All with One Accord

By

Donald Gee

Gospel Publishing House,
Springfield, Missouri,
1961.

Contents

Possible Pentecostal Unity 2
Burning The Partitions 5
Sympathy And Statesmanship 7
Experimental Christianity 11
"I Believe In The Holy Spirit" 14
Attitudes Towards The Supernatural 18
Do "Tongues" Matter? 21
Methods With Seekers 25
Healing Campaigns And Bible Schools 28
Mental Illness And Pentecostal Religion 31
What Others Are Saying About Us 34
The Pentecostal Experience 38

Edited by
Paul S Fermor M.Th.
Deal Pentecostal Church

Possible Pentecostal Unity

Why waste time striving after the impossible in Christian unity? Many dreams of "*unity*" do not represent the will of God. Our Lord did not pray for the impossible to be realized among His disciples.

When so much has been said about unity it is difficult not to be trite. Some people's idea of unity is uniformity. They want us to lose our God-given varieties of temperament and viewpoint in a dead level of stagnant agreement about almost everything, forgetting that strength is in diversity among the members of the body. The unity that is possible lies in mutual respect among those who differ in almost everything except the essentials that unite us in Christ.

The thinking of many Christians, especially ministers, about unity today has got into a rut. Their one thought is of forging some kind of federation or union of competitive or redundant denominations. The scandal of our warring and unnecessary sects is so atrocious that all men of good will welcome efforts to mitigate the evil. But only with a mental effort can we accommodate the humbling thought that our boasted denominations scarcely exist before God who sees us all personally in Christ. If and when we do succeed in some trumpeted denominational merger we shall only have accomplished something invariably disappointing in spiritual results, for the reason that it was lacking in spiritual fact.

It is impossible to achieve the unity for which Christ prayed by making unions out of denominations. Such unions only precipitate new divisions because of those who find it impossible conscientiously to subscribe to the basis of agreement. Let us sincerely welcome the elimination of wasteful overlapping of denominational machinery. Much could be done on this line that is well worth doing. The further multiplication of new sects has become little better than a crime. Organized fellowship between similar denominations provides valuable opportunity for easing friction and strengthening a common testimony in many ways. But the dream of creating one world-wide denomination out of the Pentecostal movement can be dismissed as

hopeless. If ever it were achieved we may be almost certain it would no longer be Pentecostal.

In view of these things there are those who choose the road of retreat into the idea of entirely independent churches. This offers a superficial imitation of the primitive Christian assemblies, but the stern necessity of serving our own generation by the will of God insists upon the realism that they succeed in provoking just one more division in the Church—the independents as distinct from all the rest! An ideology of "*freedom*" easily results in bondage to an idea harsher than anything found in more organized groups. The centre of fellowship shifts from the communion of the Holy Spirit, to mutual agreement about a certain concept of church government, and that is an impossible practical basis for world-wide unity.

What, then, is possible Pentecostal unity? An answer is offered with diffidence. But since our only authority for quoting the word "*Pentecostal*" is in a testimony connected with what happened on that Day we turn to the context with assurance. It is explicitly stated that the disciples were of "*one accord*" before Pentecost, at Pentecost, and after Pentecost (Acts 1:14; 2:1; 2:46). Their unity, nevertheless, was not of the impossible type advocated by some fervent preachers as essential for revival. Put briefly, their primitive Pentecostal unity consisted of acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, with all that lordship implied of belief in His worthiness to receive it. Before Pentecost came He commanded them to wait for the Promise of the Father—and they waited. It was a unity of obedience to Christ as Lord. It was possible for them. It still is for us.

Their unity had obvious limitations. There was enough variety of temperament in those referred to by name to precipitate any amount of personal incompatibilities. The fact that they had to cast lots as between Joseph and Matthias reveals lack of unanimity about who should succeed Judas. The first rush of Pentecostal enthusiasm did produce an almost perfect temporary unity to the point of voluntary communism, but it was soon marred by the disloyalty of Ananias and

Sapphira and racial discrimination against the Grecians. The remainder of the New Testament abounds with urgent pleas for unity among believers until one almost wonders whether divisions were not their besetting sin. Yet overarching all is our Lord's prayer "*That they all may be one*." And they were one in the unity of the Spirit He gave them. Inspired by that Spirit they invariably said that "*Jesus is the Lord*" (1Corinthians 12:3).

How much of that scriptural Pentecostal unity can we enjoy today? The kind of unity embodied in one world-wide Pentecostal denomination is impossible. It is equally impossible to unite over a particular ideology that would have all who participate eschew forms of organization they deem legitimate and helpful. The only possible unity lies in cultivating Pentecostal principles upon which all have always been agreed. We can be enriched by sharing the things God has taught us by revelation and by experience in doctrine and practice. We can explore many possibilities of practical co-operation in evangelism, whether by missionary work, broadcasting, or literature. We can investigate common problems. Mischievous misunderstandings can be cleared away by speaking face to face. The mere fact of meeting brethren of like precious faith from the four corners of the earth is a thrilling experience imparting a lasting benefit to the soul. The incipient fanaticism that is rooted in unrecognized pride is sweetly corrected as we mix in the wider circle of others who equally have received the Spirit. All this is within our grasp without the slightest further organization. It is a World Fellowship by recognizing—not organizing.

Finally, we must never forget that unity is a personal matter. When our Lord prayed "*That they all may be one*" He meant individual disciples—not denominations and churches. The apostolic exhortations to unity are to personalities. My ultimate unity is with my brother, irrespective of whether we belong to the same, or different, outward communions. We do not come together to "*make*" unity, for it already exists by the grace of God. It only needs to be cherished. Its test is mutual

acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Its energy is in the one baptism in the Holy Spirit that He bestows. Its aim is that "*the world may believe*." Its supreme secret is participation in what our Lord called "*the glory*."

Burning The Partitions

I have always felt chary of printing reports of visions and prophecies given by the Spirit in this Pentecostal revival: Unstable souls easily give them a place and authority that belong only to the Holy Scriptures. That which is of local or temporary significance (and that applies to so many things given by the Spirit in the assemblies), should not be stamped with an importance it in no wise warrants for a wider circle. But the other day I received a letter from an old missionary friend in South Africa that recalled a vision given several years ago, and there seems some justification for quoting it here:

> I wonder whether you still remember a vision the Lord gave me at that first united Pentecostal Missionary Conference in Johannesburg when you were out here. In that vision a large congregation of Christian workers could be seen, all looking forward, towards a platform where Jesus was standing. While they could all see the platform they could not see each other because there were wooden partitions around each person, so that none could have fellowship with the others. But it was clear that they all had the same aim, and all were looking to Christ. Then a wonderful quiet fire came down from Heaven, going through these wooden partitions which burnt up in that fire, but no smoke or flames could be seen, and it did not disturb the people. The partitions just seemed to burn up and disappear. And now the workers could see each other, and greeted each other, and there seemed to be such wonderful harmony, and they continued looking forward to Christ who was still standing on the platform. Although the wooden partitions had disappeared, it did not alter the positions of the various workers; each one still kept his own individuality, but they all seemed to love each other, and to esteem each other very highly.
>
> I have been watching for its fulfilment all these years. I have attended many Conferences of the Pentecostal brethren talking about unity; I have watched others leave our ranks trying to build up a new

Pentecostal body, hoping to absorb all the other existing bodies into one, but everything seems to be a failure. I remember one day while on the way to attend such a meeting for uniting the Pentecostal bodies, I looked back into the backyard of our house where I had planted some peach trees, and I had a glance into the yard of our neighbour who also had peach trees in his garden, and the thought came to me, 'Why doesn't God make one huge peach tree instead of these little ones?' Then I saw how impracticable that would be. It would cause more quarrelling and dissatisfaction than all the little peach trees did which are very convenient in one's own yard.

Now I do thank God that I can see after so many years of praying and waiting the above-mentioned vision still fulfilling itself.

We thank God for this and we trust that nobody will ever try to build up those partitions again.

You have heard about the big meetings among the Europeans. We do thank God that as far as our native work is concerned, we had the loveliest meetings we could have wished. Every morning at 6a.m. several hundred natives were gathered in prayer. The afternoon services at 2p.m. were well attended by up to 6,000 natives and Indians. (Others estimated that it was a larger crowd). The evening services, lasting until midnight each night, were truly owned of God. We were so glad and thankful for this ministry of preaching the Word, for it enabled the natives to see and experience the truth of Psalm 107:20: '*He sent His Word and healed them*.' So many false prophets have deceived the natives for many years, claiming to have the power to heal the people, but using methods that are nothing else than old heathen customs, covered by the cloak of religion. We were therefore especially glad for the ministry of the Word in the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit.

We still hear of outstanding healings of totally blind ones, deaf and dumb ones, as well as a few cripples, cancers, etc. We also thank God for true salvations, and that on two evenings heaps of cigarettes, tobacco pipes, snuff boxes, various heathen charms, and dice used for gambling were given us. Although there had been no preaching on earrings or bangles, the women started pulling off their earrings, bangles, etc. The much feared *'Tsotsis'* surrendered their knives they used to carry with them to stab people, which indicated that God was

> working in their hearts. Even after the tent meetings were officially closed we were still obliged to hold three to four meetings a day for a whole week, since so many natives came in groups of from forty to fifty inquiring about the wonderful things of God. By His grace the work is still going on, for which we thank Him.

