknown.

**Universal Christian Spiritual
Faith and Churches for All
Nations [0625]**

Current status unknown

Universal Church of Christ [0626]

491 Orange St.
Newark, NJ 07107
www.ucoci.com

**Victory Christian Ministries
International [0627]**

3911 St. Barnabas Rd.
Sultland, MD 20746
<http://www.vcmi.org/>.

**Victory in Praise Churches
C/o Bishop Rufus Keith Turner**

2029 E Harding Way
Stockton, CA 95205
<https://www.victoryinpraise.org/about>

**Victory United Fellowship of
Churches**

C/o Bishop Marc L. House,
Presiding Prelate
Victory City Church
5300 Frontage Rd.
Forrest Park, GA 30297
<https://www.victoryunitedfellowshipofchurches.org/>
<https://thevufc.org/>

**Victory Unto Victory Revivals,
Inc. [0628]**

Greater Victory Temple of the
Apostolic Faith
6730 Winton St.
Houston, TX 77021
<http://www.vuvr.org/>.

**Worldwide Kingdom Network of
Churches**

Dr. Charissee Lewis, Apostle
Liquid Fire Ministries
<https://drcharisseelewis.com/wkncm/>

Churches of African Origin

Since the 1960s, numerous immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa have arrived in the United States and have brought their Pentecostal faith with them. The most visible part of the first-generation African Pentecostal community is from Nigeria (the largest number of which now reside in Texas). Most (but not all) of these churches are international bodies with their international headquarters in Africa.

All Nations Alliance of Christian Churches and Ministers (Nigeria)

9970 NW 51st Ln.
Miami, FL 33178
Int. headquarters: C/o Bishop
Egenti Michael
P.O. Box 81, Dei Dei Market, FCT
Abuja, Nigeria
<http://www.anaccm.org/>

Apostolic Church Glorious Vision

10540 Synott Ave.
Sugarland, TX 77478
<https://tacusa.org/>
<https://tacusanw.org/about-us/#pastor-profile>

Apostolic Church International (Ghana)

23 Oxford St.
Worcester, MA 01609
www.theapostolicchurch.org
(American branch of Apostolic Church-Ghana)

Apostolic Church International Fellowship of North America (Ethiopia)

C/o The Secretary
1116 Nielsen Dr.
Clarkston GA S30021
<http://www.acifna.faithweb.com/>

Apostolic Triumphant Church International (Liberia)

C/o Apostle Bal Success Abraham

4727 N Royal Atlanta Dr., Ste. E.
Tucker, GA 30084
<https://www.facebook.com/atciatlanta/>
<https://www.atcissuccessinternational.com/>

Authentic Word Ministries (Rwanda)

Zion Temple Celebration Center
3001 W Irving Blvd.
Irving, TX 75061
<https://awmamerica.org/>

Bethel World Outreach Ministries International (Liberia)

Rev. Lawrence Kennedy, National
Overseer BWOMI America.
16727 FM 529
Houston, TX 77095
<https://www.facebook.com/bwochouston/>
<https://www.bethelcityofpower.com/>

Celestial Church of Christ (Nigeria)

C/o VSE Joseph O Olorunnisola,
Head of USA Diocese
46 Weber Ave.
Trenton, NJ 08638
<https://www.cccusadiocese.org/>

Christ Apostolic Church International (Ghana)

C/o Atlanta Central Assembly
Pastor Abraham Ketsaba Coffie
6781 Mableton Pkwy, SE
Mableton GA 30126

International Headquarters: Accra,
Ghana

<http://cacintlusa.org/about.html>

**Christ Apostolic Church North
America (Nigeria)**

C/o Pastor Timothy Akinlolu
Omolayo Oluwashakin Agbeja,
Co-ordinator of C.A.C. North
America and Canada.

14051 Stahley Rd.

Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214

<https://cacnorthamerica.com/>

**Christ Apostolic Church of
America (Obadare) [0586]
(Nigeria)**

108-02 Sutphin Blvd

Jamaica, NY 11435

<http://www.christapostolicchurch.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/cacwos>
[em.](https://www.facebook.com/cacwos)

[http://www.cacamerica.org/index.h](http://www.cacamerica.org/index.html)
[tml](http://www.cacamerica.org/index.html) (North American site).

Christ Embassy USA (Nigeria)

C/o Chris Oyakhilome

2616 Texas Dr A

Irving, TX 75062

or

8623 Hemlock Hill Dr.

Houston TX 77083

International headquarters: Christ
Embassy Nigeria

51-53 Kudirat Abiola Way Oregon
Ikeja, Lagos

P.O. Box 13563 Ikeja, Lagos.

[https://www.christembassy.org/201](https://www.christembassy.org/2015/Home/)
[5/Home/](https://www.christembassy.org/2015/Home/)

**Christ United Ministries
International (Nigeria)**

C/o Apostle Matthew Oluwajoba

12400 Westheimer Rd

Houston, TX 77077

<http://www.cumihouston.org/>

**Church of Pentecost, USA
(Ghana)**

1450 Valley Rd.

Wayne, NJ 07470

<https://www.copusa.org/>

**Church of the Lord (Aladura)[aka
Church of the Lord (Prayer
fellowship) Worldwide] [0705]
(Nigeria)**

Province of the U.S.A.

1697 Monro Ave.

Bronx, NY 10457

<http://aladura.net/>

<http://tclpfw.org/>

**Deeper Life Christian Ministry
(Nigeria)**

7035 Edwards Blvd.

Monte Carlo Inn,

Mississauga, ON

Canada L5T 2H8

International headquarters:

2-10 Ayodele Okeowo Street,

Gbagada, Lagos, Nigeria

<https://dclm.org/>

**Holy Ghost Hour Church
(Ghana)**

791 Westchester Avenue

Bronx, NY 10455

<https://holyghosthourchurch.org/>

**International Charismatic Church
(Ghana)**

Bishop Dr. Oppong Adu-Gyamfi

723-731 South 17 St,

Newark, NJ 07103

<https://www.iccnewjersey.org/>

<http://icchurch.org/> (Texas affiliate)

**Living Faith Church/Winners
Chapel International (Nigeria)**

310 Fulton Avenue

Hempstead, NY 11550

or

Winners Chapel

International Houston,
16205 Westheimer Road #C-400
Houston, TX 77082

International headquarters:

Canaanland,
Km. 10, Idiroko Road, Ota,
Ogun State, Nigeria

<http://faithtabernacle.org.ng/>
<https://www.winnerschapelnigeria.org/the-winners-mandate/>

Living Spring International Church

C/o Apostle David Adedeji,

Presiding Bishop

USA Mission Station
682 East 22nd Street,
Bronx, NY 10466

International headquarters: 42 Obi

Wali Street, Mgbuoba Market
Link Road, Rumuigbo, Port
Harcourt, Rivers State. Nigeria.

Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministry (Nigeria)

10000 Kleckley Dr.

Houston, TX 77075

<http://mfmusia.org/>

Mulu Wongel Fellowship Network (Ethiopia)

1905 W. Skywood St.

Brea, CA 92821

<https://www.muluwongelnetwork.org/>

Omega Fire Ministries (Nigeria)

3535 Holland Avenue

Bronx, NY 10457

or

777 S Central Expy

Richardson, TX 75080

<http://ofmrhodeisland.org/ofm-america/>

<https://ofminternational.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ofmamerica/>

International headquarters: KM 132
Benin-Okene/Abuja Express
way, Auchi, Edo State, Nigeria.

Overcomers Ministries Church (Ivory Coast)

C/o Apostle Guy Joseph Tanoh

805 S. Sherman St,

Richardson TX 75081

<https://www.vainqueurs.org/>

Pentecostal 7th Day Assemblies [0736]

Current status unknown

International headquarters:

Association of 7th Day
Pentecostal Assemblies.
Kusmasi, Ashanti,
Ghana

or

PO Box 481, Kusmasi, Ghana

[https://www.facebook.com/pages/](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ass-of-7th-Day-Pentecostal-Assemblies/172419302861374?sk=info&tab=page_info)

[Ass-of-7th-Day-Pentecostal-](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ass-of-7th-Day-Pentecostal-Assemblies/172419302861374?sk=info&tab=page_info)

[Assemblies/172419302861374?s](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ass-of-7th-Day-Pentecostal-Assemblies/172419302861374?sk=info&tab=page_info)

[k=info&tab=page_info.](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ass-of-7th-Day-Pentecostal-Assemblies/172419302861374?sk=info&tab=page_info)

<http://www.enochevangelism.org/>

<http://www.asdpagh.com/>.

