

Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement

Sources

Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (2001)

Edith L. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (1993)

Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (1997)

John F. MacArthur, Jr., *Charismatic Chaos* (1992)

I. Pentecostalism

A. Origin and Growth (to 1940)

1. Roots in the Holiness Movement
 - a. “Second Blessing”: God eradicates the old sin nature (post-conversion)
 - b. Example: Nazarenes
2. Rise of Pentecostal Movement
 - a. From Holiness Movement → seeking more “gifts”
 - b. Birth: Tongues speaking in a Topeka Bible college (Dec. 31, 1900)
 - c. Major Event: William J. Seymour & Azusa Street Revival (early 1900s; González, 340)
 - d. Name “Pentecostal”
 - 1) Distinctives: tongues & gift of divine healing
 - 2) Also new era for the church
3. Leading Pentecostal Denominations
 - a. Assemblies of God: Largest in world
 - b. Church of God in Christ: Largest in US
4. Variants
 - a. United (“Jesus-only”) Pentecostals: Modalistic Unitarians
 - b. Prosperity Gospel: “name it and claim it” → faith brings “health, wealth, and happiness”
5. Mostly rejected by Fundamentalist movement

B. Drive for Respectability (1940-60)

1. Pentecostalism reaches out to mainstream
2. Challenge: “Lower-class” appeal
 - a. Originally strong among urban blue-collar & rural poor
 - b. Caricature of “holy rollers”
 - c. Early concept of “theology of the poor,” that God gave a special blessing to the poor by way of Pentecostal gifts
 - d. Enlarged role for women
3. Means of “Respectability”
 - a. Some denominations joined NAE
 - b. Demos Shakarian & Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship: “White-collar” Pentecostalism
 - c. Career of Oral Roberts: TV ministry, university, joining United Methodist Church
 - d. David DuPlessis took Pentecostalism into ecumenical movement

II. Charismatic Explosion (Since 1960)

A. Mainstream reaches out to Pentecostalism

1. Birth of “Neo-Pentecostalism”
 - a. 1960: Episcopalian minister Dennis Bennet in Calif. speaks in tongues
 - b. Pattern: Remained in mainline denomination
 2. Growth
 - a. Resulted in new Charismatic denominations & fellowships in other denominations
 - b. Prominence through use of media (“televangelists” such as Pat Robertson)
 - c. Political influence in “religious right” in USA
 - d. A significant Catholic component
 - B. “Third Wave” (since 1980s)
 1. Charismatic gifts for evangelicals who don’t want to be Charismatic
 2. Example: Vineyard Churches
 3. Stress on spiritual warfare, e.g.
 - C. Worldwide spread
 1. International growth greater than in America
 2. Estimate (2011): over 500 million adherents
 3. Spurred Christian growth in southern hemisphere (González, 504-7, 509-11)
 4. Foundation for idea of “Next Christendom” (Philip Jenkins) → A new, predominantly evangelical Christian presence in southern hemisphere
- III. Arguments Against Pentecostal Teaching
- A. Cessationism: Sign gifts not normative
 - B. Problem of tongues as special revelation
 - C. “Gift” of healing not scriptural
 - D. Sense of spiritual superiority (e.g., “Full Gospel”)
 - E. Tendency to stress experience over doctrine