The only comments called for, except a glad "*Hallelujah*" seem to be:

(a) We *are* seeing all over the world the fulfilment of the vision. Those who want to maintain or rebuild the partitions should be very careful lest haply they work against God. Especially mistaken are any zealots "*trying to build up a new Pentecostal body, hoping thereby to absorb all the others.*" They never will; but it would be amusing if it were not pathetic to observe how blind new movements can be to the plain fact that their divisive tactics, often covered with much mouthing of "*unity*" are only heading for the creation of just one more little sect.

And (b) When the Church devotes herself to her supreme business of evangelism she finds as a blessed by-product a spontaneous unity bursting through in all her sections. A genuine love for souls carries with it a love for the brethren also. We justly look with doubtfulness upon a boasted zeal for evangelism that makes men narrow, bigoted, and censorious. We have not so learned Christ. "*He that is not against us is on our part*" was our Lord's classic rebuke to that wrong spirit. It is time to burn the partitions—not one another.

Sympathy And Statesmanship

John A. Mackay, President of Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey, and President of the International Missionary Council, recently wrote some weighty words in the *British Weekly*. He says:

> This past summer, I passed through Portland, Oregon, at a time when the evangelist Billy Graham was being listened to by crowds of over one hundred thousand. . . . The churches cannot ignore the phenomenon which this young man presents. And then there is the Youth for Christ Movement, the Intervarsity Movement, the Pentecostals, all of whom are doing an amazing work in many parts of the world.

> These groups are oftentimes frowned at as Christianity's '*lunatic fringe*' because of certain objectionable features which they manifest. Yet, according to the clear evidence of spiritual results, they are doing a great work in which God is present. As to the fruits that may be garnered from these movements into the storehouse of the Christian Church, that will depend upon the sympathy, the good judgment, and the statesmanship of Christian churchmen. Among the things which I have learned in my lifetime, both by experience and observation, is this: *Never to be afraid of a young fanatic or of what appears to be a fanatical movement, if Jesus Christ is the supreme object of devotion. On the other hand I am terribly afraid of a cold, frigid, professionally-aired Christianity which is interested only in form. The young fanatic, if wisely dealt with, can be toned down and mellowed. However, nothing short of the sepulchre awaits those who identify conventional order and æsthetic devotion with spiritual life.*

The emphasis is Dr. Mackay's, not mine, but I think it very difficult to overestimate the truth and importance of what he writes. We welcome such wise and weighty words from one whose authority is acknowledged throughout the churches.

The reference to the "*lunatic fringe*" is readily forgiven. Indeed it is justified in some quarters. Only let it be understood that a swing of the pendulum away from the arid intellectualism of surrounding forms of Christianity has almost compelled, and certainly encouraged, it. We have a shrewd idea that something of the same kind of jibe was levelled against Christ and the Early Church. We remember the words of our Lord that the deepest joy of the gospel is hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes; and we note that He deliberately chose for His apostles men of sturdy natural ability, but "*unlearned and ignorant*" according to the schools. The Pentecostal revival is seeking, not without difficulty, to find the true place in its heart for consecrated intellectual talents. Meanwhile it has performed a valuable service by its emphasis upon the inspirational and the emotional essentials of the

gospel. Without both those vital and related elements Christianity is other than that presented on the pages of the New Testament, and correspondingly powerless. The secret of the success of these near "*lunatic*" movements is simply that they appeal to something in the hearts of multitudes of common people throughout the world who never will be won for Christ by more logical and formal presentations of the gospel.

The supreme value of Dr. Mackay's words lies in their counsel regarding our attitude towards whatever movements appear at first glance to be fanatical in certain features. As soon as any revival develops denominational machinery, be it ever so justifiable and excellent for its high purposes, there arises a tendency to resent the dislocation and challenge produced by renewed outbursts of zeal. It is of the essential nature of any Pentecostal revival that "*your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*" (Acts 2:17). Protests against whatever are sincerely felt to be backward tendencies usually take on a prophetic form, and can be marred by fanaticism, crudity, and censoriousness in both language and spirit. But with it all we need to be careful not to quench the manifestation of the Spirit, lest we despise something the Holy Spirit is endeavouring to reveal and restore, however imperfect and marred the channels.

To handle these things wisely requires every ounce of "*the sympathy, the good judgment and the statesmanship*" advocated by the President of Princeton Theological Seminary. Indeed we dare to believe that it requires a wisdom from above that is truly apostolic in its nature and Pentecostal in its inspiration. We have a duty to "*prove all things*" (1Thessalonians 5:21), however enthusiastically prophetic utterances are prefaced with a "*thus saith the Lord*," or cults of emotionalism are associated with definitely religious sensuality, but our proving must be from those who share the same Spirit and know the same grace. This, and this alone, can guarantee the possibility, though not the certainty, of true sympathy and good judgment.

To discipline fanatics is easy, but it can be disastrous for all concerned. To ostracize young fanatics and fanatical movements is almost to compel them to form new and strange sects outside the main body of the churches and even outside more worthy streams of revival. A double evil is the result. The zealots are deprived of the compensating qualities and ministries found in the whole Body of Christ, and lose themselves in a quagmire of spiritual pride, reckless extravagance, and endless subdivisions as they mistake their partial revelations for the whole. On the other hand, the main body robs itself of revivifying influences that, wisely harnessed, could yield lasting good. Reformation movements within the Church surely indicate to the discerning that something vital has decayed or calls for renewal, whether it be a doctrine or an experience. It is true that after the expulsion of the rebels there may set in among the faithful a salutary recognition of the weakness that provoked the rebellion and a compensating setting of the house in order. But an unnecessarily painful price has been paid.

How much happier if the churches can prove themselves broad enough in their sympathy and elastic enough in their constitutions to find room within their borders for fervent movements whose only crime is a rather overheated outburst of prophetic enthusiasm, or novelty in evangelistic method. We ought to prefer to "*garner fruit into the storehouse*" from them, to use Dr. Mackay's excellent phraseology, rather than expel every new revival movement just because some of its features are initially objectionable. But this more excellent way demands a magnitude of love and patience and wisdom that may well test to the depths our claim to be truly Pentecostal.

The Pentecostal movement as a whole welcomes Dr. Mackay's test that "*Jesus Christ is the supreme object of devotion.*" With one heart and one voice it proclaims with delight "*Jesus Christ is Lord.*" It is in recognition of His Lordship that all true Christians find their ultimate unity and enjoy their richest fellowship. It is the supreme mark of having received His Spirit, and no other.

Experimental Christianity

In Leslie Newbigin's book *The Household of God,* he finds three main types of Christianity—**the Catholic**, **the Protestant** and, as he calls it, **the Pentecostal**; laying predominant stress on order, faith, and experience respectively. This highly interesting analysis is valuable so long as it is recognized that the Pentecostal churches are firmly within the broad Protestant tradition of Christianity since the Reformation. If they are distinguished from other Protestants it is in emphasis. Mr. Newbigin, who is a bishop of the United Church of South India, admittedly uses his terms in a typical and not a denominational sense. Therefore we who are "*Pentecostal*" by designation among other Protestant churches can find something well worth examination, in this analysis by a theologian of repute.

We accept the proposition that the type of Christianity broadly called "*Pentecostal*" emphasizes experience. We plead guilty without apology. We believe that spiritual experience is not only scriptural but vital to the Christian gospel. Christianity as a religion is based on events—the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus—that happened in history. The first Christians had known Jesus personally. The apostles testified, "*We have not followed cunningly devised fables ... but were eyewitnesses*," and that "*which we have looked upon and our hands have handled of the Word of life*" (2Peter 1:16; 1John 1:1). They had "*experienced*" Jesus Christ. Moreover, the Church was born in a mighty experience of the Holy Spirit, made overwhelmingly real by wind and fire and tongues. They possessed a baptism, not a philosophy, of the Spirit. This was far removed from a vague "*receiving by faith without any manifestation*," or a merely creedal belief that somehow or other all Christians have received the Holy Spirit as a matter of form. One of the supreme services that the Pentecostal movement has rendered to the Church as a whole has been its witness to the experience of receiving the Spirit.

By allowing room for the gifts of the Spirit in work and worship, Pentecostal people have permitted the indwelling Comforter to become more than a vague Helper or indefinite Inspirer to virtuous

thoughts and high ideals. By incorporating divine healing in their testimony the Pentecostal churches include something intensely experimental. In their fervent evangelism, happily shared by other related evangelicals that Mr. Newbigin doubtless had in mind as a type, all "*Pentecostal*" groups stress the joy and peace that come from forgiveness of sins and justification by faith. I heartily agree with William Barclay in the *British Weekly* that "*It was the joy of the Moravians that showed Wesley what he lacked. It may very well be that it is the melancholy ecclesiastical drone of so much preaching with its pulpit voice and its pulpit phrases which has driven so many people away from the Church.*" The experience of Christian joy is something essentially Pentecostal (Acts 13:52). Speaking with tongues is more than the language of spiritual ecstasy, but it certainly includes that.

