THE PENTECOSTAL EDUCATOR

A JOURNAL OF WAPTE
the World Alliance for Pentecostal Theological Education

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A Journal of the *World Alliance for Pentecostal Theological Education*

WAPTE Board

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The Pentecostal Educator is indexed by Christian Periodical Index.

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Book Reviews

Editorial

Paul R. Alexander, PhD, Senior Editor

I trust that you will enjoy this latest edition of the journal. It addresses a major area of concern for any involved in theological education, namely the delivery and challenge of online or distance studies.

Accessibility to online material is now global and will impact the delivery of theological education whether we engage it or not. Thus, this is an area that already impacts theological educators. I have yet to find a conclusive response as to how one might successfully provide spiritual formation through online studies. Many have made good attempts to address the subject however. The theme of this edition of our journal is another attempt to invigorate the discussion.

Please take note that the next meeting of the World Alliance for Pentecostal Theological Education takes place as a part of the Pentecostal World Conference. The WAPTE Consultation will take place of Tuesday September 6th. We trust that as many of our readers as possible will attempt to share this event with us.

I am grateful to our Executive Editor, Rick Wadholm Jr and his team for the fine work they produce with each new edition of this journal.

Towards the better future of a well-trained Church leadership,

Paul R. Alexander, PhD

Volume Editorial

Rick Wadholm Jr., Executive Editor

In this issue of *The Pentecostal Educator* we are offering an entry foray into the discussion of Pentecostal theological education in an online environment. The issues of pneumatology and ecclesiology need to be reconsidered in light of the proliferation of accessibility to online communities and resources. What would it mean to reflect theologically on Pentecostal appropriations of the internet? Further, how might community for and within our academic environments and educational engagements be better engendered using web based resources? What tools are available and how might they be used to further the kingdom of God? Also, what are potential dangers to our use of such technologies? These are the sorts of issues engaged in this volume.

Andrew Ray Williams addresses the use of online platforms and Pentecostal ecclesiologies and pneumatologies. While this is not a full-blown engagement of the topic, he raises important questions about the need to be careful in our theological reflections on the use of such technologies in furthering the work of the Spirit-empowered community. While the Spirit is indeed at work in the world (wide web) this does not equate to a fully embodied notion of localized communities of the Spirit filled saints.

In a highly practical piece, Paul T. Corrigan suggests very pointed ways in which *koinōnia* (participation, community) might be engendered within the Pentecostal academic setting. He not only offers tips for the e-classroom but also for professors among themselves to find greater fellowship and thus create environments more conducive to a positive experience of using the internet in educational environments. His proposals are highly collaborative and serve well to remind the reader of the communal nature of education in a Pentecostal collegiate environment.

The final article furthers this discussion with regard to ten specific types of tools available to Pentecostal scholars and institutions. Robert R. Wadholm proposes making use of the many resources currently available for providing quality materials on Pentecostal issues freely to the world. This is particularly important with regard to the majority world that may not be able to fund accessing quality academic resources. He notes that numerous leading U.S. institutions are blazing the trail in providing their courses free online to anyone interested in learning. His suggestion is that Pentecostal institutions and scholars should likewise offer their gifts for

the wider benefit of the world with open and free access. He also offers several pitfalls to an unthinking appropriation of all new technologies which are intended to remind the reader of the need for careful theological reflection on their use.

Finally, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Justin Evans who has served as our Book Review Editor these last two years. His service has been invaluable in aiding this journal to offer high quality book reviews pertinent to the Pentecostal educator. Beginning with volume 3 issue 2, Meghan Musy, PhD (Cand., McMaster Divinity College) will be serving as the new Book Review Editor. Thus, it is with great excitement that we welcome her to the team and look forward to her contributions in this field of Pentecostal academia.

The Silicon Valley Meets Azusa Street: Opportunities and Obstacles to a Pentecostal Cyber-Ecclesiology in Pneumatological Perspective

Andrew Ray Williams

Abstract: This article brings cyber theology into conversation with Pentecostal sources in order to deal with the significance of cyber theology for the church via a Pentecostal ecclesiology in pneumatological perspective. I argue that pneumatology can be extended to affirm the Spirit's presence in cyberspace, but must also take into consideration the work of the Spirit's ecclesial work through material substances. I propose that Pentecostal theology does not allow a fully online ecclesial structure, yet with an emphasis on the Spirit's universal presence, Pentecostal theology does present untapped resources for engaging cyber theology.

Keywords: cyber space, cyber theology, ecclesiology, pneumatology, Pentecostalism

Introduction

Pentecostal Christianity, with a distinct emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit, has become one of the most noteworthy religious movements of the twenty-first century.[1] At Azusa Street in Los Angeles, the United States experienced an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which quickly spread around the world, forming what many now call the global Pentecostal movement.[2] As of 1995, the total number of Pentecostals in the world

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[1] James K. A. Smith and Amos Yong, eds. *Science and the Spirit: A Pentecostal Engagement with the Sciences* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 1.

[2] Smith and Yong, 1.

numbered some 463,000,000.[3] Although there are several distinctive characteristics of this worldwide movement, one of the chief marks is its emphasis on pneumatology. This distinctive plays out by emphasizing the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit in the church and in individual believers lives.

However, the emergence of the "online church" in the twenty-first century raises many questions for Pentecostal churches, as they reflect on the nature of the "presence" of the Spirit and of the church. This particular type of theological investigation falls within the scope of cyber theology, as this discipline is devoted to reflecting on the nature of faith in the age of the Web. Therefore, in this article, we will look at the relationship between Pentecostal spirituality and cyber theology, in an effort to find out whether it is possible to imagine a distinctive form of Pentecostal ecclesial structure on the Web. In order to arrive at a *proposal*, we will first seek to look at the nature of cyber theology and work towards a working definition. Then, we will probe Pentecostal ecclesiology and pneumatology in order to see how they might interact with the Web, and lastly, attempt to note opportunities for developing a Pentecostal cyber-ecclesiology in pneumatological perspective while also noting some obstacles. This article seeks to serve as an initial investigation of an emerging topic within Pentecostal theology.

What is Cyber Theology?

Susan George has collected four definitions for the term "cybertheology" as examples of possible considerations.[4] The first definition is outlined as the theology of the meanings of social communication in the age of cyberspace. The second is a definition covering pastoral reflections on how to communicate the Good News through the capabilities of the Internet. The third definition "she interprets as a phenomenological map of the presence of the religious on the Internet".[5] And lastly, the fourth definition is understood as a space with spiritual capabilities. As one can see, these examples of uses vary from one another tremendously, which effectively shows that the term has been widely used, but there is no collective agreement on how "cyber theology" should be defined.[6]

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[3] Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), ix–x.

[4] Susan George, *Religion and Technology in the 21st Century: Faith in the E-World* (Hershey, PA: Information Science Pub., 2006), 182.

[5] Antonio Spadaro, *Cybertheology: Thinking Christianity in the Era of the Internet* (Trans. Maria Way; New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 16.

[6] George, 182.

Further, Carlo Formenti refers to cyber theology as a "theology of technology".[7] However, expressing dissatisfaction with all the current definitions, in his recent publication, Antonio Spadaro seeks to offer a new definition for a discipline that seems so difficult to define.[8] For Spadaro, then, cyber theology is "the intelligence of the faith in the era of the Internet, that is, reflection on the thinkability of the faith in the light of the Web's logic."[9]

Although all of these definitions have been used to define cyber theology and have varying degrees of merit, we will look to define cyber theology as "theological reflection of Christianity in light of the Internet." The reason that this definition has been formulated and chosen is due to the fact that it is broad and comprehensive enough to contain many distinctive methodologies and themes, therefore, expanding the future possibilities of cyber theology. This is especially important for a such a new and broad discipline.

Nevertheless, for our purposes here, we will be broaching the subject of cyber theology in relation to Pentecostal spirituality by asking and addressing a specific question: *Does the current state of Pentecostal theology allow for a distinctive ecclesial structure on the Web?* Some have already noted that the most impressive, informative, regularly updated and functioning websites are those church's that identify as Pentecostal/charismatic.[10] However, there has yet to be a treatment of whether or not Pentecostal theology allows for a church to exist solely online. In order to address this question, we will first probe Pentecostal ecclesiology in an effort to define the characteristics of a Pentecostal church.

Pentecostal Ecclesiology: Virtual Possibilities?

Daniel Migliore has sketched five current "models" of the church: the institution of salvation, an elite community of the Spirit, the sacrament of salvation, the herald of good news, and lastly, servant of the servant Lord.[11] According to Migliore, the second model of the church, *the elite*

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[7] Carlo Formenti, *Enchanted by the Web: Imagineries, Utopias, and Conflicts in the Era of the Internet* (Milan: Raffaello Cortina, 2008), 59-107.
[8] Spadaro, 16.
[9] Spadaro, 16.
[10] J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "'Get on the Internet!' Says the LORD': Religion, Cyberspace and Christianity in Contemporary Africa," *Studies in World Christianity* 13, no. 3 (2007): 225.
[11] Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Third ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014), 265-272.

community of the Spirit, is represented in Pentecostal/charismatic communities: "Protestantism has produced a variety of understandings of the church as a spiritual community. One appears in the charismatic movement, which emphasizes the gifts of the Spirit and special experiences of spiritual healing and renewal."[12] Despite the weaknesses and narrowness of Migliore's description, the elite community of the Spirit is in a *general* sense an accurate description of Pentecostal ecclesiology. His outside perspective is valuable in that it reveals what is obviously central to Pentecostal ecclesiology. Nonetheless, this outside perspective is not fully-orbed.

Generally, Pentecostals and charismatics have been slow in both their reflection and development of a Pentecostal ecclesiology, as they have focused primarily on the practical matters of church ministry at the local level.[13] Nonetheless, various Pentecostal and charismatic scholars have recently begun to rise to the occasion. A more comprehensive and helpful assessment of the current state of Pentecostal ecclesiology comes from Mark Cartledge.[14] Cartledge takes into account emerging and relevant voices from the theological tradition that have begun to develop Pentecostal ecclesiology beyond its infancy state. After a thorough review of the current literature surrounding the topic, he proposes that Pentecostal or "renewal" ecclesiology includes four primary types, specifically: "the location of pneumatology as central rather than peripheral, the importance of relationality, the rediscovery of sacramentality and the impact of doxology for mission."[15] For our purposes, it is important to note that Cartledge did not address the virtual church, which is an opportunity for further development. Nonetheless, his insight into the centrality of pneumatology in Pentecostal ecclesiology is particularly salient. According to Cartledge, this means that pneumatology, formerly sidelined from traditional types of ecclesiology ("restricted to conversion or sacramental theology"), interchanges from the margin to the center "in order to complement christocentric models."[16] Therefore, the Spirit is not only one feature of Pentecostal ecclesiology, but *the* overarching feature that informs the others.