Prophetic Faith Network

C/o Toyin Ogundipe and Jide

Ogundipe

8700 Stonebrook Pkwy

Frisco. TX 75034

<https://thepropheticfaith.com/>

Redeemed Christian Church of God [0419] (Nigeria)

North America Operations

515 Co Rd 1118

Greenville, TX 75401

<https://rccgna.org/>

**United States Full Gospel
Mission (Cameroon)**
9550 Forest Lane, #420
Dallas TX 75243

<http://www.usfullgospelmission.org>
/

Signs Pentecostals

Signs Pentecostals are known for their privileging Mark 16: 17-18 and their practice of handling poisonous snakes and drinking poisons.

**Church of God with Signs
Following**
Current status unknown.

**Original Pentecostal Church of
God**
Current status unknown.

Spanish-Speaking Pentecostals

People for whom Spanish was their first language were among the first Pentecostals in Houston in 1905 and then at the Azusa Street Revival in California in 1906. They have formed an important and growing part of the community, and like African American believers, remain among those most often ignored in the telling of the American Pentecostal and Charismatic story. The largest number of the American Spanish-speaking community are from Mexico, but a growing segment of the community have arrived from the Caribbean Islands and across Central and South America.

Closely related to Spanish-speaking Pentecostals are those from Brazil who speak Portuguese. One church, in particular, is representative of Brazilian Pentecostals, the Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus (or the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God). It is the largest Pentecostal church in Brazil and one of the largest in the world. It has established congregations in cities across the United States.

**The Assembly of Christian
Churches, Inc. [0631]**
722 Prospect Ave.
Bronx, NY 10454
<http://www.aicinacional.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Assembly-of-Christian-Churches-Inc/100872993290814>.

1925 E 1st St.
Los Angeles, CA 90033

**Damascus Christian Church
[0633]**
Council of Damascus Christian
Churches
170 Mt. Eden Pkwy.
Bronx, NY 10457
<https://www.prod.facebook.com/Damascus-Christian-Church-579369172159320/>

**Concilio Olazabal de Iglesias
Latino Americano [0632]**

**Defenders of the Christian Faith
[0633]**

C/o Rev. Ramfis Moulier, National
Bishop
No headquarters address
[https://www.defendersmovement.o
rg/](https://www.defendersmovement.org/)

G12 Vision International [0635]

1490 N Flamingo Rd.
Plantation, FL 33323
<http://www.visiong12.com/>
[https://www.facebook.com/visiong
12.](https://www.facebook.com/visiong12)

**Iglesia Evangelica
Congregacional, Inc., de
Puerto Rico [0636]**

PO Box 396
Humacao, PR 00792
Current status unknown

La Iglesia de Dios, Inc. [0637]

Oficinas Administrativas
PO Box 7288
Caguas, PR 00726
<http://laiglesiadediosinc.com/>.
[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
Concilio-La-Iglesia-de-Dios-
Inc/142007865885963.](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Concilio-La-Iglesia-de-Dios-Inc/142007865885963)

**Latin American Council of the
Pentecostal Church of God of
New York [0638]**

115 E 125th St.
New York, NY 10035

**Latin-American Council of the
Pentecostal Church of God of
New York.**

[https://www.facebook.com/pag
es/Iglesia-Pentecostal-La-
Sinagoga/11742069833302.](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Iglesia-Pentecostal-La-Sinagoga/11742069833302)

**Light of the World
Church/Iglesia la Luz del
Mundo [0639]**

4765 E 1st St.
Los Angeles, CA 90022
<http://www.lldmusa.org>.
<http://lldmusa.org/english/>.
[https://www.facebook.com/LLDM
USA.](https://www.facebook.com/LLDMUSA)

**Missionary Church of the
Disciples of Jesus Christ
[0640]**

c/o Bishop Rolando Gonzalez
Washington
15906 E San Bernardino Rd.
Covina, CA 91722
<http://disciplesofjesuschrist.org/>.

Mita's Congregation [0514]

Calle Duarte 235
Hata Rey, PR 60919
<http://www.congregacionmita.org/>.
[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
Congregacion-
Mita/476245049152833.](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Congregacion-Mita/476245049152833)

**Soldiers of the Cross of Christ,
Evangelical International
Church [0641]**

670 W. Flagler St.
Miami, FL 33130
<http://www.sccmiami.org/>.
[https://www.facebook.com/pages/
Soldiers-of-the-Cross-of-Christ-
Miami/165255256419.](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Soldiers-of-the-Cross-of-Christ-Miami/165255256419)

Portuguese-speaking

**Universal Church of the Kingdom
of God/Iglesia Universal del
Reino de Dios (Portuguese-
speaking, from Brazil)**

Administrative office
100 Mulberry St., 14 FL
Newark, NJ 07102
https://www.universalchurchusa.org
[/](#)

International headquarters: C/o
Templo De Salomao, 605

Avenida Celso Garcia, São
Paulo—03015-000, Brasil

Messianic Jewish Groups

Overwhelmingly, in the 1970s, the emerging Messianic Jewish communities, a movement among people of Jewish heritage who have professed faith in Jesus (whom they generally refer to as Yahshua) were deeply affected by the Charismatic Movement. Through the 1970s and 1980s, most Messianic Jewish organizations reorganized along Pentecostal/Charismatic lines.

**Alliance of Redeemed Israel
(formerly Messianic Israel
Alliance) [0940]**

PO Box 3263
Lebanon, TN 37088
<http://www.redeemedisrael.com/>.

Chosen People Ministries [0941]

International Headquarters
241 E 51st St.
New York, NY 10022
<http://www.chosenpeople.com>.

**International Alliance of
Messianic Congregations and
Synagogues [0942]**

PO Box 20006
Sarasota, FL 34276-3006
www.iamcs.org/.

**International Federation of
Messianic Jews (formerly
International Federation of
Sephardic and Ashkenazi
Jews) [0943]**

PO Box 271708
Tampa, FL 33688
<http://www.ifmj.org>.

**Messianic Bureau International
(MBI)**

c/o Mishkan HaMelekh
701B Industrial Park Dr.
Newport News, VA 23608

<http://www.lebtahor.com/>.

Nasorean Orthodox Qahal [0944]

3433 Southwest Trafficway, 2nd Fl.
Kansas City, MO 64111
<http://www.nasori.org/>.

**Restoration Fellowship
International**

C/o John A. Looper
PO Box 5822
Cleveland, TN 37320-5822
[https://www.restorationfellowshipin
ternational.org/](https://www.restorationfellowshipinternational.org/)

**Set-Apart Apostolic Assemblies of
Zion (Nazarene Israelite)**

4501 W Irlo Bronson Memorial
Hwy.
Kissimmee, Florida 34746
[https://covenantseed16.wixsite.com
/website](https://covenantseed16.wixsite.com/website)

**Union of Messianic Jewish
Congregations [0945]**

529 Jefferson St. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87108
<http://www.umjc.net>.

**Union of Nazarene Yisraelite
Congregations [0946]**

PO Box 556
Ottumwa, IA 52501
<http://www.2house.org>

Charismatic Denominations

The Charismatic movement was distinguished by the acceptance of the Pentecostal experience by many ministers and laypeople adhering to non-Pentecostal denominations who, rather than leaving and joining a Pentecostal church, chose to remain as members of their non-Pentecostal churches. However, as the movement persisted, Charismatic members of some churches chose to leave and form new independent churches that maintained significant elements of their Protestant tradition.

Alliance of Renewal Churches

PO Box 270083

St. Paul, MN 55127

<http://allianceofrenewalchurches.org/>

(former Lutherans)

Christ's Church fellowship

1676 East Main Rd., Ste. Three

Portsmouth, RI 02871

<http://www.christschurchfellowship.us/>

(former Restorationists)

Evangelical Presbyterian Church [0330]

Office of the General Assembly

17197 N Laurel Park Dr., Ste. 567

Livonia, MI 48152-7912

<http://www.epc.org/>

From the Heart Ministries Worldwide (AA)

C/o Bishop John A. Cherry, II

4949 Allentown Rd.

Suitland, MD 29746

<https://fthcm.org/>

(former African Methodists)

Homestead Heritage

608 Dry Creek Rd.

Waco, TX 76705

<https://www.homesteadheritage.com/>

Independent Charismatic Ministries, International

C/o Bishop Charles E. Glenn,

International Overseer

P.O. Box 514

Kokomo, IN 46903-0514

<https://www.netministries.org/ministries/CM02083>

World Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church (aka Independent Methodist Church)

7427 Matthews Mint Hill Rd., Ste.

A105-205

Mint Hill, NC 28277

<http://www.independentmethodist.org/index.Home.htm>

Convergence/Liturgical Pentecostals

The Convergence Movement grew from the development of mutual appreciation and respect of the others' tradition by people of Reformed,

Anglican and Pentecostal backgrounds and the desire to create an ecclesiastical context in which the strengths of the three traditions—Reformed theology, Anglican liturgy and worship, and Pentecostal devotion—could thrive. More broadly, the Convergence community includes former Episcopalians and Roman Catholics who have adopted a Pentecostal Charismatic devotional life (and have subsequently left the Episcopal Church and the Roman Catholic Church while retaining their belief in the centrality of the liturgical life) and to Pentecostals who have developed an appreciation of traditional liturgical worship and the ecclesiological life it implies and who have joined church communities that share their new appreciation of ritual and liturgy.