The emphasis upon experience can nevertheless be overdone. The blind man after he was healed by Jesus said emphatically, "*One thing I know that whereas I was blind now I see.*" That was glorious. But after he had received a fuller revelation of Christ he worshiped. That revelation was an experience also, as real as the other, but of a higher order for it took him beyond what Christ had done for him to who Christ was. It took him away from self to God. **The danger of becoming too experimental in religion is that the soul becomes introspective and gets taken up with nothing but its blessings and feelings and gifts and therefore fails in its supreme calling to purely objective worship of the Living God**.

It is, I suppose, Mr. Newbigin's meaning when he equates the "*Catholic*" type of Christianity with "*order*" thus to distinguish those who predominately stress ritual and liturgical forms of religious service. Their deadly danger all the time is formalism. The truly beautiful orders of service which they evolve end by becoming mechanical and almost meaningless and powerless for the majority of their devotees. One of the strange twists of Church history was that this was the end of the Irvingite (a "*Pentecostal*") movement when it became the Catholic Apostolic Church.

The "*Protestant*" type in the analysis before us lays stress on "*faith*." This is the confessional church; the believers for whom what they believe, their doctrines, their creeds, their statements of fundamental dogmas to which all must subscribe for salvation are everything. Let us recognize the importance of sound doctrine. Moreover, an intellectual formulation of belief is essential. The first centuries of the Christian Era were spent in mental travail and, unhappily, bitter controversies, as believers struggled to express in terminology satisfactory to the intellect, their tremendous experience of Christ. We who have inherited their noble creeds owe them an incalculable debt. The danger in the "*Protestant*" type of Christianity is that faith enshrined in a creed can become as spiritually sterile as order embalmed in ritual. Succeeding generations cling to a form of words that means nothing experimentally. It is easy to be impeccably orthodox in faith and know next to nothing of the abundant life that comes by experiencing Jesus Christ as a Living Saviour.

Must this differentiating "*predominant stress*" on order, faith, or experience continue to produce three different types of Christianity? Is it primarily a matter of one's temperament, or upbringing, or circumstances? Can our nearest approach to unity be toleration, or perhaps appreciation, of others but always at a distance? This is fast becoming the attitude of "*Faith and Order*" churches to their exuberantly experimental "*Pentecostal*" brethren.

If there is any truth in the analysis before us, and I believe there is, it indicates the need for the Pentecostal type of church to give more attention to order and to faith. Speaking frankly, it suggests for ourselves within the Pentecostal revival a need to add to our fervent testimony to experience a greater reverence in worship and a more determined intellectual effort to define our faith. After all, there are passages in 1Corinthians 14 that teach this very thing. True reverence is based on awe, and an ordered manifestation of the Spirit causes the visitor to fall down on his face and report that God is among us of a

truth. To publicly worship in decency and in order is scripturally commanded for all who exercise Pentecostal gifts.
For many years the intellectual definition of the theological position of the Pentecostal movement has awaited more adequate attention. This is not asking for a surrender of Holy Spirit fervour to arid intellectualism. It springs from a pure desire to love and serve God with all our being's ransomed powers including those of the mind. Testimony to experience does not completely meet the need for inquirers of a more thoughtful type, and happily such are increasing. Our particular Pentecostal doctrines need integrating into the larger body of Christian faith concerning the Third Person of the Godhead. We ought not enjoy deep emotion at the expense of shallow thinking. "*I will pray with the spirit but I will pray with the understanding also*" is the scriptural way of putting it.
The three golden strands of order, faith, and experience need weaving into one cord that cannot quickly be broken. A Pentecostal revival in the fullest measure will not stress one at the expense of the others but will manifest a shining witness to all three.

"I Believe In The Holy Spirit"

"*I believe in the Holy Spirit.*" This bare statement in what we call the Apostles' Creed is noticeable for its brevity because it follows the carefully detailed items of belief concerning Jesus Christ our Lord. The accepted reason for this is obvious - at the time when the creed took shape this article was not in controversy. Nevertheless the significance of its thus being above controversy should not be missed. It is evidence that the Holy Spirit was an indisputable reality in the experience of the Early Church. The Spirit was a definite entity.
In the long-drawn-out controversies of the first few centuries concerning the Trinity, that led eventually to the great creed associated with the name of Athanasius, there emerged more detailed statements of belief concerning the Spirit, the most famous being the affirmation that "*The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.*" By that time the belief of the Church in the

Trinity of the Godhead had taken a shape in which it has been held ever since by the vast majority of Christians. The Holy Spirit is a Person, and as such is distinct from the Father and the Son, yet One God in Trinity.

"*I believe in the Holy Spirit.*" Invaluable and inevitable as were the impressive theological discussions by which the finest intellects of the Church sought to give expression to her belief, one cannot but be conscious of the change of atmosphere from the language of the New Testament. It is to be admitted that the Pauline epistles present the doctrine of the Spirit in a variety of aspects that do not make for simplicity of formulation. But there can be no manner of doubt concerning the reality of the experience of the Spirit in the daily lives of the believers. The epistles take this for granted. It is made the basis of appeals for sanctification; His work in regeneration is regarded as fundamental, His government in the affairs of the churches is referred to with unquestioning submission, and His manifested presence in their meetings by means of spiritual gifts was an accepted feature. All in all the Church received a satisfying sense that her Lord had truly fulfilled His promise to send "another Comforter." He had come, and His Presence was indisputable.

"*I believe in the Holy Spirit.*" How far has the Church drifted from the enjoyment of the fact while retaining the article in her creed? I am reminded of an eloquent passage in R. W. Dale's classic theological work on *The Atonement* in which, admittedly referring to quite another province of faith - the relation of the Eternal Word to the created universe—he says:

> It belongs to the theologians, and not to the commonalty of the Church. The great words of St. Paul (Colossians 1:16, 17) give us a glimpse of vast and fruitful provinces of truth almost unknown to us. They have been traversed from time to time by the solitary path of adventurous speculation, but the Church has never made her home there; the golden harvests are unreaped; not even a wandering sect has pitched its tents and fed its flocks on those rich and boundless plains.

> They belong to a remote and glorious realm lying far beyond the frontier of familiar truth.

I shall not be so foolish as to affirm any just parallel between that moving passage and the enjoyment of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church. We are grateful that this province has been repeatedly traversed by theologians, not least in later times, to the enrichment of us all. Also it is true that many wandering sects during the centuries have "*pitched their tents*" in this fruitful province, and emphasized the Holy Spirit almost, if not quite, to the point of error. The unhappy fact is that so often they seem to have roved these vast plains of truth in search of novelty and adventure rather than for the purpose of feeding their flocks. It is a present challenge to the Pentecostal revival of this twentieth century whether it will accomplish worthier things than some of its predecessors who also tasted the gifts of the Spirit. Shall we truly "*feed our flocks*" by doctrines and experiences of the Holy Spirit that are sane and sound, and thereby glorify the Father and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord? Will our happy discoveries enrich the whole Church of God?

"*I believe in the Holy Spirit.*" The poverty of much of the Church's appropriation of what she professes to believe is sometimes glaringly revealed by the strange and weird things attributed to the Spirit. We are told by some preachers that works of art, or music, or literature; and political movements for social uplift, or the urge to scientific research all emanate from, and are manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Far be it from us to hold cramped and unworthy ideas of the manifold operations of the Spirit of the Lord. But it would seem more truthful to allow such credit as may be justified to the quite remarkable achievements of the human spirit, and then look in more appropriate fields for those operations of the Holy Spirit which the Scriptures attribute to Him. We do not mean to be unkind when we confess that some sermons about the work of the Holy Spirit sound like a confession of the lack of any real knowledge of Him at all. They are attempts to fill in a blank rather than an intelligent interpretation of the Word.

When we say "*I believe in the Holy Spirit*" it constitutes a challenge, borrowing R. W. Dale's eloquent figure, to explore this vast province of truth, to reap its golden harvests, and feed our flocks on its rich and boundless plains. For this is not for theologians only, it is for the "*commonalty*" of the Church. It is for experience rather than theory. It is for those multitudes of ordinary disciples that make up the membership of our local churches throughout the world.

Whether we use, or whether we discard, the time-honoured words of the great creeds of the Church, we as Pentecostal people, are committed to that attitude of heart and mind that affirms belief in the Holy Spirit. Our distinctive doctrine of speaking with tongues as the scriptural initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit makes our belief in the Holy Spirit very definite. Therein lies its value but also its challenge. If we criticize others, we need to watch and pray lest we reduce our own statements of belief in the Holy Spirit to a mere denominational *shibboleth*.

Taking the Holy Scriptures as our inspired guide for these rich provinces of truth, we believe in the Holy Spirit as the only Giver of Life through our evangelism, and the Personal Sanctifier of our converts through our teaching. We must never cease to welcome His manifestation through spiritual gifts in all our assemblies. We must strive to acknowledge His lordship in directing our activities. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles uses winsome simplicity of speech when he tells us that the Holy Spirit actually spoke to Peter and Paul.

