PENTECOSTAL EDUCATION

A JOURNAL OF WAPTE
the World Alliance for Pentecostal Theological Education

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

Carl Gibbs (Africa)   Gary Seevers (North America)
Weldyn Houger (North America)

Instructions for Authors

All submissions to *Pentecostal Education* should conform to the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* including its use of footnotes for all citations. For abbreviations of biblical and other ancient material, as well as transliteration of all non-Roman scripts, see *The SBL Handbook of Style*. Manuscripts should be written in English with consistent spelling throughout and using 11.5 point Garamond, single spaced lines. Submissions should not exceed 5,000 words in length (though longer submissions may be considered). All submissions should be emailed as Word (.doc) attachments to moalvarez@msn.com. Please include a brief biographical sketch, a 100-300 word abstract, and 3-4 keywords.

Use two levels of **headings**. They should be flush left, and not numbered.

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Manuscripts which are submitted without sufficiently meeting the above criteria will be returned to the author without publication. All submissions must not be currently submitted to, or previously published by, any other journal. If accepted, the author agrees to grant the journal *Pentecostal Education* a publishing right, while the copyright of the content is held by the author. The manuscript will not be published elsewhere in any form, in English or any other language, without prior written consent of the publisher.

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Acknowledgments

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Pentecostal Education (PE) invites submissions to be published in this journal. The journal welcomes relevant studies based on experience and field-data, substantiated by literary evidence. Considering different contexts where Pentecostal life, mission, and theological education take place, your insight may be a unique contribution to many others. *PE* is also an excellent space where younger faculty members and emerging leaders to publish their studies.

PE may extend its service to various commissions of the Pentecostal World Fellowship to publish their documents and studies.

For any question, please contact the executive editor.

Please, enjoy reading!

PE Editorial Team
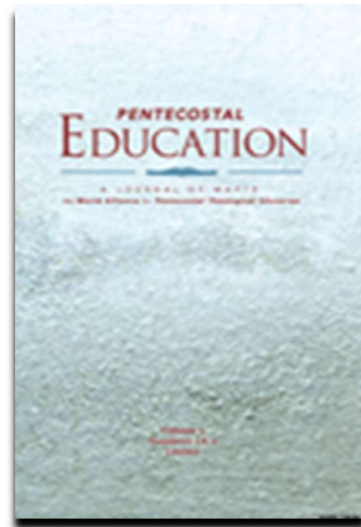
Editorial

We are glad to provide another issue of *Pentecostal Education.* Responses to previous editions have been excellent and we trust that you are finding this addition to scholarly publishing a useful and practical resource.

The work and mission of the World Alliance for Pentecostal Theological Education (WAPTE) continues to grow in scope and effectiveness. Currently a collaborative effort is taking place between WAPTE and the World Missions Commission of the Pentecostal World Fellowship. WAPTE representatives will participate in conference facilitated by the Pentecostal Development and Relief Partners Network. A future edition will feature guest editorial input from this network.

As part of this effort, WAPTE is leading a consortium of scholars in order to provide a scholarly response to the Pentecostal Development and Relief Partners Network's paper on "A Biblical Basis for Understanding Human Poverty and Holistic Mission." This response will be presented at the Network's meeting in Helsinki in May of this year.

In each edition of this journal, I encourage broader participation from Pentecostal educators and administrators around the world. Please check out our website, correspond with our Executive Director, Dr. Barry Saylor, and consider participation in a future WAPTE event.

I am grateful for the exceptional editorial work of our editors, especially the leadership of Wonsuk Ma, chair of WAPTE's Resource and Research committee, and Miguel Alvarez, Executive Editor of the journal. Likewise, thank you to those who have contributed articles and reviews for this rather larger than normal edition.

May you, our valued readers be helped, inspired and encouraged by our efforts.