Churches listed in this chapter are led by a bishop who has adopted an episcopal lineage that claims an apostolic succession of authority that links through the laying on of hands back to the original twelve Apostles of Christ.

**Abyssinian Apostolic Church
(AA)**

C/o Mst. Rev. D. D. Chase
The Archdiocese of the Mid-West
Cathedral House
P. O. Box 58612
Louisville, KY 40268
<https://www.aac-usa.org/>
<https://www.archdmidwest.org/>

**All Nations Christian Church
International (AA)**

C/o Patriarch John Githiga
P. O. Box 19805
Amarillo, TX 79114
<http://www.allnationscci.org/>
(charismatic Anglicans)

All Nations Church Network

C/o Bishop Brandon & Holli
Honeycutt
11225 E. Loop 1604 N.
Universal City, TX 78148
<https://brandonhoneycutt.wordpress.com/all-nations-church-network/>

**The Anglican Church of the
Americas**

C/o Archbishop Michael B.
Simmons
200 West 3rd. St.
Luverne, AL 36049
<http://iglesiaanglicana.org/aca/>

**Anglican Churches of Pentecost
(AA)**

C/o Bishop Kelvin C. Brooks
P.O. Box 207
Scotch Plains, NJ 07076
<https://www.anglicanfire.org/>

**Apostolic Communion of
Anglican Churches**

P. O. Box 58612
Louisville, KY 40268
<http://www.theacac.org/>

**Apostolic Communion of
Churches (AA)**

Archbishop Thomas Henry, Jr.
Christian Life Cathedral
2962 Ember Dr., Ste. 109, Rear
Building 1
Decatur, GA 30034
<https://www.theapostoliccommunion.org/>

https://www.facebook.com/pg/ApostolicCommunionOfChurches/about/?ref=page_internal

Apostolic Episcopal Communion

C/o Dr. Gary Barkman
The Dayspring Ministry Group
407 Brookhaven Street, Ste. 3634
Brookhaven, MS 39603
<https://drgbarkman.tripod.com/id108.html>

Catholic Charismatic Church [0054]

C/o Patriarch Michael
St. Jude Catholic Charismatic Church
240 School St.
Berlin, NH 03570
<http://www.worldcouncil-occa.org/>.

Catholic Charismatic Church (Old Catholic Succession)

C/o Mt. Rev. John McClellan
Marshall, Patriarch and Metropolitan Archbishop
vpatriarch@aol.com
<http://catholiccharismaticchurch.world/our-clergy-worldwide.html>

Charismatic Anglican Church

C/o Bishop Richard C. Coleman
Saint Michael's Cathedral
6237 Vance Rd.
Chattanooga, TN 37421
<https://www.facebook.com/Charismatic-Anglican-Church-1464671420512339/>

Christian Communion International

Most Rev. Daniel Williams, Primate
No address provided
<https://web.archive.org/web/20090408212334/http://thecci.tv/>

Communion of Evangelical Christian Churches [0143]

C/o Bishop Quintin Moore
Province of the United States
1505 East 20th Ave.
Hutchinson, KS 67502
<http://ceecusa.org/>
<https://www.ceec.org/>

Conservative Anglican Church of North America

Archbishop A. Dale Climie
830 South Mason Rd, Suite B-5
Katy, TX 77450
<http://www.cacna.org>

Continuing Evangelical Episcopal Communion

C/o Archbishop Robert Gosselin
Province of Recoliation
PO BOX 72
Huntsville TN
<http://ceec.church/ceec/>

Convergence Christian Communion

Solomon's Porch
C/o: Pastor Kenny von Folmar
8103 N 56th Ave
Glendale, AZ 85302
<https://www.convergentchristian.com/locations>

Covenant Fellowship Alliance (AA)

C/o Bishop H. Curtis Douglass
218-98 98th Ave.
Jamaica, NY 11429
<https://www.cfaonline.org/>

Dayspring Ministers Fellowship International (AA)

C/o Most Rev. Dr. Steven Jones,
Archbishop
P O Box 7025
Hyattsville, MD, 20787

<http://www.dayspringministers.net/>

**Global Empowerment Fellowship
of Christian Churches (AA)**

C/o Bishop Ron D. Willis
Vision Community Church
410 Deacon Rd.
Fredericksburg, VA 22405
<https://visionstafford.com/about-us>
<https://www.facebook.com/GEFOCC/>

**Grace Fellowship of Churches
International (AA)**

C/o Grace Church International,
Jonathan E. Alvarado
3434 Pleasantdale Rd.
Atlanta GA 30340
<https://www.gracechurchintl.org/>

**Holy Communion of Churches
[0207] (AA)**

International Communion of the
Holy Christian Orthodox Church
C/o His Holiness, Archbishop
Timothy Paul
205 Eastern Ave.
Springfield, MA 01109
<https://holycommunionofchurches.org/>
<http://www.internationalcommunion.org/>

**International Communion of the
Charismatic Episcopal
Church [0158]**

C/o Bishop Craig Bates
50 St. Thomas Pl.
Malverne, NY 11565
<http://www.iccec.org/>
<http://www.ccec-na.org/default.html>.

**Kingdom Covenant Churches and
Ministries**

C/o Archbishop Jerry King
(Anglican)
Fort Worth, TX

<https://kingdomandcovenant.com/>
<http://www.pentecostalgold.com/Jerry%20King.htm>
<https://www.facebook.com/jerry.king.921230>

**Kingdom Fellowship Covenant
Ministries (AA)**

C/o Bishop Ralph L. Dennis,
Presiding Prelate
6419 York Rd.
Towson, MD 21212
<http://kfcm.org/>

**Living Word Fellowship of
International Churches (AA)**

C/o Chief Apostle John Louis
Hickman
Living Word Faith Center
7900 W. Fuqua
Missouri City, TX 77489
Hickman is affiliated with the Joint
College of African American
Pentecostal Bishops.
<http://www.tlwf.com/>.

Network of Kingdom Churches
4650 Flat Shoals Rd.
Decatur, GA 30034-5095

**New Destiny Fellowship of
Churches International and
Joint College of Bishops and
Apostles (AA)**

C/o Archbishop Adolphus D. W.
Summerville Sr
7420 Unity Ave North, Ste. 310 -E
Brooklyn Park, MN 55443
<https://www.facebook.com/New-Destiny-Fellowship-of-Churches-International-1455868111383549/>
<https://www.newdestinyfellowshipinternational/new-destiny-fellowship.html>

**Paraclete Evangelistic Ministries
Fellowship of Churches
International (AA)**

C/o Most Rev. Dr. Melvin J. Rivers,
Patriarch, Primate, and Presiding
Prelate

3815 N Tryon St

Charlotte, NC 28206

Paraclete Evangelistic Ministries

Fellowship Of Churches

International (pemin.org)

Pentecostal Churches of Christ (AA)

3997 Willowview Ave.

Memphis, TN 38111

<https://www.pceverywhere.com/>

<https://www.pccnational.org/>

<https://www.pcccleveland.org/>

Pentecostal Episcopal Church (AA)

C/o Bishop Rodney Chandler

204 Youles St.

Valdosta, GA 31601

[https://business.facebook.com/pg/t](https://business.facebook.com/pg/the-pentecostalepiscopalchurch/posts/?business_id=453932841473458)

[hepentecostalepiscopalchurch/posts](https://business.facebook.com/pg/the-pentecostalepiscopalchurch/posts/?business_id=453932841473458)

[/?business_id=453932841473458](https://business.facebook.com/pg/the-pentecostalepiscopalchurch/posts/?business_id=453932841473458)

[https://newlifepec.webs.com/about](https://newlifepec.webs.com/about-us)

[-us](https://newlifepec.webs.com/about-us)

Rhema Fellowship of Churches (AA)

C/o Bishop David Martin, Presiding

Bishop

Gospel Tabernacle Church

P.O. Box 170879

Dallas, TX 75217

Bishop Martin is affiliated with the

Joint College of African American

Pentecostal Bishops

[http://www.bishopdavidemartin.org](http://www.bishopdavidemartin.org/Rhema-Fellowship)
[/Rhema-Fellowship](http://www.bishopdavidemartin.org/Rhema-Fellowship)

United Apostolic & Charismatic Church (AA)

The Most Reverend Corey A.