The outstanding experience of the Holy Spirit in all gatherings, as indeed it is their unique blessedness, is in what the New Testament calls the "*Communion of the Holy Spirit.*" There is a mystical consciousness of sharing the same Spirit even though there may be an almost bewildering variety of races and tongues, degrees of spiritual maturity, theological backgrounds, and evangelical experiences. We are fundamentally one in Christ Jesus, but that oneness in Christ is something more than a unity of faith and hope and love in our Blessed Redeemer. It is sealed home to our hearts by participation in the One

Spirit. This is the unique blessing of Pentecost in the realm of fellowship. To enjoy the Spirit "as at the beginning" is to enjoy that which transcends every creed and translates its words into the power of God in millions of lives.

Attitudes Towards The Supernatural

A large part of the distinctive witness of the Pentecostal revival is to the supernatural still accompanying the Christian gospel. Among conservative theologians at least there is unanimity that the supernatural accompanied not only the ministry of our Lord but also the Apostles. They did literally "*heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead and cast out devils.*" The early Christian churches enjoyed the supernatural in their meetings through manifestations of the Spirit in word and deed. It made the presence of God very real (1Corinthians14:25). Pentecostal churches are humbly rejoicing in the restoration in some measure of these things.

The Christian denominations, as a whole, either deny the possibility, despise the value, or deplore the lack of such supernatural elements in the work and worship of the churches. Some point to the "*miracle*" of the new birth and remarkable conversions as the present manifestation of the power of the Spirit unaccompanied by aught else. Others build up doctrines, for which they try to adduce a scriptural basis, that affirm that the supernatural has now ceased in the churches by the will of God. They are hard pressed to find conclusive ground in the New Testament for their theory. Church history, and that includes an impressive and growing amount of up-to-date testimony, records that the supernatural never has entirely faded out of Christian experience. Even today most Christians will admit that miracles do very rarely occur. It is the special witness of the Pentecostal movement that the supernatural could happen in a measure commensurate with the New Testament.

What then? To substantiate such a testimony calls for unwavering faith and courage. It is easy to proclaim a bare doctrine based on Scripture, logic and wishful thinking and leave it at that. This is hardly good

enough. **Therefore we salute our Pentecostal preachers, evangelists and pastors alike, who dare to pray for the sick and expect miracles of healing and other wonderful things in the name of the Lord Jesus**. We owe it to our testimony to seek to build up faith within our assemblies by publishing well-authenticated stories of miraculous healings and answers to prayer. These should be undergirded by plenty of strong, positive preaching and teaching to help our people to expect the supernatural. "*According to your faith be it unto you.*"

There nevertheless will remain a place for wise and courageous facing of "*failures*" to receive miraculous answers to prayer, including honest exposition of passages in the Bible where miracles did not happen. The weakness of "*faith-building*" propaganda that does not face all the facts is that in the end it can leave people more hopeless and distressed than ever. Actually our only real Holy Spirit propaganda at all times is the truth, and all the truth, as God reveals it to us. Suppressed facts, distorted expositions, and neglected passages of Scripture do no service to the building up of real faith, but rather the reverse. The flood of magazines propagating faith for miracles makes some steadying word almost a duty. Granted that we need plenty of literature to counteract prevalent unbelief, it still needs to be scrupulously free from exaggeration in both idea and report if it is to serve the truth of the gospel. Let us keep steady.

To expect the supernatural obviously carries some dangers. One that opponents of the Pentecostal revival have constantly harped upon is deception by lying signs and wonders produced by evil spirits. We believe that there are such manifestations of the supernatural from beneath and not from above. We may expect their increase in the "*last days.*" But the Bible supplies us with some plain tests for the spirits, and it seems almost blasphemous to refuse a testimony to the miraculous power of God when it is accompanied by a witness to the Lord Jesus Christ, and holiness of life and conduct that accords with the Holy Scriptures. Fear of counterfeits has carried some good people

to ridiculous lengths of prejudice against manifestations of the Spirit of God.

Over-desire for the supernatural does however, carry other real dangers of a different sort. Among some sincere adherents to the Pentecostal revival there is a tendency to run after everything that appears supernatural whether it is so, or not. **Over-desire is only another term for lust**, and there can be an unhealthy lusting after signs and wonders that desires them for their own sake rather than for the glory of God and the work of the gospel. Paul was intensely practical in dealing with manifestations of the Spirit, and insisted that they must serve some useful purpose ("*edifying*"–1Corinthians14:26). We should not get excited over every phenomenon that seems to support our witness to the supernatural. Are we such "children" as that? Lusting for miracles can be an evidence of lack of faith. "*Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe*" (John 4:48).

A favourite *cliché* concerning spiritual gifts is that they are "*100% supernatural*." Just what do we mean? If we mean that they involve no mixture of the human with the divine we are manifestly inaccurate. Ever since the beginning of the Pentecostal revival there have been local difficulties where speaking with tongues is concerned because the speakers have wanted to affirm that it was "*the Holy Spirit*" speaking, with no mixture of themselves. Yet Acts 2:4 states that "*they spake with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*," and in 1Corinthians14:14 Paul says: "*If I pray in an unknown tongue my spirit prayeth*." In the same chapter he gives directions for the orderly use of gifts of the Spirit. Such directions are obviously absurd and almost blasphemous if these gifts are "*100% supernatural*" in a crude sense that they involve no human element. Many of us within the world Pentecostal revival hold that the gifts of the "*word of wisdom*" and the "*word of knowledge*" are primarily for government and teaching under the anointing and revelation of the Holy Spirit. The constant objection to this concept has been that it robs them of their "*100% supernatural*" quality. Therefore we have been treated to ideas of the "*word of knowledge*" that are far-fetched to

say the least. But once the basic principle is accepted that a human element accompanies all manifestations of the Spirit in members of the Body of Christ the road is cleared for a saner definition of these two great gifts. Wisdom can be accepted as "*the principal thing*" (Proverbs 4:7) and the Word of Knowledge can be recognized as the spiritual gift with which Paul longed to "*teach others also*" (1Corinthians14:19).

Our attitude towards the supernatural should be believing but sober. Zeal for a testimony to miracles must never be allowed to sweep aside that sound judgment that ensures a Pentecostal revival producing fruit that remains to the glory of God.

Do "Tongues" Matter?

It sometimes happens that a chance remark contains a flash of insight into an important matter. E. J. G. Titterington (now deceased) observed in a letter to me that accompanied some kind translation work from Norwegian (at which he was an expert) that "*It was the linking together of speaking with tongues and the baptism in the Holy Spirit that sparked off the Pentecostal revival.*" Further experience in lecturing to students on the history of the revival has confirmed the truth of that observation.

There are abundant instances scattered throughout the history of religious revivals of the occurrence of speaking with tongues. S. H. Frodsham has listed several in his book *With Signs Following*. We usually regard what happened in Azusa Street, Los Angeles, in April, 1906, as the beginning of the Pentecostal revival. Actually what occurred there attracted world-wide attention through the press, and as a consequence hungry hearts flocked to Azusa Street from all parts of the world and entered into the fullness of blessing. But there had been previous outpourings of the Spirit in Topeka, Galena, Houston, and elsewhere in the United States, to say nothing of other lands. It is computed that upwards of a thousand people had spoken with tongues on receiving the baptism in the Spirit before the fire fell in Los Angeles. But the

tongues regarded simply as an isolated phenomenon, rather than an initial evidence of the Baptism, had not launched a world-wide revival. Similarly it is true that the "*baptism in the Holy Spirit*" had been increasingly taught as a "*second blessing*" and a distinct crisis in the life of the Christian by several groups connected with the Holiness movement around the turn of the century. They connected it with sanctification and a clean heart, and spoke of the Pentecostal "*fire*" as a purifying fire. This witness persists in many of our popular hymns. It was Dr. Torrey who first distinguished more clearly in his teaching that the divine purpose in the baptism in the Holy Spirit was an eduement with power for witnessing and service. In some circles this led to a separation between sanctification and the baptism in the Spirit as two steps of blessing, both subsequent to regeneration.

But the fact remains that "*It was the linking together of speaking with tongues and the baptism in the Holy Spirit that sparked off the Pentecostal revival.*" There emerged, born out of the experience of thousands, the distinctive doctrine of the Pentecostal churches that speaking with tongues is the "*initial evidence*" of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This article of belief is now incorporated in the official doctrinal schedules of practically all Pentecostal denominations. It has made seeking and then receiving the baptism in the Spirit a definite experience that can be marked off as to place and time of reception. Where it has not been accepted it has inevitably, though reluctantly, precipitated division. It has given rise to the various Pentecostal churches and denominations all over the world that now number approximately 10,000,000 adherents[1]. The testimony still spreads rapidly, though in varying degree in different localities. The doctrine is born of experience, but it is an experience anchored in scriptural precedent.