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[12] Migliore, 268.

[13] Peter Althouse, "Towards a Pentecostal Ecclesiology: Participation in the Missional Life of the Triune God," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 18, no. 2 (2009): 230.

[14] Mark J. Cartledge "Renewal Ecclesiology in Empirical Perspective," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 36, no. 1 (2014): 5-24.

[15] Cartledge, 20-24.

[16] Cartledge, 20.

This observation is quite true, as these churches see themselves as the *community of the Spirit*. In the renewing experience of the Holy Spirit, racial, gender and class divisions are demolished (Gal. 3:28). These peoples are empowered by the Spirit, who has been given as the "pledge" (2 Cor. 1:23) and "firstfruits" (Rom. 8:23) of the God's new age.[17] The church experiences a real foretaste of new life in the *koinonia*, the fellowship of the Spirit.[18] And as proof of the coming Kingdom, the church is a new community, where the Spirit of hospitality reigns in the "already" of God's Kingdom, welcoming all to himself.

Therefore, from a Pentecostal position, the church is seen from the standpoint of the Spirit. Of course, this is a natural way to regard a community that was "created by the Spirit on the day of Pentecost to carry the kingdom ministry of Jesus and be firstfruits of the new humanity he represented."[19] In formulating a pneumatological ecclesiology, Amos Yong defines the church as "an organic, dynamic, and eschatological people of God called after the name of Jesus and constituted in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit."[20] This understanding of the church asserts the church is a unity of fellowship with God through Christ in the Spirit.[21] Thus, while the Holy Spirit is emphasized in Pentecostal churches, it is Jesus Christ who is present with the people through the Spirit, anointing people to minister as he did.

Although we have noted that pneumatology is a distinctive emphasis in Pentecostal ecclesiology, we have yet to discuss an important, implied "presence" motif in this theology. It is the Holy Spirit's presence *in* and *with* the church that makes the "church the church" in Pentecostal ecclesiology. Inspired speech and signs and wonders cannot happen apart from the Spirit's present work among his people. Therefore, in attempting to formulate a Pentecostal cyber-ecclesiology, this vital topic of "presence" comes to the forefront of the conversation.

When discussing whether or not there can be such a thing as "virtual sacraments" Spadaro, a Catholic theologian, concludes that, "Behind this process is the reductive idea that to receive a sacrament in substance signifies simply being involved in a psychological event, whether real or

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[17] Migliore, 265.
[18] Migliore, 265.
[19] Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 113.
[20] Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 122.
[21] Migliore, 281.

virtual. *Pathos* takes the place of *Logos*."[22] Although many Pentecostal churches are not sacramental in the Catholic sense (though some are), this statement is important as it speaks to the issue of "presence", specifically, Christ's presence in the Eucharist through the Holy Spirit.

It is important to note that Spadaro's Catholic ecclesiology demands the sacraments to be practiced within the confines of the concrete church, which has implications for pneumatology as well. As we have noted, for Pentecostals, the Spirit's presence is one of the key features of the church. In an effort to explore this more, it is vital that we now turn to probe Pentecostal pneumatology, looking for the scope of the Spirit's "presence". We will attempt to discover whether or not his presence can be found online, and whether this presence constitutes theological justification for Pentecostal churches to exist online.

Pentecostal Pneumatology: Does the Wind Blow on the Web?

As we have mentioned before, Pneumatology is central to Pentecostalism's identity. However, traditionally speaking, most Western Pentecostals have understood the Spirit's work confined to holiness and the walls of the church. However, there are a number of theologians either located within the Pentecostal/charismatic movement, or sympathetic to the movement, that are desiring to show that the Spirit's work cannot be confined to these categories.

For instance, Clark Pinnock believes the Spirit's work has a cosmic range to His operations, and for too long the Spirit and his work has been understood in too limited a sense: "Let us stop demoting the Spirit, relegating him to spheres of church and piety."[23] Spring boarding off this claim, Amos Yong has suggested that approaching the topic of theology of religions by starting with pneumatology may open up possibilities for rethinking the relationship between Christianity and other faiths.[24] Therefore, for Yong, the Spirit not only operates in the church, but even within other religions.

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[22] Spadaro, 75.

[23] Pinnock, 49, 63.

[24] See Amos Yong, *Discerning the Spirit(s): A Pentecostal-Charismatic Contribution to Christian Theology of Religions*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 20 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000); *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), and *Hospitality and the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices, and the Neighbor (Faith Meets Faith)* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008).

However, the Spirit's presence has not only been extended to other religions by Pentecostal theologians, but also to creation. Frank Macchia has stated that "there is no such thing as a Spiritless creation", thus echoing the psalmist's prayers: "If I make my bed in the depths, you are there" (Ps. 139.8)..."When you send your Spirit... you renew the face of the ground" (Ps. 104.30).[25] Further, A. J. Swoboda has recently applied this cosmic pneumatology to the realm of ecology.[26] Although there are many more Pentecostal theologians to consider, these few examples show that anthropocentric tendencies in Pentecostal theology are beginning to be left behind for a broader vision for the Spirit's universal activity in the world. However, the Spirit's activity in the non-material world or "virtual world" has yet to be considered from Pentecostal theologians. Therefore, the question must be begged: *Does the wind blow on the web?*

Amos Yong's pneumatological theology of religions may be helpful here. For Yong, on the one hand, to say the Spirit is present in other religions is to affirm to the omnipresence of God.[27] On the other hand, Yong asserts that the Spirit is also absent from the religions to the degree either that the signs of the kingdom are absent or they are being forbidden from being "manifest".[28] Therefore, applying Yong's pneumatology to cyber theology, the Spirit is certainly working on the Web, as "the wind blows wherever it pleases" (John 3:8), but at the same time, he is also absent on the Web where the kingdom is forbidden from becoming realized.

As a result, it is certainly not unsubstantiated to conclude that the Spirit's activity can be extended theologically to cyberspace. However, when it comes to developing a cyber-ecclesiology in pneumatological perspective, one must also admit that there are limits to his presence. For instance, one must begin to ask himself or herself whether or not the Spirit of Christ's presence is made manifest *incarnationally* on the Web as it is in the sacraments.

As noted before, Cartledge has noted that the rediscovery of sacramentality is also a distinctive form of Pentecostal ecclesiology.[29] According to Pinnock, just as the Son became incarnate in flesh and blood, the Spirit wants to effect changes in history *concretely.*[30] Hence,

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[25] Frank D. Macchia, *Justified in the Spirit: Creation, Redemption, and the Triune God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 179.

[26] A.J. Swoboda, *Tongues and Trees: Towards a Pentecostal Ecological Theology*, (Blandford Forum, Dorset, UK: Deo Publishing), 2013.

[27] Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, 251.

[28] Yong, 250.

[29] Cartledge, 5.

[30] Pinnock, 119.

sacraments are an operation of the Spirit of Christ and exist purely because we are bodily creatures occupying a material world.[31] As a result, I would suggest that the sacramental and incarnational operations of the Spirit of Christ have something to tell us about the importance of the material/physical element of being "His body".

Thus, while the universality of the Spirit in Pentecostal theology opens the door for a cyber-ecclesiology, the sacramental and incarnational element of Pentecostal theology throws up an obstacle. Pentecostal pneumatology can be extended to affirm the Spirit's presence in cyberspace, but must also take into consideration the work of the Spirit's foundational ecclesial work through material substances. As a result, Pentecostal pneumatology opens up fresh opportunities, yet also creates obstacles.

Conclusion: Opportunities and Obstacles

Susan George outlines four different functions of church that can be identified: "Outreach", "Inreach", "Upreach" and "Downreach".[32] This fourth function, "downreach" (God reaching down to the church), as noted before, is a clear emphasis in Pentecostal ecclesiology and provides both opportunities and obstacles in developing a cyber-ecclesiology. In looking for renewed opportunities, we have concluded that the Spirit's presence can be found on the Web, as a result of the Spirit's universality. This, of course, opens up new opportunities for further exploration. Pentecostal theologians can begin to explore *how* the Spirit might be working in the virtual world. Further, it opens up dialogue around how we as people of the Spirit, might partner with his missiological purposes on the Web.

Additionally, our exploration of these themes have also created some obstacles in formulating a cyber-ecclesiology. Just as we have noted the Spirit's universal presence, we have also noted that the Spirit's presence is found in a distinct way in the material church due to the nature of embodiment found in Christ. Therefore, the Spirit's presence online may be limited, which presents a difficulty for further development.

In sum, based on this limited treatment of the subject, Pentecostal theology does not allow a fully online ecclesial structure. Yet, with an emphasis on the Spirit's omnipresence, Pentecostal theology does present untapped resources for engaging cyber theology. Therefore, it is my hope that Pentecostals in the future will begin to investigate the possibilities ahead and follow the Spirit into uncharted territory.

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[31] Pinnock, 120.
[32] George, 144-145.

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Pedagogy and *Koinōnia*

Paul T. Corrigan

Abstract: When students participate in their own learning, with each other and their teachers, and in the subject at hand, all within a community of faith, they enact the New Testament ideal of *koinōnia*. *Koinōnia* or participation—involving engagement, community, and whole persons—serves as both a means and purpose for Christian higher education. Teachers can take practical steps, particularly through pedagogy, to sow into a learning community of the Spirit, not only among students in their classes but also among fellow teachers who learn from and support each other in this work and calling.

Keywords: Participation, Community, Faculty, Students, Engagement

> The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the *communion* (*koinōnia*) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the *communion* (koinōnia) of the body of Christ?
> —1 Corinthians 10:16 KJV

> I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, in view of your *participation* (*koinōnia*) in the gospel from the first day until now.
> —Philippians 1:3-5 NASB

> His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may *participate* (*koinōnós*) in the divine nature . . .
> —2 Peter 1:3-4 NIV

Koinōnia, Participation, and Higher Learning

The Greek word *koinōnia* means *participation*.[33] In English translations of the New Testament, it appears variously as communion, fellowship, sharing, contribution, and participation, referring to the church, the Lord's Supper, and the practice of walking in the Spirit in daily life. The word implies *being* and *doing* together in deep and embodied ways. We *koinōnia* by living in community with one another. We *koinōnia* by taking the bread and wine of communion together. We *koinōnia* by growing ever closer to God.

Of the different ways of translating *koinōnia* into English, the word *participation* offers particular insights for Christian higher learning. The word *participation* of course has already entered the common parlance of education, unfortunately with diminished significance. Usually, "participation" means students raising their hands and answering questions in order to earn a "participation grade." I have even heard of a professor telling students in a large class that they will "get an A for participation" if he knows their names by the end of the semester. The meaning of *koinōnia* in New Testament Greek certainly speaks to something much more than remembering the names of students who speak up. In fact, the full meaning of *participation* in English speaks to something much more as well.