Paul R Alexander
Senior Editor, WAPTE Chair

In This Issue…

In this issue, we want to express our appreciation to the readers of *Pentecostal Education*. Our website has been visited countless times by readers who have downloaded the Journal and interacted with it. That shows us a high degree of interest in Pentecostal publications that exist in our world. Yet, in the same way, that community of readers also challenges us to be more excellent in our work and delivery.

Once again, the team of editors has taken a very unique interest in the excellence of this presentation that has been chosen among several writers. Our authors have produced topical articles, very challenging to those who like literature that is academically solid but accessible to the community in general. This is what makes our work satisfying!

In fact, the conditions of the "new social reality" that the world is experiencing as a consequence of the global pandemic create particular situations that must be considered when publishing a volume that will be read globally. So, with this issue goes our solidarity and our prayers for those who have suffered devastating consequences from the pandemic. We are comforted to know that the Lord is in control of all things and that even in the midst of adversity, he fulfills his purpose in the world. He is on his throne and rules with justice and authority over his creation.

With this background in mind, we invite the reader to carefully and intelligently look at each article of this volume. In this issue, you will find constructive opinions and ideas for the benefit of yourself and the community of faith. The authors represent Europe, Asia, and Africa. This issue also includes a document of historical value, demonstrating the journal's commitment to serving a wider community.

The editorial team is open to receiving opinions about the content of these articles or any formal rejoinders to the published studies. The channel is open to correspondence that promotes building and promoting constructive ideas. In addition, we also welcome academic contributions from our readers. These could be published according to the topic covered in each issue.

Thank you for your support and solidarity,

Miguel Alvarez
Executive Editor

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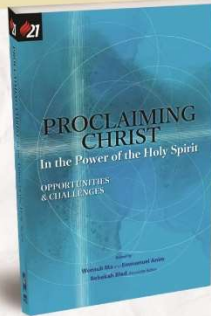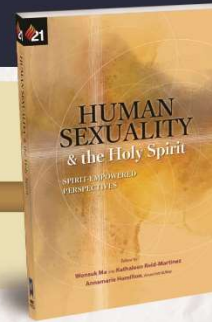
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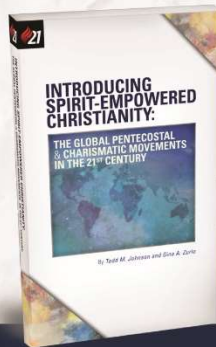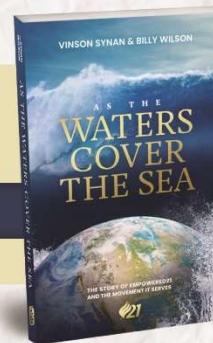
INTRODUCING SPIRIT-EMPOWERED CHRISTIANITY
THE GLOBAL PENTECOSTAL & CHARISMATIC MOVEMENTS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Tood M. Johnson and **Gina A. Zurlo**

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Charismatic Leadership Redefined: Transformed by Servanthood

Tomasz Bialokurec

Abstract:

This study seeks to redefine charismatic leadership in light of the Biblical evidence found in selected passages of the OT. The inquiry explores heroic, transformational, and servant models of leadership in search for new, adequate ways of approaching charisma. The thesis statement is that leadership can be considered charismatic inasmuch as it is relational and transformative. The role of the Spirit in equipping charismatic leaders of the OT is examined with a view to shift one's understanding of Spirit-empowered leadership from the heroic and self-seeking towards the servant and other-oriented paradigm of leadership. In the course of this study, the relationship of Biblically-inspired models of leadership with the notions of power, vocation, and mission will be discussed. It is argued that truly charismatic leaders come to serve and enable their followers rather than control them. The investigation also includes an analysis of some characteristics of OT leaders such as the ability to delegate, tenacity in the face of adversity, and the willingness to sacrifice.