It has sometimes been objected that the doctrine of the "*initial evidence*" is not stated categorically in the Scriptures. This can be admitted, but

---

[1] 1961. By 2000 the estimate was 523 million (Barrett, D.B., "Global Statistics", *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal Charismatic and Movements*, (Ed. Burgess, Stanley), Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan, 2002, p.284 —PSF

the doctrine is firmly based on the accumulated evidence of the instances recorded in the Book of Acts where believers were baptized in the Holy Spirit. In every case there was some outward manifestation that could be seen and heard, and the preponderating evidence is that it was speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. In Acts 10:46 they recognized the Pentecostal gift upon the Gentiles: "*For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.*" It was the speaking with tongues that sealed the gift of the Spirit and stilled all opposition to the Gentiles being baptized into the Christian Church. The epistles written to the Christian churches did not shape a doctrine of the Spirit that could comfortably include all their members irrespective of personal experience. That fallacy has been reserved for our later generations. The rather early believers regarded the possession of the Spirit as a fact of experience too real to be seriously contested. It was a basis for appeals to separation and holiness. The reality of the Spirit in their midst consisted of His manifestations among them and His power working in them. There was none of the vagueness that afflicts modern doctrine and testimony as to the Spirit. It is unhappily true that sometimes those who have spoken with tongues have not manifested a holy life. This sad inconsistency is no argument against the truth of the Pentecostal testimony. Paul had to write to the Corinthian believers that we can "*speak with tongues of men and of angels and have not love.*" The marred testimony resulting did not invalidate the "*tongues*," it only underlined the imperative need for the fruit of the Spirit to accompany the gifts. Contrary to some ideas, the baptism in the Spirit does not indicate spiritual maturity. Even if we have faith that can remove mountains we are nothing without love. But that does not invalidate faith. It only indicates the need of seeing things in a right perspective.

After over fifty years the smoke of battle has somewhat cleared. Where are we now over this matter? Conservative evangelicals seem increasingly willing to have fellowship with us, and we are very happy to reciprocate in Christ. This does not mean that the other

denominations have been converted to our particular doctrine, neither does it mean that we are prepared to compromise. What it does mean is that a clearer sense of proportion has come to us all. Donald Grey Barnhouse put it very neatly when he wrote that responsible Pentecostal leaders can now express ninety-five per cent agreement with their fellow evangelicals, and within that large measure of hearty agreement there is ample room for fruitful fellowship in the things of God.

But what about the remaining five per cent? It is undeniable that this includes the testimony that speaking with tongues is the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Should we surrender on that point? There is little doubt that the Pentecostal revival as a whole has no intention of doing so. Experience has proved that wherever there has been a weakening on this point fewer and fewer believers have in actual fact been baptized in the Holy Spirit and the testimony has tended to lose the fire that gave it birth and keeps it living. It may be claimed that evangelistic success has sometimes marked those who have modified their doctrine where "*tongues*" are concerned. That may be so, and we rejoice in all ministries that bring men to Christ. But evangelistic success should not be our only criterion, although it is an easy and popular one. There is a fire of pure love and devotion to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ that is the essence of the Pentecostal revival. There is a reality of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal churches that meets a confessed lack in other circles.

Even if it is admitted that the Pentecostal churches have only five per cent of faith and practice that is distinctively and peculiarly their own, it hereby is humbly claimed that the deposit is unspeakably precious. To surrender it would be to surrender a sacred trust from the Most High and renounce a testimony of great value even to those who reject it. The Pentecostal revival performs its true function within the whole Body of Christ while it keeps unimpaired its own distinctive testimony. The Church needs a Pentecostal revival.

Methods With Seekers

Some comments, especially from friends, ought to receive serious consideration. And a very old friend, writing from far away, says:

> We had great hopes of doing something, but they have the bad habit of pushing people through to what they call 'the baptism' and telling seekers 'You've got it.' Wouldn't it be better if the seekers themselves were sure they had the baptism? (A well-known evangelist) has gone back to the churches again, but says he has not gone back on his own personal experiences. The tarrying meetings and the insistence on tongues were what made him go back.
>
> Audacious though it may sound to affirm it, I believe that an unanswerable case can be made out, if we stand on the Scriptures alone, for the doctrine of the Pentecostal movement that there is a manifest initial evidence divinely ordained for the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and a very strong case for that evidence being speaking with tongues. The movement has never gained in power when it has compromised on this point to placate its critics. It does contain something vital.

But Pentecostal people need to give deep thought to the practical outcome of this distinctive doctrine. It follows that in their prayer meetings for the baptism in the Holy Spirit ("*tarrying meetings*" in accepted parlance) there simply must arise a desire, indeed an eagerness, to hear seekers speak with tongues as the evidence that they indubitably have received the longed-for blessing. The ever-present temptation that has dogged the Pentecostal revival for over fifty years is to try and "*make*" seekers apparently speak with tongues so that it can be claimed that they are "through" into the promised personal Pentecost. At the highest level this desire to help people speak with tongues when the power of the Spirit is manifestly upon them is entirely pure, for it springs from nothing but love and a longing for the seeker and helper to mutually rejoice in arriving at a desired spiritual objective. At the lowest level it can be the carnal desire of the worker conducting the tarrying meetings to build up a personal reputation for ability to "*get people through*." In order to make people speak with what are claimed to be "*tongues*" there have been methods adopted for which

we make no excuse. They have been our shame. We can affirm before God and men that reputable Pentecostal leaders heartily condemn such practices.

The simple truth is that a Bible Pentecost consists of the overflowing fullness of the Holy Spirit causing people to speak with tongues. Without that divine influx, that ineffable glory in the soul, that veritable "*baptism*" of power from on high, there is no adequate cause for the desired effect. Indeed, the "*effect*" is not even desired among those rightly instructed, except as an incidental ordained by God for His wise and loving purposes: all the desire is for the Spirit and the Spirit alone. There is something so exquisite in a true baptism in the Holy Spirit that those who have known it either subjectively or objectively can never be satisfied with anything less. These utterly worthless substitutes are not only nauseating; they are a cause for grief and indignation. For not the least harm from mechanically, instead of inspirationally, produced "*tongues*" is that they leave the disappointed seeker prejudiced against the real thing.

And disappointment there must be. It is inevitable. The hungry soul finds satisfaction in nothing less than the living God. In a true baptism in the Spirit it is God who thus is received into the waiting "*temple*" of the believer, already cleansed by faith in the precious blood of Christ. It can be boldly affirmed and supported by the testimony of thousands that in such a case there is no disappointment. There cannot be, except in the limitations of the human vessel. The speaking with tongues is a sheer delight and sets the spirit free as never before to declare the wonderful works of God in a language of ecstasy. But if it is not the overflow of a divine fullness, but only a worked-up imitation of the truth, a swift and sad disillusionment will follow. There will be no lasting joy; no deepening and strengthening of the spiritual life; no passion for souls; no longing after holiness; no love for the Lord that burns like a fire.

It is to be observed that after a genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit the Tempter may try to inject doubt as to the experience, but where the

baptism has been real there soon is supplied a sufficient answer to all his insinuations. Faith finds its resting-place in the knowledge that, according to the promise, the child of God asked our Father in heaven for bread, and did not receive a stone. For that reason purity of desire in asking for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, and not merely for one of His manifestations apart from Himself, is very important. To seek "*the tongues*," and not to seek the Holy Spirit, is futile—and worse. To seek God is to be surrounded by all the angelic guards of heaven in the seeking. Blessed are all such seekers even in their seeking; and still more blessed in their Pentecostal finding.

I am well aware that all this, if accepted, may mean considerable restrictions on the large numbers sometimes claimed as having been baptized in the Spirit. To wait patiently with hungry souls in prayer; to leave the Lord Jesus to do His own work in His own time and way; to lay hands on seekers for the gift of the Holy Spirit and at the same time refuse to try to "*push*" them beyond that which God is manifestly able and willing to do at the moment—all that must impose a discipline upon zealous workers which may feel irksome. It will prove decidedly deflating for those whose boast is in numbers rather than reality. Let that be as it may. The ultimate gain to the Pentecostal testimony will prove incalculable. That which is unreal imposes a deadweight of discredit upon our testimony which has been one of its greatest hindrances. The present phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal movement throughout the world is an encouraging evidence in God that at its heart there is a golden core of genuine experience that nothing can gainsay and no human weakness can ultimately frustrate.

My friend says that a certain preacher, after receiving his personal Pentecostal experience, has "*gone back to the churches.*" But he has not, as I suppose, left the church. This contradistinction between the Pentecostal movement and the "*churches*" is a bad hang-over from the early years of mutual ostracism. For if we use the term "*churches*" in either a local or a denominational sense, are not the tens of thousands of Pentecostal Assemblies now in all the world true churches in every

sense of the word? These millions of "*Pentecostalists*" are as much members of the Body of Christ as their Baptist, or Methodist, or other denominational fellow believers.