Jenkins, Presiding Archbishop &

Patriarch

C/o Convergence Archdiocese of
Transformation

Mt. Rev. Brian T. Long,

Metropolitan Archbishop

C/o P. O. Box 24191

Winston-Salem, NC 28687

<https://unitedapostolic.cc/>

<https://tministriesint.com/>

United Covenant Churches of Christ (AA)

C/o Bishop G.E. Livingston,

Presiding Prelate

7380 W. Sand Lake Rd., Ste. 500

Orlando, FL 32819

[http://www.unitedcovenantchurches](http://www.unitedcovenantchurches.org/)
[s.org/](http://www.unitedcovenantchurches.org/)

Worldwide Fellowship of Independent Christian Churches (AA)

Most Rev. Dr. Everett Lee Caldwell,
Archbishop

No address given

[http://therealworldwidefellowshipof](http://therealworldwidefellowshipofindependentchristianchurches.org/)
[independentchristianchurches.org/](http://therealworldwidefellowshipofindependentchristianchurches.org/)

Latter Rain Pentecostals

The Latter Rain Movement emerged in the late 1940s and subsequently spread through the Assemblies of God and then to other Pentecostal groups through the 1950s. As the movement lost energy toward the end of the 1950s, a variety of new denominations espousing its main emphases began to appear. The main ideas around which the movement

was built subsequently reappeared within the Charismatic Movement and led to the formation of additional “Latter Rain” denominations through the 1960s, 1970, and 1980s. the Latter Rain championed the “fivefold ministry,” an ecclesiology that privileges Ephesians 4:11 and sought to reorganize the church under the leadership of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

AEGA (Association of Evangelical Gospel Assemblies) International [0642]

2149 Hwy. 139
Monroe, LA 71203
<http://www.aega.org>.

Apostolic Christian Churches, International [0643]

Current status unknown.

Assemblies of God International Fellowship (Independent/Not Affiliated) [0645]

PO Box 22410
San Diego, CA 92192-2410
<http://www.agifellowship.org>.

Association of Faith Churches and Ministries (AFCM) [0646]

PO Box 1918
Willmar, MN 56201
<http://www.afcminternational.org>.
<http://www.afcmic.com/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/AFCMiinternational>.

Bible Teachers International (BTI) [0647]

7135 Louetta Rd, Ste. N
Spring, TX 77379
<http://www.bibleteachers.com>.

Bible Way Association [0648]

PO Box 370
Doniphan, MO 63935

<http://www.biblewayassociation.com>.

<http://www.thevoiceoftruth.com>.

Body of Christ Movement [0649]

c/o Immanuel’s Church
16819 New Hampshire Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20905
<http://www.immanuels.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/immanuelschurch>.

Called to All Nations Ministries, Inc. [0650]

790 E Pine Log Rd.
Aiken, SC 29803
<http://www.ctan.us>.

Church of the Highlands [0652]

4700 Highland Way
Birmingham, AL 352190
<https://www.churchofthehighlands.com/>.

Endtime Body-Christian Ministries, Inc. [0655]

Current status unknown.

Faith Christian Fellowship International [0657]

PO Box 35443
Tulsa, OK 74153-0443
<http://www.fcf.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/FaithChristianFellowship>.

Fellowship of Christians [0659]

1680 Sparksford Dr.

Russellville, AR 72802
<http://www.myfellowship.tv/>
<https://www.facebook.com/myfellowship>.
<http://www.pioneer.org.uk/>.

Fellowship of Vineyard Harvester Churches in the United States [0660]

c/o Cedar Lake Christian Center
1890 Rome Hwy.
Cedartown, GA 30125
Or
c/o Living Word Christian Center
1401 Government St.
Mobile, AL 36604.
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Fellowship-of-Vineyard-Harvester-Churches/122534831106022>.
<http://www.clccnet.org/>.

Five Fold International

C/o Apostle Eric Hansen
365 Walnut Glen Dr.
Springfield, IL 62702
<https://www.fivefoldinternational.org/>

Five Fold Ministries International

C/o Rev. Alex Pappas
Oceans United
6200 20th St., Ste. 248
Vero Beach, FL 32966
<https://oceansunite.com/>
International headquarters: Five Fold Ministries International,
C/o Apostle Harold Weitsz,
Gauteng, South Africa
<http://fivefoldonline.com/>

Five Fold Ministry International Faith Center

C/o Apostle Eddie Cudie
El Campo Faith Center
603 Burdette St.
El Campo, TX 77437

<https://www.elcampofaithcenter.com/>

Foundations of the Apostles and Prophets: School of Ministry and Local Assemblies International [0661]

PO Box 32
Ruston, LA 71273
<http://www.apostlesandprophets.net/FAP%20New.html>.
<https://www.facebook.com/timtheresa.early?ref=ts>.

Fresh Fire Ministries USA [0662]

PO BOX 820
Pineville, NC 28134
<http://www.freshfireusa.com/contact-us>.
<https://www.facebook.com/freshfireusa>.

General Assembly Churches [0663]

c/o Church at Vallejo
5 Spruce St.
Vallejo, CA 94591
<http://churchofthelatterrain.com/>.

Global Cause Network [0664]

27 W Hallandale Beach Blvd.
Hallandale, FL 33009
Or
C/o Apostle Rudy Langenberg
PO Box 553
3800 AN Amersfoort, Netherlands.
<http://www.globalcausenetwork.com/>.
<http://www.jonasclark.com/>.

Global Ministry Resource Network

5663 Balboa Ave. #416
San Diego, CA 92111
<http://www.apostolic-movement.com/>.

**Go Tell It Ministry Worldwide
Network of Churches
(GTIMWNC) [0665]**

1745 E Grand Blvd.

Detroit, MI 48211

<http://www.gotellit.org/>.

<https://www.facebook.com/DRVAUGHN>.

**International Apostolic Ministries
(IAM) [0667]**

3313 W Cherry Ln #656.

Meridian, ID 83642

<http://www.iamtheway.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/iamfamily?fref=ts>.

**International Church of the Grace
of God**

85 Washington St.

Somerville, MA 02143

<http://english.ongrace.com/historia>.

**International Evangelical Church
and Missionary Association
[0669]**

c/o Bishop Donald Meares

Evangel Cathedral

13901 Central Ave.

Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

<http://www.oikoumene.org/?id=5372>.

<http://www.evangelcathedral.net/>.

<https://www.facebook.com/evangelcathedral>.

**International Fellowship of
Ministries [0671]**

22722 29th Dr SE #100

Bothell, WA 98021

<http://www.ifm7.org/>.

<https://www.facebook.com/InternationalFellowshipOfMinistries>.

**Kingdom Community Network
(formerly World Breakthrough
Network) [0673]**

Congress WBN Admin Office, Unit
3 Courtyard of the Artisans

La Joya Complex, Eastern Main Rd.

St. Joseph, Trinidad, West Indies

<http://www.kcnetwork.org/>

<http://www.congresswbn.org/>.

<http://www.elijahcentre.org/>.

**The Living Word Fellowship
[0675]**

PO Box 3429

Iowa City, IA 52244-3429

<http://www.thelivingword.org>.

**Ministers Fellowship
International (MFI) [0676]**

9200 NE Fremont

Portland, OR 97220

<http://www.mfileader.org/>.

**Miracles Ministries Fellowship
(MMF) [0677]**

c/o Don Walker Outreach

Ministries

PO Box 21

Griffin, GA 30224

**New Covenant Churches of
Maryland [0680]**

365 Jones Station Rd.

Arnold, MD 21012

<http://www.newcov.net/>.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/New-Covenant-Church/221038541244177?sk=wall>.

Arnold Christian Academy.

<http://www.arnoldchristianacademy.org>.

**New Covenant Ministries
International [0681]**

PO BOX 1202.

Broomfield, CO 80038

<http://www.ncmi.net/>.

**Pentecostal Faith Assemblies
[0683]**

PO Box 84
Colonial Beach, VA 22443
<http://www.pfai.org/>.

Reformers Ministries
International (RMI) [0684]
C/o Ecclesia Word Ministries
International
PO Box 743
Bronx, NY 10462
or
Ecclesia Church International
1638 Bronxdale Ave.
Bronx, NY 10462.
<http://www.reformersministries.org>.

Resurrection Church and
Ministries (RCM) [0685]
Current status unknown.

Revival Fellowship International
[0686]
PO Box 1007
Beaufort, SC 29901
<http://www.rfiusa.org>.
<http://www.johnnpolis.com/>.

SHEM Ministries International
[0687]
25016 Maple Valley Hwy.
Maple Valley, WA 98038
<http://www.shem.net>.
[https://www.facebook.com/shemite](https://www.facebook.com/shemite?fref=ts)
[?fref=ts](https://www.facebook.com/shemite?fref=ts).

United Gospel Fellowship
Covenant Ministries [0689]
2400 Murchison Rd.
Fayetteville, NC 28301
<http://www.christcathedralchurch.org/>.