Key words: Old Testament, charismatic, Spirit-empowered, leadership, servanthood, transformation

Introduction

Spirit-empowered leaders are an essential part of the charismatic tradition of the Bible. The examples of Moses, the seventy elders, and some of the judges and kings show that the coming of the Spirit was an integral part of leadership emergence already recorded in the Old Testament (OT) literature. This study will explore different types of charismatic leadership, employing the contemporary concepts of leadership, and drawing on selected examples from the OT. It will be argued that a specific style of leadership can be considered charismatic only insofar as it enables the followers to fulfill their specific mission and fosters their personal development. In the course of the inquiry, the hypothesis that transformational and servant paradigms of leadership realize the nature of charismatic leadership due to their relational and empowering nature will be tested.

Definition of Charismatic Leadership

In the first part of this inquiry, select definitions of charismatic leadership will be presented. The presentation is by no means exhaustive and focuses on the models readily found in the Scripture. As a starting point of our survey, we take the famous definition of charismatic leadership presented by Max Weber:

> The term "charisma" will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as not to be accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a "leader."[1]

This definition of charisma is explained through the interplay between numerous factors such as supernatural endowment and exceptional qualities of divine origin. In another place, Weber contends that "pure charisma represents, wherever it occurs, a 'calling,' a 'vocation' in the emphatic sense: as a 'mission' or a personal 'task.'"[2] Although not religious *per se*, Weber's notion of charisma can help one understand the traditional concept of charismatic leadership.

Heroic Leadership

One of the traditional ways of defining charismatic leadership is to understand it as *heroic*: charisma translates here into a personal endowment with extraordinary leadership skills and superhuman prowess in one area or another. This definition draws upon Weber's understanding of leadership as "the authority of the extraordinary and personal gift of grace (charisma), the absolutely personal devotion and personal confidence in revelation, heroism, or other qualities of individual leadership."[3] Heroic leaders are chosen, often by a supreme power, and gifted more than others who are compelled to admire them and obediently follow their lead.

The OT judges and the first kings of the nascent monarchy fall into this category. This model is rather one-directional—as a reciprocal relationship between the leader and his or her followers is not pivotal here—and susceptible to the abuse of power and control which the leader claims and

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[1] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, eds. and trans. A. R. Henderson and T. Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), 358-59.

[2] Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. and trans. K. Tribe (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 377.

[3] Max Weber, *Essays in Sociology*, eds. and trans. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 79.

exercises. "The essence of this kind of power is the capacity of power wielders, given the necessary motivation, to override the motive and power bases of their targets. Such power objectifies victims; it literally turns them into objects."[4] And yet, "naked power-wielding cannot be transforming; only leadership can be."[5]

Transformational leadership

James Burns was instrumental in developing a new paradigm of leadership called transformational leadership where "one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality."[6] This type of leadership can transform both leaders and their followers because their respective "power bases are linked not as counterweights but as mutual support for common purpose."[7] Transformational leadership is founded upon a reciprocal exchange between a leader and his or her followers, an exchange that elevates the existence of everyone involved.

> Transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both. Perhaps the best modern example is Gandhi, who aroused and elevated the hopes and demands of millions of Indians and whose life and personality were enhanced in the process. . . . That people can be lifted into their better selves is the secret of transforming leadership.[8]

This capacity to transcend any sort of limiting boundaries and enhance personal growth of "both leader and led" is the driving force of transformation. In short, transforming leadership is elevating as well as enabling and equipping.

Furthermore, as Peter Block observes, "real transformation is possible when [W]e commit to the culture and texture and efforts to create community. This means self-interest is replaced by a care for the common good. . . . Real commitment is an act made with no expectation of return."[9] In this paradigm, self-seeking heroic leadership is transformed, as it were,

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[4] James McGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 35.

[5] Burns, *Leadership*, 34.

[6] Burns, *Leadership*, 33.

[7] Burns, *Leadership*, 33.

[8] Burns, *Leadership*, 33.