Let us beware of making it our supreme aim to drag people into our own denomination. If they can maintain unsullied and intact their Pentecostal witness where they are, then let them do it. Our experience causes us to expect that they will have difficulty. Our hope is that such difficulty will grow less as truth wins its certain victories. Our prayer will henceforth be that the flood tide of Pentecostal grace and power that should follow speaking with tongues may be manifested in any and all of the churches. For Pentecost is more than a denomination; it is a **REVIVAL**.

Healing Campaigns And Bible Schools

It is interesting, I almost said exciting, to watch the news from all parts of the world in connection with this Pentecostal revival. It reveals something at least of the way the Holy Spirit is leading in the great strategy.

Great meetings exercising the "*sign-gifts*" conducted by a number of evangelists not only in America but in other parts of the world draw huge crowds. News of this kind of thing in the United States has become almost commonplace, but it is to be noted that equal crowds have been attracted not only in Latin America, but in South Africa, Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, the West Indies, and the Philippines. The present interest among the clergy in Holland in divine healing is remarkable. Indigenous preachers in other lands are not lagging behind.

As a responsible correspondent puts it in a personal letter just to hand:

> It is my belief that the movements would do well to consider that none of these men are perfect. The greatest thing that they have to offer is a new boldness and faith in God. It is this ministry that electrifies large audiences and gives the Church an opportunity to contact the masses. All in all, these mass meetings make communities

> God-conscious, salvation-conscious, and Divine-healing-conscious. It puts the ministry on the offensive rather than the defensive.

Some wise words by C. J. E. Kingston in *The Elim Evangel* are worth repeating:

> Every age has been compelled to rethink its methods of approach in order that the message of the Evangel may teach the greatest possible number in its generation. For instance, the mendicant friars, though later to degenerate into parasites, began as a genuine effort to carry the gospel to the man in the street; later the Wycliffe preachers tramped the hills and dales of England reading the Word of God; Wesley and Whitefield rediscovered field-preaching as a means of reaching the people; William Booth invented the Christian army and reached the masses with band, drum, and uniform to help him; while we in the twentieth century have seen the revived interest in divine healing attracting multitudes to hear and receive the gospel who wouldn't otherwise have come under its influence.

What all true Pentecostal heart's desire is to distinguish between the wheat of an authentic moving of the Holy Spirit and the chaff of individualistic exploitation of a popular cult for personal ends. One of the recurrent temptations of successful evangelists is to branch off on their own and become individualists. This is partially rectified when the evangelists see the apostolic wisdom of getting around them a team of co-workers, and indeed the exigencies of large campaigns leave them no alternative. A pleasant sight it is to see a well-matched team at work in mass evangelism. But the "*team*" idea needs a far wider application than the mere campaign. The evangelistic or missionary team is itself only part of the whole body of Christ, and the labours of the evangelist are lost almost before he has begun if he fails to work harmoniously with the churches around him. The God who has set some in the church for miracles and gifts of healing has also set first apostles, secondarily prophets, and thirdly teachers; and He who gave some evangelists, gave others to be pastors and teachers (1Corinthians12:28; Ephesians4:11).

Which brings us to the other matter of our Bible schools. God be thanked that they continue full and are increasing. I write this from the

burning heart of one of them. Let critics within and without the Pentecostal movement weigh the fact that these thousands of our keenest, most consecrated, most spiritual, and most intelligent young men and women are devoting themselves to the study of the Scriptures in order to be well furnished for the ministry of the gospel.

It is generally conceded that the supreme priorities now in missionary work are Bible schools and literature. For that reason we can read with thankfulness of invaluable Bible schools and courses conducted in the Congo, in Kenya, in Nigeria, in Hong Kong, in Southern Asia, in various places in South America, and, indeed, wheresoever our missionaries are labouring under this compelling sense of urgency. At any time the foreign missionary may have to withdraw. Only time will reveal what the Church of China owes at this time of her tribulation to faithful men who were taught in our Bible schools before the curtain fell.

What has all this got to do with healing campaigns? Much every way. The temptation that besets Bible schools is loss of evangelistic fervour and exaggerated value upon academic achievement and mere intellectualism. Small wonder that fervid Pentecostals of an earlier generation opposed all Bible schools. If we have grown wiser with the years we still need to guard the holy fire of pure zeal, even though it be unlettered and untaught. Pastors and teachers of the type produced by schools, or produced even more profoundly by their special gifts from the Spirit, will always need the mighty ministry of the evangelist and the worker of miracles to gather for them the spiritual "*raw material*" of added converts to Christ upon which their gifts can operate. We just cannot afford mutually destructive criticism.

The healing-evangelist on the other hand is tempted to hastily dub as "*dry*" and "*backslidden*" any fellow ministers who look askance at his sensational methods, or stubbornly refuse to accept every claim to the supernatural that makes too large drafts upon mere credulity. Some forms of criticism are healthy, and he is a fool who ignores them.

It should be remembered that cases of divine healing are constantly occurring in the regular ministry of our thousands of faithful pastors of local Pentecostal Assemblies throughout the world, practically all of whom make a habit of willingly praying for the sick to be healed through the name of Jesus. The miracles they see do not usually receive more than local publicity, but the sum total would make an impressive testimony.

The healing campaigns and the Bible schools represent extreme wings in the army of Emmanuel. They are mutually complementary, not contradictory. Happy are we when we see them as diversities of gifts and callings within one fully Pentecostal church. The Christ who works miracles among us is also the Christ whose doctrine speaks words of life. He, in His Spirit, needs us all and we all need Him.

Mental Illness And Pentecostal Religion

It is noteworthy that whenever our Lord publicly manifested His grace and glory, demons seemed compelled also to manifest their presence through those whom they had been able to take possession of. Something similar dogged the ministry of Paul at Philippi. Conservative theologians agree as to the veracity of the Biblical accounts of demon possession as such. The Pentecostal movement is not alone in maintaining that it still is a reality, and perhaps more widespread than many care to admit. In the *Missionary Herald* of the Baptist Missionary Society for August, 1956, there was published an account of one of their lay pastors in Orissa, India, commanding the evil spirits in the name of Christ to come out of a woman whose head was wrenched to one side, and who had lost her speech. Immediately she was fully delivered, and as a result of the miracle she herself was converted, with her husband and two other families.

We almost may expect that any occasion of revival, either local or widespread, where the Spirit of God begins to manifest Himself in remarkable ways will be accompanied by parallel manifestations from beneath and not from above. This has been the experience of the Pentecostal revival from the beginning. The Bible indicates such

parallel manifestations of the supernatural in the last days. We need not be taken by surprise.

Truth constantly suffers from extremists, however, and unfortunately there have been preachers who have publicly blamed almost all ailments and abnormal conditions of body or soul upon demon powers. It has been an easy thing to do, and outward symptoms sometimes give it colour. It panders to love of the dramatic. Unhappily it has caused much unnecessary pain to many children of God when they have been mistakenly, and even cruelly, told that they were demon-possessed. Had it been true it hardly needed saying - at least to the sufferer. This is one of the realms for the gift of "*discerning of spirits*," but that particular manifestation of the Spirit of God will only work in blessing when, as with all the other gifts of the Spirit, the worker is filled with love. It is not for showmanship, nor for spite.

We do well to recognize that mental illness is quite often "*illness*" in the usual sense of the word. Disease has attacked the brain. There need be nothing supernatural about it. A few years ago I had several long conversations with a Spirit-filled husband and wife who both were nurses in a mental hospital, and I learned much. The husband later wrote some valuable articles on "*Christ and the Distressed Mind*" that are before me as I write. **If prayer is offered for the mentally ill it should be for healing in the usual sense of the word**. Quite likely the healing required is largely emotional, and the mentally sick friend is helped by an emotionally sound outlook and atmosphere, and not by a lot of excitement. Pentecostal love and power is quite as truly manifested in wisdom and gifts of healing as it is in casting out demons.

Do Pentecostal meetings of an emotional type tend to attract the mentally unstable? The question is an interesting one. I am fairly sure that no religious group has any monopoly of this problem, but churches of a severely formalistic type of service, with emphasis upon coldly intellectual preaching, and little opportunity for self-expression

in public among members of the congregation, possess scanty appeal to a large segment of the mentally unbalanced.

The public exercise of the gift of tongues is very definitely connected in the Bible with the use of "*the understanding also*" by the one who speaks with tongues. **"*Tongues*" are a perfectly lawful outlet for deep emotion in the spirit, but they are not to be a substitute for more intelligible forms of prayer and praise.** The gift of tongues is not associated with the mentally weak. Prophesying also can easily verge upon that which is mentally unbalanced. It usually has done so in heathen religions. Here we tread on very delicate ground. Sufficient to point out that the Bible is emphatic that prophesyings have to be judged, and the churches are never called upon to accept as inspired all the extravagant outpourings of fevered brains that imagine themselves inspired. The practical portions of the epistles and the calm wisdom of the "*wholesome words*" of our Lord Jesus Christ are a healthy antidote for emotional and visionary extremes. A true Pentecost involves a lot of very practical holiness. Our Lord left those whom He delivered in their "*right mind.*" They became conspicuous for their peace and sanity.