Meanings given for *participate* in the Oxford English Dictionary include: "[T]he action of taking part in . . . [P]ersonal engagement in a common enterprise . . . [C]ommunion . . . The action or fact of having or forming part *of* something; the sharing *of* something. In early use: the fact of sharing or possessing the nature, quality, or substance *of* a person or thing . . . [And] active involvement in a matter or event, esp. one in which the outcome directly affects those taking part."[34] Considered in light of its fuller dictionary meaning and in light of its New Testament Greek counterpart, the word *participation* gets to the heart of what authentic teaching and learning are about. I want to suggest that one of the primary goals of Christian higher learning is to get students to participate, not just in class activities but in the process of learning, with a community of learners, and with the subject at hand.

What might a classroom that took participation as a central principle look

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[33] J. Y. Campbell, "Koinōnia and Its Cognates in the New Testament," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 51, no. 4 (1932): 353.
[34] *Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd ed., s.v. "Participate."

like? Perhaps it would look something like what Ken Bain describes in *What the Best College Teachers Do*, a study of college teachers who have consistently had "remarkable success in helping their students learn in ways that made a sustained, substantial, and positive influence on how their students think, act and feel."[35] In a key passage, quoted here at length, Bain explains:

> More than anything else, the best teachers try to create a natural critical learning environment: "natural" because students encounter the skills, habits, attitudes, and information they are trying to learn embedded in questions and tasks they find fascinating—authentic tasks that arouse curiosity and become intrinsically interesting; "critical" because students learn to think critically, to reason from evidence, to examine the quality of their reasoning using a variety of intellectual standards, to make improvements while thinking, and to ask probing and insightful questions about the thinking of other people.
>
> Some teachers create this environment within lectures; others, with discussions; still others with case studies, role playing, field work, or a variety of other techniques. A few create it with a central project that students take on, often working collaboratively with other members of the class. Sometimes students tackle the problems silently while hearing them raised in provocative lectures designed to offer them ideas and evidence that challenge their previous ways of thinking. Other times, they address the problems in small groups or in larger class discussions. Indeed, the method of choice varies considerably depending on a variety of factors, including the learning objectives, the personality and cultures of teachers and students, and the learning habits of both. But the method matters far less than do the challenge and permission for students to tackle authentic and intriguing questions and tasks, to make decisions, to defend their choices, to come up short, to receive feedback on their efforts, and to try again. The best teaching creates a sense that everyone is working together, whether that means working on a problem silently while listening to the professor or reasoning aloud with other students and the professor. Moreover, the questions, issues, and problems are authentic: they seem important to students and are similar to those that professionals in the field

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[35] Ken Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 5.

might undertake.[36]

What Bain describes here is students participating in their learning, participating with each other and their teachers, and participating in the subject at hand. When that kind of participation takes place in the context of a community of faith, we might call it *koinōnia*. Getting students to participate in the call to authentic learning is both a *means* and *purpose* for Christian higher education. It is a purpose because what we want is for students to learn to participate—to be able to take part in theology, math, chemistry, business, literature, or whatever the subject at hand—and it is a means because the way that students learn to do that is through participating. Christian higher education is not a product for consumers nor an event for spectators but a sacred vocation for those who are called.

The Specifically Christian Character of Participation

Participation is a general principle of effective teaching everywhere. But when we consider it in terms of the *koinōnia* of the New Testament, we may come into some specifically Christian ways of understanding and practicing teaching and learning. The history of the body of Christ has been the history of a participatory pedagogy, the principal instance of which being the Last Supper and its continual reenactment in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In particular, there are three aspects of these meals that we can take as principles of participation to strive for in our own teaching.

The first insight is that participation involves *engagement*. At the Last Supper, the disciples were not spectators. Instead, they took part with Jesus in everything about the meal. They got their hands dirty (and their feet clean) as they struggled to understand what Jesus was trying to teach them about love, community, the work he had for them to do, and the sacrifice he was about to make. The apostle Peter was particularly engaged, even to the point of arguing with Jesus, first about Jesus washing his feet and then about his own imminent denial of Jesus. During the supper, Jesus did not merely present his disciples with ideas. Instead, he invited them to engage with the ideas—and with *him* personally—in the process of learning. Likewise, when Christians celebrate the Lord's Supper today, we are not observing an "object lesson" but rather are taking part in a sacrament. Such active engagement, internal and external, should mark our classrooms as well.

The second insight is that participation involves *community*. As a

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[36] Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*, 99-100.

celebration of Passover in the intimate setting of the upper room, the Last Supper was a meal among close friends. It was a culmination of the personal relationships that Jesus and his disciples had been developing with each other over several years. It was also a culmination of the working relationship that the disciples had been developing with the things that Jesus was trying to teach them. They had eaten together many times before, just as Jesus had taught them many times before about sacrificial love. That meal was an act of community, and so it is appropriate that the sacrament of bread and wine has come to be called communion. When we take part in communion today, we do it together and we do it, among other reasons, in order to enact community. Likewise, in our classes, we would do well to encourage students to engage with each other and with us as well as with the subject at hand.

The third insight is that participation involves *whole persons*. In all aspects of the Last Supper—the eating of the meal itself as well as the preparations and feet washing beforehand, the conversation throughout, and the singing of hymns when they had finished—Jesus and the disciples engaged each other and the lessons at hand not just with their minds but with their whole selves. They took part emotionally, physically, and spiritually as well as intellectually. Similarly, today the Lord's Supper asks Christians today to think, reflect, remember, examine, touch, taste, move, pray, listen, read, and be together. Likewise, in our classrooms, we too ought to engage whole persons. We ought to engage the *minds* and *hearts* of our students—that is, the faculties for remembering information and analyzing things as well as the faculties for empathy, intuition, insight, creativity, compassion, awareness and so on. This is just what the apostle Paul gets at when he asks followers of Christ to "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2). The Greek word translated as *mind—nous*—refers to what Henri Nouwen describes in *The Way of the Heart* as "the source of all physical, emotional, intellectual, volitional, and moral energies . . . the central and unifying organ of our personal life."[37] When we encourage students to engage with their hearts as well as with their minds, they may participate more fully and learn more deeply.

For some teachers, this talk about "the heart" and "community" may seem awfully "touchy-feely." It may seem not rigorous, not relevant to the intellectual purposes of education, or just plain weird. So I should clarify. By using these terms, I do not mean that we need to sit in a circle on the floor, hold hands, and sing campfire songs. To be sure, feelings of camaraderie may and perhaps should develop through students participating together, and those feelings may help students to participate

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[37] Henri Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart* (New York: Harper, 1991), 74.

further. But those feelings in themselves are not the purpose of practicing community in the classroom. Instead, the mutual engagement of students with each other, with teachers, and with the subject at hand is important for its own sake and for the sake of the learning that results. Besides, terms like community and heart (or *koinōnia* and *nous*) are only as fuzzy as the New Testament, which, with the cross at its center, is decidedly not a mushy book.

Considering how Christ taught his disciples, we may glean valuable principles about higher education, including the idea that that participation means whole persons engaging in learning together. But for Christian teachers, the aim should not be just to *follow the example of Christ* but rather to also *participate with Christ* in the life and the work of the Holy Spirit. When we aim to teach in ways that allow us and our students to participate with each other in learning and in the subject at hand *as part of our Christian vocation*, then we are truly taking part in the *koinōnia* of the gospel.

Facilitating Participation in the Classroom

So we want engaged, communal, holistic participation for our students. But how do we facilitate that through our teaching? I propose that one half of the equation has to do with the integrity, authenticity, and presence of the teacher[38] and the other half with effective teaching practices.

Many teachers teach the way they were taught, whether or not their own teachers used effective approaches. But the fact, documented by researchers like Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa, that some students learn a lot in college while most students learn very little suggests that not all ways of teaching are equally effective.[39] We should strive to be reflective and intentional in our teaching practices. In doing so, we will want to consider some principles for effective teaching that are generally true. For instance, it has been demonstrated that approaches that promote active learning ("anything that involves students doing things and thinking about the things they are doing") work much better than approaches that promote passive learning (anything that involves students merely "receiving information and ideas").[40] In particular, "problem-based

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[38] Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 10.

[39] Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa, *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 36.

[40] L. Dee Fink, *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 4, 104.

learning," "collaborative learning," "service learning," and "undergraduate research" come highly recommended.[41]

At the same time, there is certainly no one right way to teach. We should not, for instance, ban lectures and make everyone teach through roleplaying. Successful teachers use plenty of different approaches. We should not universally prescribe or proscribe teaching practices. Teaching practices do not work equally well (or poorly) for all teachers. Instead, we need to discover what works for our individual and institutional contexts. We need to develop practices that allow us to "be ourselves" while also reaching our students who are different from us. We must take care to design and run our classes in the ways most appropriate for us as teachers, for the mix of students in our classes, and for the particular subjects we teach.

We may find it useful to continually experiment with new ways of getting students to engage in their learning and in the classroom community. Some practices that I have come to use include the following:

- Learning students' names,
- Inviting students to participate, telling them how to, and holding them accountable for it,
- Assigning readings that are interesting, challenging but accessible, relevant to students' lives, and complex enough that simplistic responses will not suffice,
- Teaching students how to read actively (rereading, underlining, taking notes, asking questions, etc.),
- Having students regularly write short informal responses to what they read,
- Having students share their work with one another from time to time,
- Orchestrating small group discussions as well as whole class discussions, giving students opportunities to come to voice frequently,
- Asking hard questions and not always giving answers,
- Giving students concrete cultural artifacts to discuss (such as images, videos, stories, charts, statistics, etc.),
- Asking students to write essays in which they research and develop their own ideas about important issues (while giving them the necessary scaffolding),
- Doing activities during class,

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[41] John Tagg, *The Learning Paradigm College* (Bolton: Anker, 2003), 164.

- Minimizing long lectures,
- Inviting students to respond to course content analytically, personally, and creatively (e.g. by painting),
- Focusing on issues of social involvement and bringing scriptures (e.g. 1 John 3:17-18) to bear on these issues,
- Hosting field trips that inform and bring alive course content,
- Eating meals with students,
- Having moments of silence during class, and
- Praying with and for students.

As a general principal, teachers ought to use practices that emerge out of or fit with their personalities, gifts, and training and that complement the personalities, gifts, and training of their students. Teachers can discover and develop such practices through experimenting in the classroom, reading about teaching and learning, and dialoguing with colleagues.