United Gospel Tabernacles
[0499]
PO Box 1235
Galliano, LA 70354-1235
[http://bunnyinside.com/149c371c1](http://bunnyinside.com/149c371c1d6b09e7.html#Presidents)
[d6b09e7.html#Presidents](http://bunnyinside.com/149c371c1d6b09e7.html#Presidents).
<http://gospel-tabernacles.net/>.

Vision International Ministerial
Association [0690]
PO Box 744
Jupiter, FL 33468

Vision of Hope Christian
Fellowship [0691]
PO Box 365
Lathrop, CA 95330
<http://www.citytakers.com/>.

World Ministry Fellowship [0694]
PO Box 860157
Plano, TX 75086-0157
<http://www.worldministry.com>.
[https://www.facebook.com/worldm](https://www.facebook.com/worldministry)
[inistry](https://www.facebook.com/worldministry)

Word of Faith/Prosperity Gospel

What is popularly termed the Prosperity Gospel movement refers to churches that follow perspectives derived from the Word of Faith teachings initially developed by Kenneth E. Hagin (1917-2003) and/or the Seed Faith teachings as expounded by Oral Roberts (1918-2009).

Association of Independent
Ministries (A.I.M.) [0582]
Apostle I.V. & Pastor Bridget
Hilliard

c/o New Light Christian Center
Church
1535 Greensmark Dr.
Houston, TX 77067

<http://www.newlight.org/aim/index.cfm>.

<http://www.newlight2.org/#!about-us/czcn>.

Covenant Connections

International [0693] (AA)

811 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.
Copperas Cove, TX 76522

<http://www.chop.org/cci/index.html>.

<https://www.facebook.com/chopcci>

Faith Ministries Alliance

C/o Rev. Bill Winston
Living Word Christian Center
7600 W. Roosevelt Road
Forest Park, IL 60130

<http://faithministriesalliance.org/>

<https://www.livingwd.org/lwcc-home/>

Fellowship of International Christian Word of Faith Ministries (FICWFM) [0508]

c/o Crenshaw Christian Center
7901 S Vermont Ave.

Los Angeles, CA 90044

<http://www.ficwfm.org/>.

<http://www.crenshawchristiancenter.net/>.

<https://www.facebook.com/FICWFM>.

International Convention of Faith Ministries (ICFM) [0512]

5500 Woodland Park Blvd.

Arlington, TX 76013

<http://www.icfm.org/>.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/icfm.usa/>.

Kenneth Copeland Ministries

C/o Eagle Mountain International
Church

14355 Morris Dido – Newark Rd.

Newark, TX 76071

<https://www.kcm.org/church-listing>

Lakewood Church [0674]

PO Box 23297

Houston, TX 77228

<http://www.lakewoodchurch.com/>.

New Light Christian Center Church [0611] (AA)

11233 Crown Park Dr., Ste. A

Houston, TX 77067

<http://www.newlight3.org/>.

<https://www.facebook.com/newlighttcc>.

Rhema [0515]

C/o Kenneth W. Hagin

PO Box 50126

Tulsa, OK 74150-0126

<http://www.rhema.org>.

<https://www.facebook.com/kennethhaginministries>.

Word of Faith International Christian Centers [0692] (AA)

20000 W 9 Mile Rd.

Southfield, MI 48075

<http://www.woficc.com>.

<https://www.facebook.com/WOFICC>.

World Changers Church International [0693] (AA)

C/o Rev. Creflo Dollar

2500 Burdett Rd.

College Park, GA 30349

<http://www.worldchangers.org/>.

Worship Center Worldwide Fellowship of Churches (AA)

C/o Dr. Millicent Hunter

Baptist Worship Center Church

4700 James St.

Philadelphia, PA 19137

<https://thebaptistworshipcenter.org/mhm.htm>

Contemporary Apostles and Prophets—Apostolic Networks¹

The current movement focused on the church leadership of apostles and the gift of prophecy continues the Five Fold ecclesiology originally advocated by the Latter Rain movement that privileges Ephesians 4:11 in its understanding of church polity.

All Nations Churches

C/o Apostle Courage Igene
All Nations Church
1323 Columbia Dr., Ste. 315
Richardson TX 75081
<https://allministers.org/>

Antioch International Ministries (AIM) [0699]

C/o Pastor Jim Sanderbeck,
President of Apostolic Council
246 Cowden Rd.
New Wilmington, PA 16142
<http://aiministries.org/>

Christ Covenant Coalition [0469]

C/o Joseph Mattera
The Liberty Center
121 Elizabeth Ave.
Elizabeth, NJ 07201
<http://www.christcovenantcoalition.com/>.

Christian International Ministries Network [0651]

C/o Bishop Bill Hamon
PO Box 9000
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
<http://www.christianinternational.org/>.

DOVE Christian Fellowship International (DFCI) [0654]

11 Toll Gate Rd.
Lititz, PA 17543

DOVE Christian Fellowship

International.
<http://www.dcfi.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/DOVEInternational>.

Elim Fellowship [0475]

1703 Dalton Rd.
Lima, NY 14485-9516
<http://www.elimfellowship.org/>.

Every Nation [0656]

783 Old Hickory Blvd Suite 210E
Brentwood, TN 37027
<http://www.everynation.org>.
<https://www.facebook.com/everynation>.

Gateway Church [0482]

700 Blessed Way
Southlake, TX 76092
<http://gatewaypeople.com/>.

Hillsong Church [0486]

C/o Hillsong Los Angeles
LA River Studios
2840 Division St.,
Los Angeles, CA 90065
<http://hillsong.com/>.

¹ Only a few of the more than 200 apostolic networks known to exist received an entry in the 9th edition of the *Encyclopedia of American Religions*. Those few are listed in this chapter, but the great majority of the 200+ Apostolic networks are covered in a separate list compiled by the Institute for the Study of American Religion.

<http://hillsong.com/nyc>.

**International Ministries of
Prophetic and Apostolic
Churches Together
(IMPACT) [0672]**

PO Box 492
Matteson, IL 60443
<http://www.impactnetwork.net>.
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Impact-Network-Carrying-the-Torch-of-Present-Truth/156420117771445>.
<http://www.johneckhardtministries.com/>.

**Liberty Fellowship of Churches
and Ministers [0730]**

5229 Kelly Elliott Rd.
Arlington, TX 76017
<http://www.libertyfellowship.org>.

**MorningStar Fellowship of
Ministries [0678]**

375 Star Light Dr.
Fort Mill, SC 29715
<http://www.morningstarministries.org/>.

Pro LGBT

Denominations in this chapter follow traditional Pentecostal and Charismatic theologies but affirm LGBT relationships. This issue alone has generally prevented these churches from being able to establish fellowship with other Pentecostal and Charismatic denominational bodies.

**Affirming Pentecostal Church
International**

C/o Bishop Erik D. Swope-Wise,
Presiding Bishop
Contact at: E-mail:
myapci@yahoo.com
<http://www.myapci.org/>.

Newfrontiers [0682]

c/o John Lanferman, Newfrontiers
USA
Jubilee Church
4228 S Kingshighway Blvd
St. Louis, MO 61039
<http://newfrontierstogether.org/>.
<http://jubileestl.org/>.

The Rock Church [0737]

640 Kempsville Rd.
Virginia Beach, VA 23464
<http://www.rockchurch.org/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/rockchurch.18>.
<http://www.annegimenez.com/>.

**Truth Ministries International
(AA)**

C/o Apostle Betty C. Phillips
122 East Tinsley St.
Griffin, GA 30223,
<http://www.truthministriesintl.com/>

**The Church of God Ministry of
Jesus Christ International**

C/o Sister Maria Luisa Piraquive
P. O. Box 268268
Weston, FL 33326
<https://idmji.org/en/>

Covenant Fellowship

C/o Bishop Randy Morgan

New Covenant Church of Atlanta
1600 Eastland Rd SE
Atlanta, GA 30316
<https://www.thecovenantnetwork.com/>

**Fellowship of Affirming
Ministries (AA)**

C/o Bishop Yvette A. Flunder,
Presiding Prelate
8400 Enterprise Way
Oakland, CA 94621
<https://www.radicallyinclusive.org/>

**Fellowship of Reconciling
Pentecostals
International**

C/o Pastor Daniel Parnell, Chief
Presiding Presbyterian
East Street Apostolic Church
1909 South East St.
Indianapolis, IN 46225
<https://rpifellowship.com/>

**Global Alliance of Affirming
Apostolic Pentecostals**

C/o Rev. Joseph Parramore
New Journey Fellowship
Tampa, FL
<https://web.archive.org/web/2011007175943/http://www.gaaap.net/>

**United Progressive Pentecostal
Church Fellowship**

Bishop Oliver Clyde Allen, III,
Presiding Bishop
704 United Ave SE
Atlanta, GA 30312
Or
C/o The Vision Church of Atlanta
704 Ormewood Dr.
Atlanta, GA 30312
<https://www.facebook.com/TheUnitedProgressivePentecostalChurch/>
<https://www.thevisionchurch.org/>

Additional Unclassified Pentecostal Groups

Some Pentecostal Charismatic denominations are difficult to categorize, including those organizations that appear to exist primarily to credential independent Pentecostal ministers and provide a covering for otherwise independent Pentecostal churches.