To imagine that to be "*Pentecostal*" is to live abnormally in a realm of constant religious excitement is far from the truth. Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord are bound to be times of much deep and holy emotion, but such pure emotion leaves the soul strengthened in every way to serve God with powers that are renewed in health and vigour. Our danger is not from revival but from revivalism, where deliberate attempts are made, and methods are used, to work up certain outward features of revival. For the mentally ill true revival brings healing balm, but revivalism can easily aggravate their disease. **The mentally sick need peace, not excitement.**

The mentally ill make tremendous demands upon our patience and compassion. As one aspect, some of us receive frequent letters that reveal a mental condition only slightly abnormal in the writers. Often is little more than a quite inordinate desire to serf out numerous

requests for prayer or utter strange things. With others the more gravely disordered mind is made apparent by a conviction that the one who writes destined to be some great one in the religious realm for the casting out of demons, or preaching to vast multitudes, or the sole instrument for a world-wide revival. We are all familiar with the religious crank who has become mentally obsessed with some doctrinal hobby that he can never leave alone. I suppose it is not easy to draw the line between mental weakness and culpable error or stupidity. The waste paper basket is the kindest resting place for some effusions.

Leaders of Pentecostal meetings need great tact and patience when the mentally unstable invade their borders, for such persons find in many of our meetings just that opportunity for disordered self-expression that they crave. The leader of a meeting need have no scruples in dealing kindly but firmly with one who is mentally abnormal as distinct from a believer who is sane but unruly or untaught. In neither case must they be allowed to wreck the public testimony of a meeting for the sake of misguided "*liberty*." On the other hand we must guard our priceless heritage of true liberty by the Spirit of the Lord at all costs. Flight into deliberate formalism is a poor remedy for its occasional abuse and marks poor leadership. The demands upon leaders of Pentecostal meetings for wisdom, love, and power are tremendous. But they are the inescapable price of being within a revival. We believe those demands can be met in the fullness of the Spirit of Christ. And He who delivers from unclean spirits also heals the sick in mind.

What Others Are Saying About Us

Here are three articles from our contemporaries that carry blunt references to the Pentecostal movement. Though outspoken they are not unfriendly; rather the reverse. Old prejudices that always referred to the movement as essentially erroneous, or even devilish, happily seem at last to be dying out. We have no objection to brotherly criticism. We have given plenty. We trust we have enough humility of mind to learn from what others are saying about us.

Incidentally it is significant that there are these increasing references. We are encouraged by the fact that the Pentecostals can no longer be treated with disdain. To be quietly ignored is worse than violent attack. And we willingly grant that recognition is, and must be, based upon deeds and not words. It was the "*Acts*" of the apostles rather than their words that first drew wide attention to the primitive Pentecostal church. Theorizing about Pentecostal doctrines will impress none but theorists. It is manifest spiritual power that compels notice. Every true revival must find its soul in fervent evangelism or else dwindle into a rather exclusive sect for specialists.

For that reason we are gratified by the reference to the Pentecostal revival made in the Annual Synod of the Waldensian Church of Italy, where some disappointment had been expressed that their Church did not seem to be touching the general current of Italian life. One speaker pointed to the great success of the evangelistic work of the Pentecostalists and the Brethren, emphasizing that in those two movements evangelism was held to be all-important.

A. Stuart McNairn's article in *The Bible Speaks to Britain* is notably friendly, and we thank our brother for his kindly words to a "*much-maligned body whose work God is honouring in many parts of the world.*" If he deplores, in closing, "*the tendency of the Pentecostals in some places to indulge in rather shameless sheep-stealing*," we are not without sympathetic understanding of the problem. The tendency is inevitable in any revival that testifies to a deeper personal spiritual blessing such as the baptism in the Holy Spirit. And it is not always that the "*sheep*" are "*stolen.*" Very often we fear they have been starved, and have sought and found more satisfying pasture on their own initiative. Ought we to blame them if that is the case? Genuinely shameless proselytizing (and we know that within the Pentecostal movement also!) can often be checked by closer fellowship among the pastors. The ostracism that has for so long been meted out to Pentecostals by other denominations has not helped ministerial courtesy from either side. No pastor, in any denomination, will object to transferred membership based on honest

conviction and a revolutionary experience. New wine needs new bottles.

A. C. Forrest's article in the *British Weekly* carries a warm tribute to one of our Pentecostal Assemblies in Canada which it is my privilege to know personally. The criticism that the visiting evangelist was "t*oo slick*" drove me to look up that word in my *Oxford English Dictionary* where I find "*slick*" defined as "*dexterous: not marred by bungling: carried smoothly through.*" Now I hold no brief for that evangelist, of whose identity I have not the faintest idea, but I suggest that preaching that conforms to that definition of "*slick*" by the *O.E.D.* has a lot to commend it. Perchance Mr. Forrest had something different in his mind, for I gather that he intends a mild criticism. We will agree that, with the best of intentions, we preachers can at times be rather too clever. We shall note this comment, to our profit. We want to know what kind of impression our meetings and our ministry are making upon the visitors that now are increasingly dropping into our churches. Paul was quite concerned about the impression a Pentecostal meeting in his day made upon the "*outsider*" (Moffatt's kindlier translation of idiots: 1Corinthians 14:23-25) and we desire to show the same proper interest in what others are saying about us.

Dr. Hahn's comments in *The Christian on Pentecostalists in Chile and Brazil* are a little harsher. But they say nothing that has not been said before without his frank appreciation of the virility and impressive size of the Pentecostal contribution in the strength of the evangelicals in South America. In Chile, says Dr. Hahn, the members of our churches are "*drawn from the most ignorant classes, and their consequent inhibitions are few. Their meetings are noisy, but the Lord is blessing them.*" Now to have few inhibitions strikes me as being not at all a bad thing. This habitual shrinking from quite healthy emotion in religion is a prime reason why revival is hindered among many excellent Christians, and why it is so easily repressed once it begins. The command to believers to "*quench not the Spirit*" is often disobeyed not so much because of wilful

rebellion but because of inhibitions against the slightest demonstration of joy in salvation.

That bit about our converts being from "*the most ignorant classes*" inevitably directs our thoughts to a luminous verse concerning certain other "*unlearned and ignorant men*" who had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13). Not that we wish to put a foolish premium upon downright ignorance. God forbid. Our Lord has an honourable place for the consecration of intellectual ability which He has given. And it seems safe to expect it to find a place in wise Christian leadership. But the Pentecostal revival has been largely a healthy revolt against the utterly arid intellectualism that has been admired and cultivated as an essential for the Christian ministry. We are not surprised if zeal for revival has caused some converts to swing to an opposite extreme. The truth of the matter is reasserting itself. We are happy that a growing and more scripturally instructed appreciation of what constitutes a genuinely full Pentecostal ministry is assuring a widening appeal to all classes.

It is a parallel comment that "*Pentecostalists are hurt by fanaticism largely due to lack of education of their followers.*" Responsible Pentecostal leaders will sadly acquiesce as to the grievous harm done to this lovely revival by genuine fanatics. But it has not always come from the uneducated. Perhaps "*wisdom*" would be a truer word than "*education.*" And "*fanaticism*" may sometimes be a matter of opinion.

Even our Lord was regarded as beside Himself by some of His friends (Mark 3:21). **Opposition to "*fanaticism*" can itself become fanatical.**

We are glad to learn that the "*more moderate Pentecostalists*" are supporting the revival in Brazil. We take it this means the more co-operative. In closing may I be permitted to repeat words I wrote in a World Conference brochure:

> The Pentecostal churches offer their fellowship in Christ to the whole of His Church in this grave hour of her history. They believe they have something to bring of value to the whole Body. They believe they have something to gain by larger fellowship with all who truly belong to Christ. They are greatly encouraged by many world-wide tokens

that old prejudices are melting and a new era of mutual appreciation is dawning. Let it be so. Brethren, let us receive one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

The Pentecostal Experience

The very name by which this conference is designated bears witness to the fact of the Pentecostal experience, for although our churches bear different denominational titles we all accept, by the fact of our participation here, the broad designation of "*Pentecostal.*"

First of all I propose to speak about an EXPERIENCE. Then I want to attempt an analysis of that experience. Finally, it must be my duty to relate what I have had to say to the general theme of this conference.

1. The baptism in the Holy Spirit as an experience, and not merely a doctrine.

It is possible to enjoy that experience, and thousands have done so, with hardly any intellectual grasp of the doctrine of the Spirit. But it seems to me that the weakness of most sections of the Christian Church where the Holy Spirit is concerned is that He has become the subject of theological dogma rather than a burning experience in the personal lives of believers.

Let me hasten to say that I am very far from despising the importance of correct theological views regarding the Third Person of the Trinity; but let us remind ourselves that from the Day of Pentecost onwards the Early Church enjoyed a powerful experience of the Spirit while her doctrine concerning that experience was still taking shape. Indeed the very richness and variety of the experience constitutes one of the difficulties of framing a completely orderly doctrine of all that the New Testament says regarding Christians and the Holy Spirit. Sometimes He is the Spirit of the Father; sometimes He is the Spirit of the Son and of Sonship; and sometimes He merges in His own separate personality and power. We are bewildered by such riches. Since we are blessed with a Pentecostal revival in these days it is small wonder that our footsteps somewhat follow the original pattern. So let it be. We are dealing with the phenomena of spiritual life.