Participation in a Teaching Community

I am proposing participation (qua *koinōnia*) as a core principle and practice for all aspects of Christian higher education. If one part of this involves teachers working to develop *communities of learning* with their students, then another part involves teachers working to develop *communities of teaching* with one another. In the Acknowledgements at the beginning of his book *To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey*, Parker Palmer shares an example of a teaching community:

> This book began in 1978 when Henri Nouwen, John Mogabgab, and I started a series of conversations on spirituality, community, and education. For two years we spent a day together every other week, talking, praying, laughing, and eating woefully inadequate lunches. Between meetings each of us wrote a brief essay in response to the preceding conversation; those essays then provided the starting point for our next meeting. So this book, which stresses the spiritual and communal dimensions of education, had its own origins in a small community of friendship, inquiry, and worship.[42]

When I first read this account as an undergraduate student, I scribbled in the margins of the page: "Awesome!" and "I want this!" Though I am no longer so sure about embracing inadequate lunches (and no longer, come to think of it, so thin either), I would still love to participate in the kind of

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[42] Palmer, *To Know as We Are Known*, xxi.

teaching community that Palmer describes here. What he describes is in fact both a teaching community and a learning community. Teaching communities are learning communities where teachers work together to develop their teaching practices.

One of the most important recent ideas about teaching and learning is the idea of "communities of practice," developed most prominently by the Swiss theorist Etienne Wenger. "Communities of practice," Wenger writes, "are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly."[43] Communities of practice are the traditional way in which people learn things. They form in all areas of life, wherever people do something, interact about how they do it, and, as a result, end up doing it better. It would be incredibly useful and meaningful for teachers in higher education to form "communities of practice." It seems that teachers at Christian colleges and universities should have an edge in forming such communities, with community being such a principle practice of the faith. Oddly, though, even in Christian higher education, we habitually teach in isolation from each other, cutting ourselves off from the traditional way in which people have gotten better at the things they do.

But I am grateful to be able to engage in a teaching community to a significant degree. Faculty members at my university engage with one another in matters of teaching, learning, and faith not only through informal dialogue but also through a number of formal venues such as a year-long Faith Integration Seminar, a semester-long Dialogue on Teaching, and several other groups. I celebrate these, and have made sure to invest time and energy into them. Nonetheless, I think that for the most part these efforts at my school and parallel ones at other schools represent only the beginnings of a full and authentic community of practice. On the whole, I think that faculty at most institutions do not yet have sustained, in-depth, concrete, ongoing interactions with one another about why and how we teach and how we can do it better. But many people are growing in this area. And I am hopeful that we will continue to do so.

In general terms, a community of practice among teachers in Christian higher education should involve the same aspects of *koinōnia* that are important in the classroom—engagement, community, and whole persons. More concretely, it might involve such practices as the following:

- Meeting over coffee to talk about teaching theory and practice,

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[43] Etienne Wenger, "Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction" (June 2006). <http://www.wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/>.

- Recommending to one another articles and books on pedagogy, higher education, and Christian formation,[44]
- Telling each other stories about the struggles and successes of our students,
- Praying together for our students,
- Sharing with one another how we feel we are developing as teachers and how we would like to develop in the near future and in the long term,
- Swapping successful syllabi, teaching activities, and assignments,
- Giving one another written feedback on drafts of lesson plans or writing assignments,
- Troubleshooting teaching problems together,
- Visiting each other's classes to participate or observe,
- Co-teaching or team-teaching classes, or
- Writing essays to one another about faith and learning (as Palmer describes).

A Christian teaching community may also include practices that have to do not so much with teaching and learning specifically but with developing and sustaining Christian community more generally, practices such as worshiping together, taking communion together, eating meals together, and grieving with one another in times of sorrow.

Conclusion

We should work to "sow into the coming forth" of teaching and learning communities of the Spirit.[45] Serving as "faithful presences" within our individual institutions and within higher education more broadly, such communities can make a difference in our lives and in the lives of our students.[46] Whatever practices we find most effective for forming and sustaining these communities, if we and our students are truly called to higher learning, then our participation with each other, in the learning processes, and in our subjects becomes part of our "participation in the

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[44] Suggested readings include: Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*; Fink, *Creating Significant Learning Experiences*; Tagg, *The Learning Paradigm College*; Parker J. Palmer, *To Know As We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey* (San Francisco: Harper SanFrancisco, 1993); and James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009).

[45] This phrase is borrowed from my friend Rickey Cotton, from whom I have learned much about both pedagogy and *koinōnia*.

[46] James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 244.

gospel" (Philippians 1:3-5) and "in the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:3-4). I pray God will help us with this.

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The Open Extension of Pentecostal Education and the Interactive Web

Robert R. Wadholm

Abstract: Free and open access to knowledge resources via interactive Web technologies promises to extend Pentecostal communities of discipleship. Ten opening factors are examined to evaluate how they are being used by Pentecostal educators today, and how they can be extended in the future to increase the reach of Christian education. These factors include Web searching and e-books, free and open source software, e-learning and blended learning, open educational resources such as OpenCourseWare, learning object repositories and portals, learner participation in open information communities, electronic collaboration, alternate reality learning, real-time mobility and portability, and networks of personalized learning. While there are limitations and dangers with using the Web for discipleship and Christian education, interactive Web technologies can be used effectively by Pentecostal educators to create, foster, and engage in open communities of learning, opening up resources and tools for global use and distribution.

Keywords: Open Education, Discipleship, Interactive Web, E-learning, Knowledge Sharing

A recent growth in the accessibility, portability and freedom of resources through Web technologies has changed the educational climate of today and calls for a fresh response from Christian educators who are seeking to extend the reach of their communities of discipleship. The world of the Web is alive with free and open access educational tools and resources, and should be fully utilized by Pentecostals with the goal of offering the gospel and Christian education freely and openly to the world. Three things make this revolution in education possible: 1. *infrastructure* (hardware, software, connections, and technologies), 2. free and open

content, and 3. a *culture* of participation and knowledge sharing.[1] I would argue that Pentecostal leaders ought to help fuel the fire of free and open access to Christian educational resources by providing their own knowledge resources freely and with no strings attached, openly extending the reach of their communities of discipleship.

Scope and Methodology of the Project

Following is a brief qualitative analysis and evaluation of "open" Christian (and specifically Pentecostal) online educational resources based on the framework of ten modern opening factors in education elucidated by educational psychologist Curtis Bonk in his 2009 monograph *The World is Open: How Web Technology is Revolutionizing Education*.[2] Interactive Web technologies have emerged in the last several years as a platform for social construction, learning, and participation. The read-only Web has become the read and write Web, a social platform for all. Resources are now created by the people and for the people. As Bonk argues: "Anyone can now learn anything from anyone at anytime."[3] Online participatory learning has made a mark on the world of education today. And Pentecostals have not been left out. Bonk presents ten factors—tools, resources, and conceptual frameworks—that have converged to create a world wide web of learning. Each of these factors will be examined to evaluate how they are being used by Pentecostal educators today, and how they can be extended to increase the reach of Christian education tomorrow.

Ten Opening Factors in Pentecostal Education Today

1. Web searching and E-books are powerful tools in the dissemination of information. How do people discover new information and gain new knowledge? Where do they go when they need answers? Books? Libraries? Experts? Friends? Today, more than ever before, people rely on the internet (for good or bad). Here they find free information at the touch of a keystroke. They find answers in books, libraries, expert advice and friends that are online using search engines like Google. What happens when they Google "God" or "The Holy Spirit"?[4] The answer to this

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[1] Bonk, Curtis J. *The World is Open: How Web Technology is Revolutionizing Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 53, 356.

[2] Bonk, 53, 356.

[3] Bonk, 7.

[4] Google, The Holy Spirit, accessed February 4, 2016, http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=The+ Holy+Spirit; Tatum, Richard A., Ranking the Divine: The Holy Spirit and Search Trends, BlogRodent, May 28, 2007, accessed February 4, 2016, http://tatumweb.com/blog/2007/05/28/divine-rank/.

question may rely in part on our personal contributions to the freely available literature and resources online. Pentecostals have an important contribution to make in providing resources for Christian growth in the area of knowledge and information about the Holy Spirit. What books will searchers find when they search for the Holy Spirit? Will searchers discover that the only books and articles they can find are dated (from the early 20th century) or are only available for a price? Online books and articles on the Christian life and Pentecostalism could be made freely available for global distribution through services like Scribd and Google books, which would allow the content to be fully searchable, making the discovery of pertinent resources quicker and easier.

James Poitras, a scholar from the United Pentecostal Church International, has chosen to release many free articles and Pentecostal study resources online at Scribd.com[5] and on his personal Website.[6] Now the whole world can read his works. All Bible scholars, college and seminary students, pastors and teachers could similarly post their current research online as a free resource to the world. Instead of writing only for their theology professor, students, or peers, they could be writing for the world, and be receiving valuable real-world feedback and perhaps collaboration. Open source software developers around the world have given untold man-hours unpaid in the pursuit of freeing software for humanity's sake, making their work and code available to the world because they think code ought to be free. Do we think discipleship materials ought to be free?

2. The mention of free and open source software here may seem out of place. But many of the other factors we will be discussing depend at least in part on the work and services provided by programmers, designers, and organizations that have made their work and services free to the world. Most blogs use free services and many use open source software like WordPress. Portals, course management systems, and open educational resources often utilize open source solutions like Joomla, Drupal, and Moodle (for instance, see Asia Pacific Theology Seminary's E-Learning Website based on Moodle).[7] Social networks are nearly all free to use, and many have opened at least parts of their code up for others to develop new applications. In many ways, the Web is made possible by free and open source software. The extent to which discipleship can be opened up to all audiences using these services in part depends on the cost of using these

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[5] Scribd, Paper Prophet, accessed February 4, 2016, http://www.scribd.com/Paper%20Prophet.
[6] Poitras, James, Reaching Through Teaching, accessed February 4, 2016, http://reachingthroughteaching .com/index.html.
[7] Asia Pacific Theology Seminary, Asia Pacific Theological Seminary E-Learning, accessed February 4, 2016, http://www.apts-moodle.com/moodle/.

services. By making services, software, and resources free and open, we invite the world to join us on a journey.

3. <u>E-learning and blended learning</u> options in which all or part of the instructional resources are made available online, are quickly becoming ubiquitous as modes of teaching/learning in Pentecostal Bible colleges and seminaries in the United States. E-learning began with radio at the beginning of the 20th century, and moved on to also include film, television, CDs, and the internet as the 20th century drew to a close. Since the beginning of the 21st century, Web tools and resources have been made available that allow for student collaboration and participation to a greater degree than earlier forms of e-learning. E-learning can reach those who are far away in space and time, and can be offered free of charge in many cases. New forms of e-learning that include tools for collaboration also allow learners to interact and construct knowledge as a community of practice. This includes the use of content management systems that allow for student/teacher and student/student interaction online through forums, chat rooms, messaging, and wikis.