**Adonai International Ministries
Global Outreach [0695]**

P.O. Box 234159
Sacramento, CA 95823
<http://www.adonaiglobal.net/>.
<https://www.facebook.com/adonaiglobaloutreach/>

**Alpha and Omega Christian
Church [0696]**

96-171 Kamehameha Hwy.
Pearl City, HI 96782
Current status unknown.

**American Evangelistic
Association [0697]**

PO Box 121000
W Melbourne, FL 32912-1000
<https://www.facebook.com/AeaMinistries>.
<https://aeaministries.org/>

**Anointed Word Ministries and
Fellowships International
[0698]**

PO Box 3006
Springfield, OH 45501

<https://www.facebook.com/Anointed-Word-Ministries-and-Fellowships-International-26137555885/>

B'nai Shalom [0700]

Gospel Tabernacle
811 S Cleveland Ave,
Belton, MO 64012
<https://www.gospelkc.org/>

**The Body (Bro. Evangelist)
[0701]**

Current status unknown.

Christ Faith Mission [0702]

6026 Echo St.
Los Angeles, CA 90042
<http://www.123internet.com/pisgah>
Current status unknown.

Christ-Life Fellowship

C/o Robbie Litzman
P.O. Box 170307
Dallas, TX 75217-0307
<https://www.christ-life.org/about/>

Christ's Church Fellowship [0703]

Pastor Monique LeMaire
1676 E Main Rd., Ste. 3
Portsmouth, RI 02871
<https://christchurchfellowship.weebly.com>

**Church of God by Faith [0704]
(AA)**

2409 Old Middleburg N
Jacksonville, FL 32210
<http://www.cogbf.org>,
https://www.facebook.com/Natlco_gbf.

**Church of the Little Children
[0705]**

89 Home Place Tr.
Pocahontas, AR 72455
Current status unknown.

**Colonial Village Pentecostal
Church of the Nazarene
[0707]**

Current status unknown.

Eagle Rock Fellowship [0706]

PO Box 151
Lakewood, CA 90714-1051
<https://www.facebook.com/Eagle-Rock-Fellowship-Inc-953989567990262/>

Evangelical Bible Church [0709]

2444 Washington Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21230
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Evangelical-Bible-Church/11567951794446>.

**Fellowship of Christian Believers
(AA)**

Bishop Louis W Osborne Jr.,
Presiding Prelate
P.O. Box 18218
Portland, OR 97218
<https://fcbinternational.org/>

**Full Gospel Assemblies
International [0711]**

C/o Simeon Strauser, General
Superintendent
PO Box 1230
Coatesville, PA 19320-1230
or
3018 Lincoln Hwy.
Parkesburg, PA 19365
<http://www.fgai.org>.

**Full Gospel Defenders
Conference of America [0712]**

Current status unknown.

**Full Gospel Evangelistic
Association**

Galen Percy, President
PO Box 702378
Tulsa OK 74170-2378
<https://www.fgeaonline.org/home>

**Full Gospel Ministerial
Association of America [0713]**

120 Liberty Ave.
PO Box 1143
Berea, KY 40403
<http://www.fgmaa.org/>

**Global Network of Christian
Ministries [0714]**

4830 Wilson Rd, Ste 300, PMB #53
Humble, TX 77397
<https://www.facebook.com/globalncm/>
<http://globalministriesonline.com/>

God's Living Words Ministry

3246 William Ave.
Longview, Washington 98632
<https://www.godslivingwordsminty.com/>

**Gospel Assemblies
(Sowers/Goodwin) [0715]**

c/o Gospel Assembly Church
7135 Meredith Dr.
Des Moines, IA 50322
<http://dmgac.org/>

**Gospel Crusade Ministerial
Fellowship (GCMF) [0716]**

1200 Glory Way Blvd.
Bradenton, FL 34212
<http://www.christianretreat.org/conferences>

**Gospel Harvesters Evangelistic
Association (Buffalo) [0717]**

Current status unknown.

**Gospel Ministers & Churches
International/Gospel Alliance
Church [0718]**

3233 W Peoria Ave, Ste 101
Phoenix, AZ 85029
<http://www.gmci.org/>

Gospel Revelation, Inc. [0719]

C/o Rev. James E. Gay
PO Box 52
Connersville, IN 47331
<http://www.gospelrevelation.com/>

**Integrity Communications (and
Related Ministries)
Charles Simpson Ministries
[0720]**

PO Box 850067
Mobile, AL 36685-0067
<http://www.csmpublishing.org/>

**Interdenominational Ministries
International (IMI) [0721]**

PO Box 2107
Vista, CA 92085-2107
Current status unknown.

**International Christian Churches
[0722]**

Current status unknown

**International Evangelism
Crusades [Frank Stranges
(1927-2008)] [0723]**

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Reviews

Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo. *Introducing Spirit-Empowered Christianity: The Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Movement in the 21st Century*. Tulsa, OK: ORU Press, 2023. 160 pp. ISBN: 9781950971138

Todd M. Johnson is a Distinguished Professor of Mission and Global Christianity and a visiting Research Fellow at Boston University's Institute for Culture, Religion, and World Affairs. He has published multiple works on counting religionists worldwide, including encyclopedias, atlases, databases, monographs, and scholarly articles. Johnson has made detailed estimates for ethno-linguistic people, religious diversity, Pentecostals, Sunnis, and Shia traditions, and co-authored *the World Christian Encyclopedia and World Christian Trends*. Gina A. Zurlo is co-director of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and specializes in religion demography, World Christianity, Sociology of Religion, and Women's Studies. She received her Ph.D. from Boston University in 2017 and is a Visiting Research Fellow at Boston University's Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs.

The authors divided the book into four broad chapters, each focusing on a different aspect, beginning with a List of Titled Graphics and an Introduction (7). The book has wonderful pictures of different churches and church leaders. Tracing the roots of Pentecostal and Charismatic renewal movement within global Christianity, beginning of the twentieth century (13-32). Johnson-Zurlo, in chapter one, discusses the roots of the Azusa Street Revival. Historical records indicate a more multifaceted global origin in the 19th and 20th centuries, which helped pave the way for the massive growth of Spirit-Empowered Christianity throughout the twentieth century.

Johnson-Zurlo settled on an operational definition and taxonomy of Pentecostals and Charismatics as a Christian group that emphasizes salvation in Christ as a transformative experience brought by the Holy Spirit in which speaking in tongues, prophecies, visions, healing, and miracles stand in historic continuity with the experience of the early church as found in Acts of the Apostles (16). Johnson-Zurlo prefers to

use “Pentecostal-Charismatic” and “Spirit-empowered” movement synonymously.

In chapter two, the authors categorize the “Spirit-empowered Christianity” movement into three types for the purpose of understanding the diverse global phenomenon of Pentecostalism (33-96). Johnson-Zurlo shows clusters of sampled Classical Pentecostals, Charismatic Catholic/Protestants, and Independent Charismatics. Indigenous denominations represent a broad category of Pentecostals and Charismatics, beginning among non-white races without Western or white missionary support. The book also discusses the overarching movement of these movements, such as the Jesus family in China.

Chapter three represents pivotal trends and their effects upon the church and society with significant theological implications for the Church (97–111). The movement has gained global momentum, focusing on women’s roles in leadership, social justice, prosperity, and mission. Johnson-Zurlo represents a series of profiles of individual Spirit-empowered leaders, Spirit-empowered churches, and movements worldwide.

In the fourth chapter, Johnson-Zurlo states the methodology applied to count Christians. The history of counting Pentecostals, for data, which is David B. Barrett’s method, is related to the counting of Christians as a whole. Christians are first counted, then certain Christians are identified as Pre-Pentecostals, Pentecostals, Charismatics, and Neo-Charismatics (113-117). The authors include extensive statistics on the number of Pentecostals, Charismatics, and Independent Charismatics categories. The taxonomy, though criticized, provides the framework for an estimate of 644 million Spirit-empowered Christians in 2020, which is about 26% of all Christians and is expected to grow to one billion by 2050 (30% of all Christians). In 2020, Type 1 Pentecostals were about 124 million, Type 2 Charismatics about 268 million, and Type 3 Independent Charismatics 252 million.