On the Day of Pentecost there came to the waiting company in Jerusalem an experience of the Holy Spirit that was literally an overwhelming baptism in its spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical reality. To deny this historical fact is to cast aside all belief in the veracity of the second chapter of Acts. Moreover, in all essentials, that experience was repeated later in Samaria, in Cæsarea, and over twenty years later in places as far distant as Corinth and Ephesus.

In the New Testament the Spirit sometimes is represented as guiding the movements of missionaries in a startlingly direct manner. He was undisputed Lord in the churches. Their constant experience of Him fulfilled in a satisfying manner and measure the promise of Jesus that it would be better for His disciples that He should go away because when that had happened the Comforter could take His place.

Instead of nostalgic wishing for the "*good old days*" of Galilee or Judæa when Jesus was with them in the flesh, we find joyous experience that the Comforter had come. His presence was real. The Pentecostal experience left a lasting deposit among them of witness to the living Christ still working with them and confirming the Word with signs following. Yet they constantly taught that Jesus was at the right hand of God in heaven. His presence with them was their experience of the Holy Spirit. It is precisely this that is the particular testimony of this world-wide Pentecostal revival.

2. An analysis of the Pentecostal experience.

Only a powerful inward experience supplies an adequate reason for the outward manifestations of the Spirit such as speaking with tongues or physical shakings or cries of ecstasy. A besetting weakness that has dogged the Pentecostal revival from its beginning has been misguided attempts to produce apparent evidences of the Pentecostal experience without its reality. This temptation has been an inevitable consequence of our doctrine that speaking with tongues is the scriptural initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. I hold that doctrine to be right. But the results of a supposed Pentecostal experience that lacks its reality are nothing, and worse than nothing.

It is infinitely better to wait many days for the real experience, if need be, than to be hastily defrauded with a worthless imitation. We seem to have become almost ashamed of the good old-fashioned title of "*waiting meetings*" for those seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit. We appreciate the good desire to avoid a suggestion that long waiting is essential. But the once almost universal title of "*waiting*" meeting did carry with it a concept of deep spiritual value. Our true help to seekers consists in raising their faith far an immediate fulfilment in themselves of the promise of the Father, and to that end surrounding them with a spiritual atmosphere of joy and praise. But time should always be allowed for the searching ministry of the Spirit of Truth as He seeks to deal in faithfulness with possible hindrances in the heart of the believer who is asking for His fullness. Obedience is essential for those seeking a personal Pentecostal experience. No true disciple of the Lord Jesus can avoid the sanctification of the Spirit without His life becoming a miserable failure.

But let us now become positive. The central fact of the Pentecostal experience consists in being FILLED with the Holy Spirit. This is distinct from His previous work of regeneration. Also it is distinct from His work of sanctification as the Spirit of Christ and the source of the fruit of the Spirit. On the day of Pentecost the disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit. This necessitates more than a partial or

incomplete measure of blessing. A vessel can contain water without being filled with water. No spiritual experience, however blessed, can justly be described as truly Pentecostal that comes short of fullness.

However we may explain the phenomena of speaking with tongues, which is such a distinctive feature of this great revival, it seems evident that a large part of the explanation lies in the fact that the soul becomes intoxicated with such a divine ecstasy that it is swept beyond all ordinary forms of speech.

As we now come to reverently analyze what happens within the personality of the believer when baptized in the Holy Spirit, we observe first of all that the fullness is emotional. Why not? Indeed, how can it be otherwise? Consider the facts. A weak human vessel is being filled with a divine fullness. To say that such an experience can be received without any emotional manifestation is to do violence to all sense of reality. With all due respect, we refuse to be satisfied that so-called Pentecostal experiences without a physical manifestation are valid according to the scriptural pattern or even common logic.

Fear of emotionalism and of counterfeit phenomena have so taken possession of some Christian circles that they have actually developed and encouraged an absurd panic and prejudice where these things are concerned. **Such fears are a shocking reflection on the faithfulness of God**, for did not our Lord promise that if any of His hungry children ask their heavenly Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit they will most assuredly not receive a stone instead of bread, a scorpion instead of an egg, or a serpent instead of fish?

It may justly be claimed that individual emotional experiences vary, but the central fact of being filled with the Holy Spirit remains, and by its very nature that fullness is overwhelming emotionally. There must be some outlet of deep feeling. Why not accept the form of outlet that God in His wisdom has ordained? Why oppose speaking with tongues? The physical manifestations accompanying the baptism in the Holy Spirit are not the essence of the experience, but it is a mistake to regard them as being immaterial. They are an integral part of the Pentecostal

experience, and provide the only immediate evidence to the onlooker that the Comforter has come indeed in all His glory and power. To see the shining faces of those first praising their Lord in new tongues is to taste something of the very joy of heaven.

But if the fullness of the Spirit is emotional it is also intellectual. On the day of Pentecost the minds of the disciples were divinely enlightened and inspired. This is evidenced by Peter's sermon, first in its new insight into the significance of Old Testament prophecies, but still more by his grasp of the profound truths concerning the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, exaltation, and coming Kingdom of Jesus of Nazareth.

Throughout Peter's sermon in the flood tide of his new Pentecostal experience there is the ring of certainty of a man who knows, not only emotionally but intellectually. This was the first instalment of the fulfilment of our Lord's promise that when the Spirit of Truth had come He would guide them into all truth. Let us be quite clear that this means intellectual apprehension of truth, for the risen Christ Himself opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. Nevertheless it is neither in the emotional nor in the intellectual, but in the spiritual realm that we must look for the deepest results of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. The promised result was that its recipients would receive power to be witnesses. We seriously impoverish the force and depth of this great promise if we regard it as meaning simply power to preach, or even to work miracles. Its true significance lies in making believers witnesses to what the Lord Jesus Christ means to them. It is in this intimate and personal aspect that evangelism has always been the function of every believer. It is more comprehensive than the most gifted pulpit oratory, even when confirmed by a display of miracles. The promised power is for all, and not just for preachers, and preaching always lacks the authentic Pentecostal note when it is not backed up by personal witness to Christ.

Subjectively the spiritual result of the baptism in the Holy Spirit consists in the flooding of the heart with perfect love. And that love

shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit causes us to fulfil thereby the two great commandments. For in the first place it causes the happy recipient to love the Lord our God with all of the heart and mind and soul and strength; and then it goes on to produce love for our neighbour as ourselves. No wonder that a most impressive outward fact of the life of the early Christians was the love they had for one another. It was that love which constituted the glory that made them one. Every repeated outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal fullness repeats the glory of that love and unity.

3. God's Pentecostal purpose in this hour.

The Pentecostal movement surely has something more to contribute to the needs of the hour than a message of mere escapism. We live in a world that has vastly changed since the fire fell in old Azusa Street Mission in 1906.

An analysis of the Pentecostal experience can only have a practical value where it has shown those essential factors which are unchanged and unchanging. I trust this is self-evidently true of almost all that I have said regarding the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Age cannot dim the lustre of these things for we are bowed in worship before the Eternal Spirit. Change and decay only affect the outward features of our civilization as they rise and fall. In matters of the human spirit our natures remain unaltered throughout the long stream of history. It is this that makes the Bible such a living Book. We are apt to forget how very, very ancient are these sacred writings. Their supreme glory, as we believe, is that they were inspired by the Holy Spirit. But it is that same Spirit, and not another, that is with us here and now in this conference and wherever we go. The remembrance of that fact may well fill us with holy awe.

Enshrined in the heart of this Pentecostal revival has been the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord. I believe that the Pentecostal experience is to brace us for the responsibilities of the hour. Whenever our Lord spoke about His personal return it was always with a practical application and exhortation to personal holiness and faithful service in

order that the Master, when He returns, may find each of us about our appointed task—the preacher in his pulpit, the teacher at his desk, the executive in his office, the mother in her home, the nurse by the sickbed, the farmer on his land, the workman at his bench, the pilot at the wheel, and the public servant at his place of duty. The Pentecostal experience fits us all.

Put broadly, the hour demands from the Church two supreme things—powerful evangelism without, and personal holiness within The Pentecostal experience is the divine dynamic for both, but it needs to be a continuous experience. It has been well said that the entrance fee into the Kingdom of Heaven is nothing at all but once you are in the annual subscription is all you have. I am sure that principle applies to the Pentecostal experience. Make no mistake about it, it is a costly thing to keep filled with the Spirit.

The solemn alternative before us is that we can live as a movement and die as a revival. While we are gathered here there are many thousands of Pentecostal believers all over the world who are praying for us day and night. I am sure that their one supreme prayer is that God will visit us with a new breath from heaven as we are all with one accord in one place. For our many differences sink into insignificance before this one heart cry for a renewed Pentecostal experience to be given to us all.

Deal Pentecostal Church

69 Mill Hill, Deal, Kent. CT14 9EW

www.dealpentecostal.co.uk