4. Pentecostals' use of <u>leveraged resources and OpenCourseWare</u> solutions are limited. OpenCourseWare is a term used to describe course resources like syllabi, course readings, assignment descriptions, videos, audio and other rich media that is made available by universities and colleges to those outside of their own communities for free, to be accessed and/or reused in whatever way a user pleases, often without the guarantee of faculty or staff support, or any kind of certification for studies accomplished. OpenCourseWare first became a worldwide phenomenon when, in 2000, MIT announced that they would make materials from every one of their courses freely available to the world online.[8] Instead of following a for-profit model of online access to courses, they decided to give the access freely to everyone in the world as a philanthropic gesture. Since then, an OpenCourseWare consortium has formed consisting of major universities from around the world, including top U.S. schools like the University of California Berkeley, University of Michigan, and the University of Notre Dame. Seminaries have recently joined this trend (Covenant Theological Seminary, Reformed Theological Seminary, and Westminster Theological Seminary), forming the Gospel Coalition—theological seminary open courseware projects offering free online access to course materials, mp3s, articles, and discipleship materials. In the Pentecostal camp, Lee University has begun to offer audio on several courses, and the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary freely provides

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[8] MIT OpenCourseWare, Our History, accessed February 4, 2016, http://ocw.mit.edu/about/our-history/.

mp3s through ITunesU for courses on Apologetics and AG History and Polity. North Central University offers free downloads of chapel services. Further work can be done in this regard.

5. <u>Learning object repositories and portals</u> are closely related to open courseware. While open courseware projects focus heavily on entire courses of study, learning objects are smaller pieces like case studies, short videos, audio, animation, or text that can be reused in other learning environments than those they were originally created for. Learning object repositories and portals like the popular Merlot allow for the sharing of resources across traditional institutional boundaries. Teachers, students, and users can upload, download, use, and often reconfigure free bite-sized chunks of learning resources. The Pneuma Foundation,[9] the Discipleship Ministries of the Assemblies of God,[10] and the Assemblies of God Youth Ministries site[11] are examples of online portals for free Pentecostal learning resources. The Assemblies of God, Northern California and Nevada District Web site provides links to free Bible studies on life issues. Several non-Pentecostal projects include the American Academy of Religion's "Syllabus Project", which is a repository of syllabi dealing with religion, and the NT Gateway, a portal organizing and representing online learning resources for study of the New Testament. Nearly every website that exists is itself a repository or portal to information freely available online. What makes these new portals and learning object repositories different is that they are often user-created, user-rated, user-commented, and user-centered. This makes every user a guide and contributor in the learning process. This open constructivist environment is all-too-often missing in Pentecostal online portals and repositories, which are typically administered and managed top-down with little ability for collaboration or input from users.

6. <u>Learner participation in open information communities</u> is what makes great Web tools and services successful in terms of ubiquity of use. Online text-based forums, wikis, and audio forums (with group interaction) using tools like Voxopop, Wikispaces, or Skype allow for learners to engage one another beyond asynchronous communication. Now people can collaborate and learn together, talk across the world for free, and create video learning resources and post these on YouTube or write books and articles and post them on Scribd. These tools are all about user control of

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[9] The Pneuma Foundation: Resources for Spirit-Empowered Ministry, accessed February 4, 2016, http://www.pneumafoundation.org/.

[10] Assemblies of God USA, AG Discipleship Ministries Agency, accessed February 4, 2016, http://discipleship.ag.org/.

[11] Assemblies of God USA, National Youth Ministries, accessed February 4, 2016, http://youth.ag.org/.

user-created content. More people than ever before are willing to participate in the creation and distribution of learning resources, freely volunteering their time and energy and creating communities that learn and teach together (take Wikipedia as an example). Pentecostals are no exception. North Central University's Brian Pingel teaches youth development classes as his day job, and uses blogs to discuss and develop ideas on youth ministry with those in the Christian community. This provides both a resource for emerging youth leaders, and a nonformal constructivist learning environment in which all can be collaborators and disciples. In Pingel's words: "My goal with my blogs is to throw out a thought so we can wrestle with it together."[12] Open information communities can also function as spaces for growing, particularly for users who are young. Online spaces may be used by adolescents as transitional spaces where they may construct "religious autobiographies" which may in turn also help to "restructure other people's preconceived ideas about Christian lifestyles and beliefs."[13] These spaces can help to empower disciples who are discipling disciples without the presence of a "sage on the stage." The interactive Web has the character of "becoming," and dovetails well with the Pentecostal emphasis on the value of every individual's voice in the community of faith, the prophethood of all believers.

7. <u>Electronic collaboration</u> across the globe is made possible by free tools like Skype (voice over internet), Adobe Connect (online conferencing), UStream (online streaming Web video), Flickr (digital images), Facebook (connecting with friends online), Twitter (online microblogging), and Google docs (online group document development). Text, audio, video and interactive animations can be shared across the internet freely. Discipleship and religious education can now take place through media that allows for greater distance in time and space and for greater connectedness across these distances which also allows for synchronous discussion and for more constructivist learning pedagogies. The pastor of a church in northwestern Minnesota can use Facebook as a discussion forum for a group of pastors in his region to grow together, he can use E-mail throughout the day to encourage members of his congregation, he can collaborate with bloggers on Bible.org around theological topics, and be a frequent personal blogger who uses his blog as a platform for communicating difficult ideas and current thoughts to friends (and

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[12] The Center for Youth and Leadership, Brian Pingel, accessed February 13, 2010, http://www.youthand leadership.com/blog/brian-pingel.

[13] Lövheim, Mia, "Young People and the Use of the Internet as Transitional Space." Online – Heidelberg Journal of Religions on the Internet, Ed. Oliver Krüger, (2005), accessed February 4, 2016, http://archiv.ub.uniheidelberg.de/volltextserver /5826/1/Loevheim3.pdf.

sometimes enemies) from as far away as Australia.[14] These forms of discipleship may help to foster a "co-discipleship" form of ministry in which collaboration occurs to the benefit of all. Some of this is not "intentional" discipleship, but rather serves as resources or tools to expand knowledge and encouragement across boundaries of time and space.

8. <u>Alternate reality learning</u> is one further step in the direction of virtual electronic collaboration. There have been Evangelical and Pentecostal churches with a presence in virtual 3D online spaces, using various delivery platforms to build relationships and bring people into contact with Christ, streaming broadcasts of their worship services, discipleship materials, and interaction with staff in a virtual environment. Second Life is one such place for exploration and creation, for imagination and visualization. Anything you can think of, you can build. Unfortunately, many spaces in the virtual world are filled with pornography and corrupt content. But educational institutions and organizations have made vast forays into virtual worlds and MOOGs (massively multiplayer online games) to create spaces for learning and collaboration. These spaces are akin to the use of other Web technologies by organizations in the mid-90's. You may ask, "What place is there for Pentecostals in a virtual world inhabited by sinners?" The question rather answers itself.

9. <u>Real-time mobility and portability</u> allow religious educational resources to be available at all times in all locations. Podcasts and MP3s from major Pentecostal seminaries are freely available online at ITunesU, Pentecostal-related video resources are available to watch on YouTube, and tools like Facebook, blogs, and text messaging allow for personal contact with fellow disciples throughout the day. This is an area where the greatest impact is perhaps possible. While much of the world has access to mobile phones, many are not able to access a desktop computer. The mobile phone or device may become a portal for religious education and discipleship through the tools just mentioned and others yet to be invented. This can allow for 24-hour access to resources for those on the other side of the digital divide. Education resources could be made available globally free of charge, and could be translated into major languages. Currently, to my knowledge, there is very little concerted effort on the part of Pentecostals to provide these kinds of mobile open educational resources to global non-English-speaking audiences.

10. <u>Networks of personalized learning</u> are everywhere online. Blogs, social networks, and wikis are all being used by Pentecostals for discipleship and educational purposes. People who are connecting in order

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[14] Rick Wadholm, Jr., interview with author, October 3, 2009.

to teach and learn are not necessarily looking for new tools, they are looking for other people with whom to learn. They are looking for value in content, for ideas worth thinking about, for scholarship and mentoring and wisdom. H-Pentecostalism,[15] a network of Pentecostal scholars and students, is one such platform for collaboration and dialogue. Pentecostals should seek to utilize the tools people are already using, the free tools that are easy to use and which allow for greater amounts of collaboration. Blogs can be an excellent start, allowing Pentecostals a forum for discussing and collaborating around subjects important to them while remaining open to the world community.[16]

Conclusions

What is the future of e-learning and teaching in Pentecostal circles? Discipleship in a busy and often borderless world requires attention to the tools and resources of a global online culture. This culture has become increasingly open and participatory, allowing Pentecostals to leverage modern technologies in the extension of collaborative Christian education throughout the world. Limitations or dangers with using the Web for discipleship and Christian education are fourfold:

1. Web tools ought not be thought of or used as the sole means of discipleship. Their utility lies in their ability to freely and openly extend discipleship and Christian education, not in their ability to replace communities of faith with digital equivalents. In the end, the community of faith is composed of the people of faith, not the tools or spaces in their employ.

2. If we focus too much on the technology, we may lose sight of the *people*.

3. It can be difficult to know where to start, particularly for those who feel "technologically challenged." Some easy ways to get involved include contributing to a blog, joining an online community and using it to discuss a topic pertinent to the faith, and uploading personal instructional content to the Web to make it freely available to everyone.

4. There are better things to do with your life (most of the Web is a waste of time—make your piece of the Web worthwhile).

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[15] H-Net, H-Pentecostalism, February 13, 2010, accessed February 4, 2016, https://networks.h-net.org/h-pentecostalism.

[16] Tatum, Richard A., "Top 20 Bloggers (PneumaBloggers, that is)," BlogRodent, April 10, 2007, accessed February 4, 2016, http://tatumweb.com/blog/2007/04/10/top-twenty/.

The interactive Web is just another fad, and this fad, like others, will eventually go away. But the openness that has become taken for granted in the world of information and online learning is a furtive ground for engagement in discipleship activities. It is not the be all and end all, nor the "One ring to rule them all." But it is a world changer that should be taken advantage of. Participation is now free and open. While discipleship is not merely education plain and simple, it is the creation of a participatory community of learning. And today's technologies offer many interesting and unique opportunities for creating, fostering, and engaging these communities of learning. We now have tools at our disposal that open up the world of teaching and learning, allowing us to offer Pentecostal education freely and openly. Will you freely give

BOOK REVIEWS

Karen H. Jobes. *1, 2, and 3 John*. Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Volume 19. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. 358 pp. $27.44. Hardcover. ISBN: 0310244161.

Karen Jobes' *1, 2, & 3 John* serves as the nineteenth volume of the Zondervan Exegetical Commentary series on the New Testament. This work, designed for pastors and general students of the Bible, examines the Greek text and provides readers with graphically structured translations, highlighting various interpretive decisions made by the author in explaining the material. The translations, which present analysis of the text at the clausal/phrasal level, provide labels that note the function of each clause/phrase. Students of linguistics may be disappointed to discover that the commentary does not use technical linguistic categories but aims to be accessible for those who lack formal experience in the study of linguistics.