Johnson–Zurlo has provided a demographic assessment of the global Pentecostal and Charismatic movement (117), including estimates for denominations and networks worldwide. This section also includes a detailed country-by-country list for 1970, 2000, 2015, and 2020, with figures, trends, charts, and maps. The data reveals that the growth of Spirit-empowered Christianity has been uneven globally. In the same two decades, Spirit-empowered believers in the global North in the new century had a drop of 1.89% from 6.30% in the previous century. The data shows that about half of the global North has a negative deviation

with an annual growth rate of 1.03%, and about half of the global South had a growth rate of 2.05%, while renewing itself.

Despite the strength of the book, the Johnson–Zurlo team has a few shortcomings. such as, the horizontal layout design of the book, disconnected pictures with the corresponding topics of discussion, including the last page of the book with the authors biographies and a different picture of a prophet in Botswana (160), The potentiality of Indigenous and Neo-Pentecostals, which forms part of the fastest growing group, needs more attention and research, as the fourth wave.

Johnson-Zurlo’s writing style is concise and grounded in solid theological principles, using narratives, charts, graphs, maps, pictures, and figures. Demonstrating that Pentecostalism is the fastest-growing religion in the world. The book provides a new insight into globalization and the importance of understanding the Spirit-Empowered movement in the twenty-first century.

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Josiah Baker. *A Visible Unity: Cecil Robeck and the Work of Ecumenism*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Academic, 2024. xii + 265 pp. ISBN: 9781978717190 .

Jesus prays for the church to be one, but the church’s divisions demand careful work toward unity. Josiah Baker’s book analyzes various current ecumenical methodologies. He is well-equipped for this work, as he is the secretary of the North American Academy of Ecumenists, chair of the bibliography committee, a co-leader of the Ecumenical Studies Interest Group of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, and the administrative assistant of the Southern California Christian Forum.

Baker divides this work into a preface, an introduction, six chapters, and a conclusion. The preface provides his motivations: to honor Cecil Robeck’s legacy, to inform readers of the ecumenical movement’s development, to “push back against some claims made in ecumenical literature” by identifying “errors in ecumenical scholarship for the sake of constructing better theory,” and “to grow the readers’ love of the church” (xi–xii).

The introduction defines terms and outlines his methodology. Most helpfully, he defines ecclesiological convergence as “the reconciliation of doctrinal differences that divide churches” (2). The book aims to examine various ecumenical methodologies and how changing methods contribute to achieving ecclesiological convergence (9). Utilizing a biographical sketch of Robeck as a Pentecostal ecumenist, Baker presents Robeck’s ecclesiology and then analyzes the effectiveness of five different ecumenical methods (16–19).

Chapter one addresses Robeck’s ecclesiology, which asserts that “the church is a divine initiative,” the “church is a historical community,” and “the church is the people of God” (28). These dimensions culminate in renewal, restoration, and reconciliation, respectively (49–50). Perhaps most notably, renewal of tradition is not merely repetition of the past, but requires adjustment and reform for relevance (35). Thus, renewal’s changes to current praxis may preserve, rather than sever, apostolicity.

Chapter two examines the first method, reconciling memories, which brings divided communities together to reconcile their histories and share a “common historical narrative” (58). He relates this method to Robeck’s espousal of the Azusa Street myth and criticism of the racism that caused the schisms ending the revival (64). Unfortunately, though this chapter highlights Robeck’s work on racial reconciliation, Baker fails to recognize how Robeck’s popular work on Azusa Street engages in near-hagiographic depictions of its purported racial inclusivity. Despite this failure, reconciling memories facilitates ecclesiological convergence, as several Pentecostal denominations, including Robeck’s Assemblies of God, draw their roots from Azusa Street (77–78).

Chapter three covers conciliar ecumenism. Robeck was an early participant in the World Council of Churches (WCC), without the support of any denomination. Robeck admirably advocates for Pentecostal denominational participation; yet, only eight Pentecostal bodies have joined the WCC, with the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa, at just over a million members, dwarfing the other seven (102–103). The non-participation of key Pentecostal denominations reduces the effectiveness of conciliar ecumenism. For instance, the WCC’s failure to mention “charismatic ministries such as divine healing, exorcism, or prophecy as part of the church’s ministry and mission” likely stems from not having Pentecostals involved (163).

Chapter four analyzes bilateral dialogues, specifically the Catholic–Pentecostal, Reformed–Pentecostal, and Lutheran–Pentecostal dialogues. Baker notes two significant contrasts between Pentecostal–other dialogues and other bilateral commissions. Pentecostal–other

dialogues invite almost exclusively Pentecostal observers, rather than observers from the broader ecumenical movement (129), and Pentecostal–other dialogues rarely cite non-Pentecostal dialogues (135). Pentecostal observers contribute to the reception of the dialogue by Pentecostalism, while the lack of citations from other dialogues suggests a disconnect with the broader ecumenical conversation. Bilateral dialogues call members to reinterpret their ecclesiology for the sake of communion, recognizing what is shared and what is in tension and moving toward ecclesiological convergence (138).

Chapter Five critiques yet commends spiritual ecumenism, which draws from Jesus’ prayer in John 17:21 and is rooted in “shared spiritual practices” (147–48). Because non-scholars often employ this methodology, it is usually spontaneous. Robeck’s spiritual ecumenism is rooted in his study of patristics regarding prophecy and church unity (151–57). Baker shines in his analysis of the charismatic movement’s spiritual ecumenism in charismatic practices such as deliverance, worship, and prayer (159). Robeck lauds the charismatic movement for bringing unity, but scholars note division, schism, and proselytism as also emerging from the movement (162). As an ecumenical method, spiritual ecumenism should lead to ecclesiological convergence (165). Baker sees ecclesiological convergence in individual “conversion of believers toward each other” and notes that Robeck’s experience of spiritual ecumenism is why Robeck endorses organic union and not merely spiritual unity (170–71). Spiritual ecumenism alone does not accomplish ecclesiological convergence nor a visible unity. In fact, it often leads to divisions as Christians fail to reconcile divergent spiritual practices (171).

Chapter six outlines the newest ecumenical methodology, Christian Forums. Christian Forums offer open space, using testimonies as a dialogical medium (185). This facilitates non-academic engagement and especially Pentecostal engagement (186). Testimonies rely on the church’s sacramental nature as “a sign and instrument of unity,” allowing Christians to recognize others as believers (197–98). Individual recognition serves as a precursor to ecclesial recognition, particularly when ecclesial recognition is “not yet possible” (202). Christian Forums are a first step in engaging previously unheard voices in ecumenical dialogue, with the “advancement of recognition” constituting ecclesiological convergence (205).

In his conclusion, Baker connects changing ecumenical methodologies with the pursuit of a more visible unity, and he advocates for including other seemingly “marginal” groups in the ecumenical

movement (214–15). He concludes that diverse ecumenical methodology is essential to the renewal and unity of the church (218–19). Other doctrines than ecclesiology, other methodologies, other vantage points than Pentecostalism, and other outcomes could all be examined in future scholarship (221–22). Robeck’s lack of engagement with models such as “comity arrangements” and “church union negotiations” helped explain the lack of any reference to Newbigin, a key complaint I had (221).

This work accomplishes Baker’s motivations. Robeck is honored as a paragon of Pentecostal ecumenism. Readers are educated regarding ecumenism’s history and five current ecumenical methodologies, with others left explicitly uncovered (221). He engages other scholarship well, as in his critique of Creemers’s conclusion that early Catholic–Pentecostal dialogue necessitated “alternative methods,” when, in fact, it contributed to the “genesis” of the ecumenical method (137; cf. 139). Finally, Baker grows the reader’s love of the church and hope for ecumenism.

This book shines in its honoring of Robeck, the lively style of writing, and the clear articulation of ecumenical methodologies. Baker’s style is particularly commendable, as this book is the published version of his dissertation, yet it was engaging and understandable. He also displays humility, such as when he acknowledged that one of his prior published book reviews had a critique which he no longer holds as he now recognizes “the insight of” and agrees with “her claims” (167). His articulation of methodologies amply shows how different methodologies fit different circumstances. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to ecumenism, and every methodology should hope to be discarded, as the Church approaches a visible unity.

Because he intends in part to honor Robeck, Baker’s work fails at times to adequately critique Robeck. This is apparent in his coverage of Robeck’s work on Azusa Street and Robeck’s favoring of spiritual ecumenism. Independent of content, another significant weakness is the book’s cost, regrettably limiting its reach.

I recommend this book to all, especially Pentecostals, interested in ecumenical theology.

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Michael F. Bird and Jason Maston, eds. *Five Views on the Gospel*. Counterpoint Bible and Theology Series. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2025. 255pp. ISBN: 9780310128533.

Five Views on the Gospel is the newest contribution to the Counterpoints Series, which has 43 titles on biblical, theological, and ecclesial topics. For each one, authors contribute a chapter that explains their view on a topic and critiques their fellow contributors' views.