In order for readers to understand how the commentary approaches the Johannine Epistles, the book provides four distinctive features to the study of these letters: (1) assumption of a common authorship (or authorship by close associates) of the Fourth Gospel and the letters, (2) assumption of John's gospel providing an interpretive framework for the epistles, (3) the lack of assumption regarding an extended compositional history of the Gospel of John, distancing itself from speculations that lead to the (re-)construction of the Johannine community, and (4) the lack of reconstruction of particular heresies faced by the original churches addressed in the Johannine epistles. The lack of reconstruction of specific heresies provides a great foundation for the "Theology in Application" sections that conclude the discussions of each portion of Scripture after its examination. These sections provide practical principles for balancing the call to walk in truth with loving those who do not. The general contents of the book provide the foundation for such an application.

Throughout the commentary, Jobes directs the reader's attention to the concept of truth in 1–3 John. In her explanation of the first four verses of 1 John, she discusses "The Problem of Truth in an Age of Relativism." As she approaches the next six verses, she provides a small excursus on the concept of truth in the epistles. As the commentary moves through the remainder of 1 John, Jobes highlights how the continued discussion expands upon John's assertion where he argues that those who confess fellowship with Christ, while walking in darkness, lie and do not do the truth. Even in sections of 1 John where Jobes does not explicitly discuss truth, she presents applications of the text related to the topic of truth.

The commentary moves on to 2 and 3 John. Jobes notes that approximately the first quarter of 2 John focuses on the concept of truth, which leads into later sections that discuss living out the truth and appropriate responses to those who do not. As she concludes her study of the Johannine Epistles with her study of 3 John, she notes that the letter opens regarding the idea of "the truth." Jobes ultimately discusses the idea that "love doesn't trump truth," highlighting the lack of love demonstrated by those who encourage individuals to live in a manner contradictory to God's word. Given the commentary's review of the topic of truth in the Johannine epistles, Jobes reminds readers that the truth claim itself does not come from the believer, but from Christ. As a result, she encourages readers to stand upon the truth of God's word and walk in Christ's love.

The commentary's content presents multiple strengths of the book. The study of similarities among the Johannine Epistles and the study of grammatical features/patterns within the Greek text of each epistle provide support for the discussions presented in the commentary. The commentary utilizes the similarities among the texts of the Johannine Epistles to center the discussion of the epistles on the idea of living by/walking in the truth. Jobes notes this as a common topic among the epistles.

In addition to identifying a common theme among the letters, the study of grammar in the commentary reveals that the forms of words can directly impact how a modern reader understands the structure of the text. One example appears in the commentary's discussion of 1 John 2:12-14. Jobes notes the shift in tense-form divides the text into two stanzas, while the English translation of the verbs in question presents them both in the present tense, despite the variation in the Greek text. Such observation highlights what Jobes identifies as the "rhetorical effect" of tense shifts.

Though this work has significant strengths that aid in providing information regarding how readers should understand the Johannine letters, the commentary lacks clarity concerning the methodology used to

present the material within. Concerning the structure of 1 John, the commentary cites the works of John Callow and Jeffrey E. Brickle but notes that the outline presented results from various methodologies and the author's understanding of the text. As a result, there does not appear to be any objective criteria used to develop the provided outline.

Though smaller writings, the foundations for the outlines of 2 John and 3 John are just as unclear. While the commentary does not discuss the structure of 2 John, it makes an appeal to classical Greco-Roman rhetoric, conventions of Hellenistic letter writing, and principles of an unidentified form of discourse analysis to provide a basis for the structure of 3 John. At the same time, no details discuss how these varied forms of analysis contribute to the outline of 3 John provided.

Jobes' work provides a healthy biblical balance to those within the Pentecostal/Charismatic tradition. While this tradition encourages people to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit—something that all believers should do—Jobes reminds readers of the agreement between the Spirit's present-day work and the testimony of Scripture. The commentary later highlights the role of the Spirit in discerning between truth and heresy, since not all spirits are of God. Ultimately, the commentary reminds readers of the importance of living a life transformed by the Spirit. Such a work reminds Pentecostals of the multi-dimensional work of the Spirit, as explained in the epistles of John, and encourages readers to be open to the fullness of the Spirit's work.

Though related to the weaknesses noted, this work appeals to some more recently developed approaches in the study of language and linguistics to study the text of the Johannine epistles. It will ultimately draw the attention of those interested in Johannine theology and the topic of how Christians should conduct themselves in an age when there is a cultural shift from Christianity as the cultural majority.

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Yong, Amos. *The Dialogical Spirit: Christian Reason and Theological Method in the Third Millennium*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers; Cascade Books, 2014. 352 pp. $31.20. Paperback. ISBN: 9781625645647.

Yong, Amos. *The Missiological Spirit: Christian Mission Theology in the Third Millennium Global Context*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers; Cascade Books, 2014. 292 pp. $26.40. Paperback. ISBN: 9781625646705.

Amos Yong's 2014 two-volume companion set, *The Dialogical Spirit* (DS) and *The Missiological Spirit* (MS), provides an autobiographically structured context for comprehending his theological vision and projects, vis-á-vis methodical reflection on two dozen of his past essays written over the past decade and half (2000-2014).

Two broad purposes thematise both books; one latent, and the other more explicit. First, through both books Yong strives to demonstrate the ongoing and foreseeably long-term relevancy to his base theological project initiated with his 2002 publication of *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective*. Hence, explicitly funding the respective thrust and issues specific to each book is Yong's long-standing Third Article ("pneumatological starting point"), Trinitarian, and philosophically-*Peircean* and Gelpian (Charles S. Peirce; Donald L. Gelpi) informed theological method—summarized in his seminally articulated concepts, "foundational pneumatology" and the "pneumatological imagination." For this two volume set, Yong conceptualizes these concepts as the "pneumato-theological imagination," thereby resulting in a "pneumato-theological methodology" (DS, p. 15;

MS, p. 225). Meanwhile, the book titles infer the more specific purposes with correlating aims respectively pursued within the two companion volumes, which I will mention further along in this discussion.

Yong's second broad purpose is to clarify how his project effectively addresses the emerging 21st century global contemporary context and challenges, which throughout both books he consistently assesses as post-Enlightenment, post-foundationalist, post-Christendom, postsecular, postmodern, post-Christian, post-Western, postcolonial, and global-pluralistic (hereafter I will refer to this context as the "21st century global post- context"). Hence, within this global post- context, Yong consistently argues how his project provides expedient resources towards on one hand (*The Dialogical Spirit*), the Christian task of theological construction and reasoning, and on the other (*The Missiological Spirit*), the task of constructing "mission theology," which comprises the task of theologizing, albeit from missiological perspectives.

Both books are similarly structured, each comprised of an introduction followed by 12 chapters more or less chronologically ordered while also categorized into four thematic parts, followed by a conclusion. This ordering thus enables a biographical structure to each book, which conversely enable readers to trace the historical development of Yong's theological thinking. By doing so, Yong also strives to model for the reader, a "biographical and narrative dimension" to theological construction, which Yong suggests as essential for theologizing (DS, p. 2) and missiological reflection (MS, pp. 2-3) in the 21st century global post- context.

Moving on to specifics of *The Dialogical Spirit*, Yong argues that the "pneumatological imagination" emerging from Third Article and Trinitarian theological reflection points us towards a "dialogical approach" to theological engagement with and contextually within the 21st century global post- context. Yong's 12 chapters effectively exemplify this dialogical approach given that each essay comprises engagement with different "conversation partners." Hence, the 12 chapters exemplify theologically motivated dialogue with 12 "interlocutors," both within and outside the Christian faith, representing an array of disciplines (e.g., philosophy, science, anthropology, religion, etc.).

The four parts ordering the DS chapters identify four broad challenges Yong identifies as characterizing the 21st century global post- context, while simultaneously suggesting four dialogically patterned strategies for theologizing. Titled "The Postfoundationalist Turn: Epistemology and Theology after the Enlightenment," Part I thus exemplifies dialogues with

Charles Sanders Peirce (ch. 1), Richard Rorty (ch. 2) and Donald L. Gelpi, S.J.) (2001-2002). Yong argues that the "pneumatological imagination" suggests we acknowledge a "set of . . . shifting foundations" that establishes "a multiplicity of starting points any dialogical encounter must be prepared to engage" (p. 3). Part II, "The Post-Christendom Era and the Pentecostal Retrieval," dialogues with James William McClendon Jr. (ch. 4), Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen (ch. 5), and James K. A. Smith (ch. 6) (2007; 2002-2007). Here Yong suggests that our Post-Christendom era calls for developing pentecostal theology that is globally informed, though "not in the sense of being politically hegemonic," but rather in terms of being informed by the vast "plurality of voices" that may be retrieved worldwide (p. 7). In Part III, "The Postsecular Milieu: Theology Meets Science and Religions," Yong converses with science-theologian John Polkinghorne (ch. 7), and two Buddhists who have extensively explored convergences between current scientific scholarship and Buddhist tradition, namely, His Holiness the Dalai Lama (ch. 8) and B. Alan Wallace (ch. 9) (2005-2011). Here Yong thus demonstrates how pneumatological and Trinitarian grounded theological methods may be dialogically interfaced with current scientific explorations. Yong further argues that our postsecular era enjoins our willingness to dialogue with other religious traditions in their own respective dialogues with current scientific advances, such as notably demonstrated by Buddhist scholarship.

Finally, in Part IV, "The Postmodern Situation: Pluralism and Theology in Global Context," Yong converses with Jesuit Hindologist Francis X. Clooney (ch. 10), Dutch Reformed anthropologist André Drooger (ch. 11), and Reformed missiologist Benno van den Toren (ch. 12) (2012). Here Yong argues for a Christian approach to religious pluralism, interfaith encounter and interreligious dialogue in manners that faithfully witness "universal truth claims" emerging from the gospel, while conversely practicing a genuinely listening engagement with other religious traditions, that thereby creates a revisional space for mutual growth towards understanding one another.

As the title of the companion volume suggests, *The Missiological Spirit* appropriates the major DS themes to more specific missiological concerns. Yet rather than striving towards a "theology of mission," Yong focuses what he sees as more historically needful tasks; namely, to reconsider "Christian theology from missiological or missional perspective," thus articulating "what might be called *mission theology*" (MS, p. 1). Comprehending Yong's discussions requires attention to this distinction he makes as together they are weaved throughout the volume as two complementary yet different threads. He thus conveys "Christian theology of Mission" as "the theological framework for thinking about Christian

mission," and the latter as referring to "the missional dimensions of Christian theology" (MS, p. 223). Within Yong's vision, animating both threads is the "missiological spirit," which thus frames both disciplines from his Third Article "pneumatological starting point." Yong's thesis is that foray towards the missiological challenges posed by our 21st century global post- context, is best found in the "pneumatological imagination derived from the Day of Pentecostal narrative," which "can not only inspire more faithful Christian witness but also be a resource for Christian theology of mission and mission theology for the third millennium" (MS, p. 2). Describing this "pentecostally-inspired missiological posture" as the "pneumato-missiological imagination," thereby projecting a "pneumatologically formulated missiology" (MS, p. 2), Yong argues that only such "can secure the Trinitarian vison that empowers missional performance [comprising recognition to the "many practices" implicit within this "posture"; see MS, pp. 229-230] amidst the many tongues of the many missionary contexts" (MS, p. 15).

Similar to the structure of DS, the titles to the four parts of MS and their respective chapters, explicate four broad discussions emerging from Yong's thesis, while also chronologically narrating development of his missiological thinking over the past decade and a half (2002-2015). In Part I ("Reluctant Missiology: Indirect Missiological Reflection"; chs. 1-3; 2002-2005), Yong narrates his earlier work primarily within more systematic theological concerns albeit noting their eventual spillovers towards forming more explicit missiological dimensions within his theological vision. In Part II ("Pentecostal Missiology: Pragmatic Mission Theology"; chs. 4-6; 2007-2010), Yong explicates major themes that have continued to characterize his construction of Christian missiology from a Pentecostal perspective. In Part III ("North American Missiology: Theology of Mission Post-Christendom"; chs. 7-9; 2008-2010), Yong suggests in response to the 21st century global post- context, missiological insights emerging from his own "diasporic identity as a Malaysian born, 1.5 generation Asian American theologian." Finally, Part IV ("Systematic Missiology: Notes for a Christian Missiological Theology"; chs. 10-12; 2011-2014), points more towards Yong's future forays into mission theology, providing rudimentary sketches towards what he envisions as a "missiological theology," robustly informed by his past work as a systematic theologian. The envisioned outcome will be a mutually informing symbiosis between systematic theological reflection and "missiological theology," thus leading to a "systematically, structured-theological framework for Christian missiology" (MS, pp. 13-14).

In order to best assess strengths and weakness to Yong's DS and MS book set, it helps to first establish his intended audience, and thereby also assess

its appropriate role within the fields of theological and missiological reflection towards the 21st century global post- context. As primarily an autobiographically structured collection of previously published essays, the book-set seems primarily written for readers fairly initiated into Yong's writings and theological projects. On the other hand, the set can function as an introductory reader into Yong's theological/missiological projects and vision, presuming they have or are acquiring some rudimentary grasp of theological reflection and methodologies, and also with systematic theology.

With this in mind, the book-set also gives a clear window on one hand into Yong's own retrospective assessment of his work thus far and on the other, emerging directions to his theological and increasingly missiological nuanced life work. This is especially evident given his 2014 shift from Regent University to the Fuller Seminary School of Intercultural Studies (SIS), where he now serves as director of both Fuller's Center for Missiological Research and SIS's PhD program in intercultural studies (DS, p. xii). Hence, this interpreted compilation of key articles from Yong's past writings effectively surveys Yong's expansive theological projects, all emerging from his base Pentecostal intuitions and seminal concept of the pneumatological imagination. Therefore, another strength to Yong's book-set is that it provides an exemplary resource for following his cue towards Pentecostal theologizing in manners that reinvigorate Christian theology as indeed "mission theology," wholly contextual to our 21st century global post- challenges.

I will mention two weakness I find to Yong's book-set, with the hope that perhaps further editions may rectify these. First, given the sustained role that his original theological-hermeneutical methodology plays within the compiled essays and introductory and concluding discussions, it would be helpful had Yong included a more expansive summary of the theological method developed from his 2002 *Spirit-Word-Community* work. Second, recognizing Yong as perhaps the most prolifically published writer within contemporary Pentecostal scholarship, I feel the overall autobiographical thrust of the set would be better substantiated, had he in some manner provided referential engagement with his diverse book-length works. For instance, perhaps each chapter could include an annotated note, referencing the reader to relevant books or edited book-length volumes.

In view of Yong's targeted readership and the book-sets' sophisticated scholarship, Pentecostal educators can approach this book-set as a valuable graduate-level resource and reader in the areas of Pentecostal theological method and Pentecostal missiology, and also as a reader

granting an introductory analysis of Yong's theological-missiological vision and projects.

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Amy S. Anderson. *When You Come Together*. Minneapolis, MN: Being Church, 2010. x + 209 pp. $14.99. Paperback. ISBN: 9780982901007.

Via her multi-cultural ministry perspective, Anderson rethinks the structures and organization of worship in her book *When You Come Together*. Recommended by trusted colleagues in University ministry prior to my reading, this book re-centers the reader's view of modern worship settings around ancient, biblical radii in the hopes of true expressions of faith. Her expressed consultation with both colleagues and students on the topic adds gravity to her exploration.

There exists a clear delineation between the sound theory of the beginning chapters and the commonsense practice of leading the changes the book suggests. Chapters 1-6 addresses the theory, while 7-10 the engagement of practice. Chapter order was well thought out, sequentially building a case for the thesis. The footnotes elevated this already accessible book to become an assured resource.

While deconstructing the terminology that infers the heritage of early 20th-century Pentecostalism, Anderson recreates a working vocabulary that the greenest newcomer to charismatic circles can relate to and grasp. Foundational elements of worship are highlighted in the first two chapters, creating a broad opportunity for readers of all walks of Christ to recognize patterns of Pentecostal experience. Anderson's approachable exposition of Paul's various ad hoc lists of charismata inspires the reader towards validation of the desired relationship between the present day believer and God, the giver of said gifts.

The third chapter focuses on leadership and implies a sense that the equipping of faith communities has been lacking for some time in modern Christian movements. Anderson applies the foundational qualification of priesthood upon those taking part in worship experiences. Further, she challenges popular ideas on leadership, and encourages the reader to take a source interest in intentional, biblical forms of gathering.

The central proposition, inspiring the title of the book, is found in 1 Corinthians 14:26. Unearthed in chapters four and five is a reworking of the concept of how the church meets, and questions the implied traditional boundaries adopted in present Christianity. Anderson contends for believers meeting together, rather than living in solitude, and develops from a European perspective a way of engaging others in conversation and faith.

She shares that from the beginnings of faith, the church had gathered as a body where the giftings and leadership from the previous chapters could then be called to fruition. Order, pattern, and unity are accentuated along with the responsibility of church leadership to guide others toward a healthy model of meeting together. In the idea of family, however, Anderson foreshadows the formation of a healthy faith community that she adheres to most by addressing the unstructured time spent with family members.

Musical metaphor creates a relatable dialogue in chapter six in which Anderson demonstrates three different models of worship gatherings: concert, symphony, and jazz. Despite her difficulty in appreciating jazz as music, she dives past the aesthetics into the dynamic structure between the players, and then addresses the worship gathering as housing for said dynamics. Guided by a leader, sharing a common thread of spirit, creativity and interaction between God and his people, manifestation of the gifts occurs, fulfilling the construct that *When We Come Together,* all have something to share.

A look at basic sociology and the way that groups are formed and develops is also included in chapter six. The pattern of *routinization* is illustrated with a round chart depicting a cycle of growth that could result in discipleship and challenge, yet often times results in stagnation. Accentuating a re-focus on God himself, the remedy that Anderson prescribes for stagnation is not found within adhering to a specific tradition, liturgy, or energy level of worship. She again makes a strong case for the reader to seek the revelation of God found within the worship experience. Anderson closes this chapter with the aforementioned idea that any church can be Pentecostal, which separates the experience from the organization so as to liberate and celebrate moves of the spirit irrespective of denominational affiliation.

Anderson revisits the idea of Pastor as instigator of change in Chapter 7, affirming strategy and patience as well as skill in teaching as ground attributes to strive after as leaders. She values both depth and breadth in vision referencing that the small beginnings of new faith communities are

primed for growth because of healthy modeling and following of the jazz theory previously posited.

Her first of the most extensive chapters of the book concerns the role of the worship leader in order to compel the reader towards a union of praxis and theory. Pragmatic in method, Anderson cites volume, song choice, tone, and setting as elements that require the attention of worship leaders in today's churches. Musicality is not the driving factor in her pursuit of her muse. Pastoring the people and preparation of the faith community are far dearer to her heart, speaking to the necessity of team focus and spiritual sensitivity so that all can worship regardless of their talent level.

Rounding out her thoughts on worship, Anderson continues her effort toward a worshipping faith community by asking questions of assumed elements of worship. Non-instrumental worship, empowering those not in recognized leadership positions, as well as simply sitting in silence to hear the voice of God are invaluable ideas brought to light through her asking thoughtful and difficult questions about our current formations.

The bibliography challenges the reader to educate themselves on worship experiences, and to develop a theology that is more conducive to the inclusion of other worshippers. Her notes following each title provide guidance on how to receive the author's perceptions. The heading notes under the categories of reading are particularly helpful when regarding responses to emerging culture.

Anderson qualifies her book as the beginning of a search for true, engaging worship experiences, while not claiming to be the definitive guide to it. This book is a catalyst for dialog between those craving change and those who are comfortable with the norm. Students and practitioners alike can appreciate the heart of Anderson, as her writing is inviting and conversational. Recommended for charismatic education and to an evangelical audience associated with Pentecostal worship experience. This book was written in 2010, yet should be discovered today and perhaps on an annual basis.

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David A. deSilva. *Unholy Allegiances: Heeding Revelation's Warning*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2013. xvi + 132 pp. $19.95. Paperback. ISBN: 9781619701410.

If you are looking for the latest version of blood-moon-mania, you will be left behind by *Unholy Allegiances*. This work, brief but powerful, is written by David A. deSilva, the Trustees' Distinguished Professor of New Testament and Greek at Ashland Theological Seminary. Although originally designed for pastors and laypersons, it will be useful for Pentecostal educators, seeing that eschatology is prevalent in classroom conversations. A more detailed presentation of deSilva's views can be found in *Seeing Things John's Way: The Rhetoric of the Book of Revelation* (Louisville, KY: WJKP, 2009).

DeSilva's work, divided into five chapters, challenges people preoccupied with speculative theories of the apocalypse. He writes for those dissatisfied with "prophecy experts" who read Revelation as "a Christian Ouija board for prognosticating the future" (p. xi). Instead, he advises readers to hear John as the Christians living in the original seven churches, those located in the idolatrous, Roman societies of Asia Minor, would have heard him. How did John, he asks, challenge his original audience? Only when this question is tackled can we interpret John's prophecy for a contemporary audience.