The editors of this title, Bird and Maston, describe their motive arising after an online sermon in 2020 went viral, "What is (and isn't) the gospel?" Respondents weighed in from across the world, causing Bird and Maston to conclude that "the 'gospel,' however defined, is what unites all the different expressions of Christianity, and is also what typically divides us" (239). They suggest that believers read the Gospels, accept the gospel, are baptized because of the gospel, and worship to celebrate the gospel—yet a functional consensus masks significant ambiguities about what the gospel is (15-16). Moreover, because ambassadors represent Christ and the church throughout the world, "getting the gospel right" is of foremost concern (18). *Five Views of the Gospel* is therefore meant to bring understanding, clarity, and appreciation for different views of the gospel and downstream distinctives.

The first view explored is the "King Jesus" gospel by Scot McKnight of Westminster Theological Centre and Houston Theological Seminary. For those new to this term, McKnight describes an essentially evangelical formulation that Christ the King was born, crucified, and resurrected to bring in a kingdom and invitation to his lordship. What distinguishes McKnight's view is the disparagement of theological narrative as important to salvation or the average believer (26-29). Preferring instead to emphasize "lifelong Christofornity" (43), McKnight argues that the classical formulation of the gospel is limited for pointing converts towards soteriology and doctrine rather than a discipleship experience. McKnight thus reformulates the gospel as living under "the world's true King" and being part of Jesus' incarnational rulership (28).

In response, contributors articulate concern that McKnight is light on repentance, atonement, and other language traditionally chosen to frame the gospel. Horton, for example, ponders why McKnight downplays sin and forgiveness (48). DeSilva wonders if the concept of "allegiance" to God can truly substitute for "obedience" (53). Ma likewise cautions that "submission" to Christ "takes on a particular

shape” of mission and action that cannot be neglected in gospel formulation (58). Respondents generally concur that language can be reworked, but it will be of little effect if realities such as repentance or receiving the Holy Spirit are not conveyed with it.

The second view explored is Reformed, offered by Michael Horton from Westminster Seminary California. Horton’s view of the gospel is probably the most recognizable to those acquainted with traditional evangelistic expressions such as the Romans Road. Horton’s gospel centers on one’s personal reception of the cross and the gift of justification by grace through faith. While he takes time to repudiate a reductionist approach to salvation (64-68), he ultimately summarizes the good news as simply “an announcement of what God in Christ has accomplished for sinners” (82). Horton supplements this with doctrine from the five Solas, covenants of law and grace, and the inability to add to God’s work (“Christ plus nothing,” 79). This puts forth an essentially legal and relational formulation of the gospel, characteristic of Lutheran and Calvinist theology.

Horton’s respondents appreciate but critique this formulation in various ways. Smith voices concern about bad fruit from centuries of individualism and determinism being wed to the gospel. She argues that presuming social work to be an afterthought of salvation, or that earthly efforts are “works,” dampens transformative efforts (231). It may also erect a glass ceiling out of subsidiary notions that the world is as God wills it to be and manmade efforts are doomed to fail. Other contributors argue that Reformed presuppositions are unable to innovate or incentivize the kinds of reforms Horton lauds (e.g., racial reconciliation, 222-225). Finally, concepts of the “elect” (82) and being “chosen” (84) are curtailed to encourage a new conversation, but minimizing them diminishes tenets that have historically put his view at odds with others and remain central to the topic.

The third view, a Wesleyan perspective, is offered by David deSilva of Ashland Theological Seminary. His treatment of the gospel begins with a description of the vertical and horizontal aspects of the cross: Christ’s death accomplishes justification before the Father (the vertical) and enables sanctification as a source of transformative life (the horizontal). Describing salvation as beginning with the conviction that life isn’t how it ought to be, the “full gospel” is God’s “gift of a new life, empowered by the Spirit to live a different way” (113). Echoing McKnight’s desire to keep the person of Jesus central, deSilva frames the gospel as truth being embodied, reminiscent of Wesley’s axiom of faith becoming love.

In responding to deSilva, few argue with his presentation but critique Wesleyanism more broadly. Christian perfection concerns all of them (134-35; 141-44; 147; 151), as does the working out of faith expressed through love. Ma posits that greater primacy should be given to the Holy Spirit in discussions of reform or sanctification because the Spirit is the one who empowers them (148-49). Horton appreciates the Wesleyan emphasis on holiness and relationship but takes issue with describing a life of good works as “our full salvation” (93). Smith offers an alternative critique, that the “full gospel” is not achieved by a believer being fully transformed, but when believers collectively take responsibility to stop exploitation and create new systems (151).

The fourth view is Pentecostal, articulated by Julie C. Ma from Oral Roberts University. She sees the gospel as extending beyond the cross to achieve spiritual empowerment through baptism in the Holy Spirit and effecting care for the suffering (175). Emphasizing “life through God’s breath” (158), Ma explains how regaining God’s Spirit reignites the Genesis 1 “responsibility to be in charge of God’s creation” (159). The crucifixion and reception of the Spirit are therefore not separate in Ma’s mind, but part of the same saving trajectory. She then describes the Spirit as “ready to tackle” AIDS, homelessness, injustice, and disease (161). By joining power, mission, and action, she defines the gospel as a Spirit-empowered commission to walk as Jesus walked, with love and power over the curse (166).

Ma’s respondents appreciate the non-Western context that frames her testimony and discussion. However, they question the centrality of Spirit-baptism as part of the saving gospel. McKnight sees her as confusing “the gospel with its benefits” (181) and reading too many “gospel expansions” back into the biblical text (177). Horton defends a one-baptism view, arguing that the Pentecostal formulation implies that one is not saved if they are not baptized in the Spirit (182). Smith respects the outward focus of Ma’s Pentecostal mission but warns of a “colonizing tendency” and “erasure of a people” inherent in power-based formulations of the gospel (195).

Finally, Shively T. J. Smith’s liberation gospel starts the conversation where she feels it is most limited: a theology of social responsibility (172). She critiques the predominant view of “individual salvation” (199) and the presupposition that social matters are downstream from individual transformation. Seeing the gospel as God’s intervention to “problems of the human spirit” (199), especially exploitation and abuse, Smith recasts Christ’s incarnation as a divine interruption from the margins of society. Because Jesus was exiled, poor, and excluded, he

dignifies these communities by turning them into the primary image bearers of the gospel. In fact, the marginalized teach the non-marginalized more than vice versa. Even if the good news of Jesus must be carried to the margins, once heard, these communities transform themselves into the *imago Dei* with more grace than their affluent counterparts.

In response, Horton acknowledges that the liberation gospel provides an important critique of the powerful and wealthy but warns against making the gospel about “either our privileged or non-privileged experience” (228). McKnight questions the textual veracity of Smith’s statement that “Jesus functions as an ancient version of a community organizer” (202). He suggests emphasizing the Gospels over Acts because “the gospel is a message about Jesus before it is the implication of Jesus for redemption and liberation” (221). Also critiqued is a reverse exclusionary ethos implied by liberation theology, that sending societies are the new rejected ones, and prosperity is a stigma—a sign of senders’ values that will simply oppress again.

Ultimately, five theologians unpacking what exactly the gospel is and its implications for mission, action, and discipleship was very clarifying. The dialogue would be enjoyed by anyone exploring what distinguishes one evangelical stream from another, trying to locate their own gospel tradition, or probing the implications of gospel theology. Each author was concise, avoided tropes, and talked to one another rather than past each other. They engaged the topic well, proving that “the basics” are surprisingly relevant—especially regarding whether the traditional American gospel (that Jesus saves you from hell, to go to heaven) advances a limited or unhelpful formulation.

Coming from a Spirit-empowered perspective, I appreciated the dialogue around the Spirit and how aspects of Pentecostalism are echoed in the mainstream more than they were in the past. I also appreciated how a greater palate for the Spirit discouraged conventional arguments over cessationism and encouraged a “saved to do what, in the meantime” conversation. On this note, however, I wonder if there was a missed opportunity in limiting the study to like-minded Protestants (18). I recently came across the Orthodox theologian Jaroslav Pelikan’s statement that “the gospel is not what we say about Jesus but what the Church is because of Jesus.” By not dialoguing with a view like this, what many Christians have understood the gospel to mean for centuries is left out of understanding, as are Catholic, Anglican, and Charismatic/non-denominational views. These are all important to a contemporary, globally responsible faith.

That said, *Five Views of the Gospel* edges readers towards the conclusion that a pluralism of views close to scripture permits a dialectic that is probably necessary for the gospel's full expression on earth. It's a wise and diplomatic conversation that's well worth the read.

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Jun Kim is a Korean Pentecostal scholar and currently serves as the Academic Dean at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary and Vice-president of the Asia Pentecostal Society. Since 2004, he and his wife, Jane C. Kim, have been missionaries in the Philippines.

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