In chapter one, deSilva presents three common myths regarding Revelation: 1) Revelation is about *us*, 2) What Revelation reveals is *our future*, and 3) Revelation is written in a mysterious code (emphasis his). Discussing myth 1, he reminds us that Revelation is a letter addressed to seven real, historical churches living in specific contexts. It was a pastoral letter, written to evoke a response from the original hearers. Regarding myth 2, deSilva notes that biblical prophecy is not always predictive in function. Reading Revelation's prophecy this way has given rise to three of the four major interpretations of Revelation: futurism, historicism, and preterism, with all three viewing the majority of events recorded in Revelation as future, at least from the time of writing. Instead, biblical

prophecy should be seen primarily as the "word of the Lord" meant to encourage or correct, not necessarily predict future events (p. 6). On myth 3, deSilva challenges the idea that Revelation contains mysterious codes within its pages, only to be decoded by later generations. Rather, it was a *revelation* that employed symbolic language and images to disclose God's present purposes for the world and the people in it, including believers— faithful and unfaithful alike. Revelation's symbolic language "lifted the veil" and helped Christians interpret their specific contexts, allowing them to understand how their story fit into God's sovereign plan (p. 9). John's audience would have recognized much of this language, since it was largely drawn from the Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic literature. The use of symbols and images has led some to read Revelation spiritually or allegorically, which is the thinking behind idealism, the fourth major interpretation of Revelation. DeSilva disapproves of this approach, rejecting its overemphasis on timeless truths instead of focusing on Revelation's historical context.

Next, deSilva presents two different stories in chapters two and three. The first story involves imperial Rome, which saw itself as the center of the world with its own version of manifest destiny. Rome, as all pagan societies, had little room for the God of Israel. It was a wealthy, idolatrous society with an imperial cult worshiping its own gods. Rome had its own sacred calendars, filled with blasphemous celebrations, and its own savior—the emperor and 'lord of lords,' who established an unholy peace and spread his own good news. Living in this society, with its promise of peace and prosperity, presented Christians with many challenges and temptations. The second story is a vision from heaven, where God's throne is central, not Rome. "God and the Lamb" have authority here, not Rome's emperor (p. 22). In this vision there are great heavenly multitudes offering continual worship to God and the Lamb, surrounded by "every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea" (p. 37). This vision reminded the first-century Christians that they belonged to this multitude. They were the minority in Roman society, but from God's viewpoint, they were part of the heavenly majority. John's vision, sprinkled heavily with Old Testament imagery, put things in right perspective. It reframed his audience's situation by anchoring it within the traditions of Israel, inviting them to see their story from God's perspective.

In the fourth chapter, deSilva examines some of the specific challenges that faced the original seven churches. Among them is included an exhortation to remain faithful until Christ's second coming. There could be no *unholy allegiance* with the sinful, idolatrous world around them. Christians were called to complete faithfulness. The return of Christ was imminent and the church's "greatest threat" was to be "found unprepared"

at his coming (p. 79). But John also reminded them of a more immediate concern. The same Christ who promised to return was already present "in the midst of his churches," promising "swift judgment" on the unrepentant (pp. 80-81). It was a stern warning that exhorted the faithful to remain steadfast and urged the wayward to repentance. DeSilva then offers a few practical steps for contemporary readers. Here he presents a series of questions to guide us while interpreting Revelation's message for today. We, like John's original audience, are called to experience our own "apocalyptic adjustment" (p. 97). John's vision helps us interpret our everyday realities—be it social, economic, religious, etc.—with its challenge to remain faithful in our own idolatrous society.

The final chapter presents Revelation as a "brilliant, creative work of theology," written in conversation with the traditions of Israel (p. 106). DeSilva notes many parallels between Revelation and the Old Testament, especially from Exodus. He reminds us that John, in echoing the Exodus story, proclaimed God alone as worthy of worship. This God, who opposed Egypt many centuries before, will ultimately bring an end to Rome's violent oppression, severe injustice, and imperial idolatry. He will deliver his people. His reign promises justice and vindication for all who remain faithful to God and the Lamb. Not even death, according to John's vision, can hinder God's reign and his righteous plans and purposes for his people. The God of Israel is sovereign over all mankind. Before concluding, deSilva reminds contemporary readers of the fear and judgement of God. This "other side of God," as deSilva terms it, is often neglected or suppressed by modern American Christians (p. 122). But John's vision, as well as the testimony from both testaments, informs us that our God is a holy God. DeSilva challenges us to remember that we serve *this* God, who holds us all accountable.

My only concern with *Unholy Allegiances* involves how Revelation was received by those in the early church, many who viewed *most* of the events recorded in Revelation as predictive or, at least, having implications for future events (Irenaeus, Melito of Sardis, etc.). Although deSilva discusses how the Old Testament and Jewish apocalyptic literature shaped Revelation's message, he does not discuss how Revelation influenced some of the early Church Father's theology. But overall this is an excellent work. It is well written and clearly presented, including thirty-plus illustrations and maps. *Unholy Allegiances* is much needed in our day, where confusion exists about eschatology, with new apocalyptic theories arrive on the shelves of bookstores every week. DeSilva has reclaimed Revelation from the so-called prophecy experts, demonstrating its prophetic relevance for all generations. Instead of offering a new take on Revelation, he thunders away with the voice of a Sunday morning

preacher, exhorting Christians to remember their first love. His scholarship challenges the way many of us live in the world today. Perhaps this is the best kind of scholarship.

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Joanne G. Jung. Character Formation in Online Education: A Guide for Instructors, Administrators, and Accrediting Agencies. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015. 142 pp. $16.99. Paperback. ISBN: 9780310520306.

Character formation in online learning is a complex problem, calling for an integration of the theories and practices of technologically mediated pedagogy along with a focus on the transformation of the inward self of the student. First, we must know what character is, and how it is formed in general, and then we must lay out a framework for its development (and assessment of its development) through a specific medium that lacks physical proximity. From a Christian perspective this is even more complex, as the transformation of the self is not a mere act of volition or reflection on the part of the student, nor is it only a crafting of the learning process by the instructor. Joanne G. Jung's *Character Formation in Online Education* is a very simple book, given the complexity of the task, and unfortunately reads like a compendium of very loosely connected blog posts rather than a book intended for academic readers. Jung's focus on the importance of pedagogy and passion, off- and online, are welcome, but the text has no explicit underlying framework, is too diffuse in its audience, and suffers from jarring transitions and the overuse of long lists and simplistic explanations.

I appreciate Jung's emphases on the relational, experiential and personal sides of learning, and how these may affect character formation. Jung posits that transformation requires relationships, and relationships are fostered in an online environment through "purposeful assignments, meaningful feedback, discussion prompts, personal interaction, video conferences, and collaborative documents" as well as through social media (p. 104). Character formation is "aligned" with spiritual formation, but the two terms are also used interchangeably. For Jung, "character is more than an outward, behavioral, or moral change" and is instead who one is, and who one is becoming (p. 15). She states that "evidence of student spiritual growth can be archived, reviewed, appraised, and shared between

colleagues" (p. 23). To me, this seems to be a gross oversimplification of character formation and spiritual growth.

Further, lack of a clearly explicated fundamental framework makes the organization of this book difficult to discern. For instance, in the first section, "Rising to the Challenge," Jung describes "qualifications" of a successful online professor. But here, the first two qualifications are virtually the same in nature, and could be summarized as "communicate effectively." For the next three qualifications, an effective online instructor is said to think about the learner, be clear, and build relationships. From there, and with little to no transition, Jung takes the reader through a brief tour of a modern Learning Management System with its various functions. The move from focusing on clear and effective teacher communication to use of a tool is a bit jarring, and leaves out any hint at a fundamental framework for addressing either communication or tool use.

Another problem in this book is its diffuse audience. For example, in chapter three, there is a sharp turn in intended audience, as the book unexpectedly changes focus from instructors to instructional designers, a role that Jung calls "course designers," listing qualifications for such a role. Who is this list for? Why is it included here? Is Jung suddenly talking to administrators, or is she letting instructors know what makes a good instructional designer (so they know it when they see one—but what use would that be?), or is it to inform instructional designers about their own jobs (for which they likely have degrees)? When, in the same chapter, Jung turns unexpectedly to topics such as faculty development, or a checklist for course content, I again find myself asking about the intended audience. This is not informative for accrediting agencies, which are an explicit audience of the book, since it seems to be pulled directly from an accrediting agency's list of items to address when a school is being evaluated. Is this for school administrators, allowing them a birds-eye view to see how the different parts of online learning systems might ideally fit together (or to fill in the blanks on their accreditors' evaluations)? Online learning directors surely have advanced education in their field, and have no need for these, so perhaps this is for administrators further up the chain? Or to inform the team below that level (for example, the faculty and tech support) about the larger picture as a kind of FYI?

Later, at the conclusion of chapter 5, a section on video conferencing unexpectedly (and without explanation) ends with a list of instruction system evaluation questions (p. 81). Why? The chapter focuses on individual instructors, and without explanation, a list of institutional assessment questions is provided, over which individual instructors have no power. Again, who is the intended audience? Strangely, in the notes

after the conclusion of the book (p. 139), Jung acknowledges that this chapter was actually written by Nancy Hoffman, who allowed Jung to adapt it for the book (why was Hoffman's name not included as an author of the book?): this chapter seems to have been written by someone else, for someone else.

In addition, Jung's explanations of character formation are overly simplistic. In the second part of the book, "Elements of Online Character Formation," Jung encourages instructors to move past technology to heart and soul, and to encourage students to put down technology and meditate away from the device, living in real communities. Reflective questions may be used to prompt students to this kind of hybrid online learning model, with character formation as the goal. I believe this is good and useful advice. We should be fostering character formation and reflection in theological education, and much of this occurs outside of the digital world. But Jung further insists that use of the word "soul" when asking reflective questions to students online "forces one to stop and think" (p. 70), and helps to develop character. Is "soul" talk the way we form character in students face to face? Is all "soul" talk even character forming (and should we instead be focusing on the work of the Spirit, rather than on ourselves)? Is it possible to have character formation without reference to the soul (for instance, philosophical naturalists may claim to have character formation)? Jung's specific encouragements make it seem as if it were the case that if an instructor adds the word "soul" to an online conversation, the level of the discussion is automatically deeper and more likely to form character in students offline. Further, what makes this kind of "character formation" Christian, and not merely philosophical or generically theistic?

I do not encourage academics to read this book. It seems to me to add nothing new to the research or the arguments for this or that pedagogical model, and is filled with truisms about teaching from the trenches while lacking substance. This book could not have been written 50 (or even 15) years ago, nor will it be helpful in another 15—it is too close to the current technological tools used in online learning, and too far from presenting an original framework for dealing with those same tools. More problematically, the text treats character formation as if it were simply a matter of relationships, and fails to thoughtfully appreciate the work of the Holy Spirit in this complex task.

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