[9] Peter Block, *Stewardship: Choosing Service Over Self-Interest* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2013), 20. "Empowerment carries with it an obligation: that we commit ourselves." Ibid., 46.

into a self-less commitment to community service. This transformation of a leader, however, is possible only if "the coming of the Spirit upon him does not present a hero-like effect, [but] relates to the moral and spiritual level, although its effect on his leadership is also evident."[10]

Servant Leadership

Another alternative to the heroic model of leadership is servant leadership that shares many characteristics with the aforementioned transformational model. This other-oriented paradigm was advanced by Robert K. Greenleaf, who claimed that leadership "begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then a conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead."[11] Here leading means constant willingness to "go out ahead to show, by their example, how one may be a servant in what appears to be a cold, low-caring, highly competitive, violence-prone society."[12] A genuine servant leader is, by definition, a role model as well as a prophetic witness pointing to the realities lying beyond the cultural and spiritual *status quo*.

> The essence of leadership, says Greenleaf, is the desire to serve one another and to serve something beyond ourselves, a higher purpose. In our traditional way of thinking, "servant leadership" sounds like an oxymoron. But in a world of relationships, where relatedness is the organizing principle of the universe, it makes perfect sense. In that orientation, servant leadership seems like a very potent and natural way to think about leadership.[13]

Relatedness appears to be the ordering principle of the reality transformed by servanthood. In the servant paradigm of leadership, personal development remains a priority. However, in contrast to the heroic leadership model, "servant leadership emphasizes personal development and empowerment of followers."[14] The attention shifts from leaders to their followers. This focus shift marks the paradigm shift. Servant

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[10] Wonsuk Ma, "Isaiah," in *Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit*, eds. Trevor J. Burke and Keith Warrington (London: SPCK, 2014), 37.

[11] Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2002), 27.

[12] Robert K. Greenleaf, *The Power of Servant Leadership*, ed. Larry C. Spears (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 1998), 104.

[13] Joseph Jaworski, *Synchronicity: The Inner Path of Leadership* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 1996), 59.

[14] Brien N. Smith, Ray V. Montagno, and Tatiana N. Kuzmenko, "Transformational and Servant Leadership: Content and Contextual Comparisons," *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* 10, no. 4 (2004): 80.

leadership is all about equipping the followers to become leaders in their own right.

Another important aspect of servant leadership is its relationship to the notions of power, control, and responsibility. Block made a case for replacing the rhetoric of power and control in leadership with the attitude of stewardship. "When we choose service over self-interest, we say we are willing to be deeply accountable without choosing to control the world around us."[15] Burns agrees with Block that "we must recognize the limited reach of 'total' or 'coercive' power. We must see power—and leadership— as not things but as relationships."[16] As in the case of transformational leadership, relinquishing control marks the threshold of genuine servanthood that is not afraid of responsibility on the one hand and vulnerable intimacy, on the other hand. "Stewardship is the willingness to work on ourselves first, to stay in intimate contact with those around us, to own our doubts and limitations, and make them part of our dialogue with others. Our humanness is defined more by our vulnerability than by our strengths."[17] True leaders are countercultural also in that they are able to accept their limitations and display unreserved humility, engaging "this world with nothing to offer but his or her own vulnerable self. That is the way Jesus came to reveal God's love."[18] Henri Nouwen convincingly argues that "the leaders of the future will be those who dare to claim their irrelevance in the contemporary world as a divine vocation that allows them to enter into a deep solidarity with the anguish underlying all the glitter of

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[15] Block, *Stewardship*, 16. "Servant leadership, like stewardship, assumes a commitment to serving the needs of others. It also emphasizes the use of openness and persuasion rather than control." Larry C. Spears, "Characteristics of Servant Leaders," in *Servant Leadership in Action*, eds. K. Blanchard and R. Broadwell (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 2018), 42. Likewise, Morgan Scott Peck contends that "Spiritual power resides entirely within the individual and has nothing to do with the capacity to coerce others. People of great spiritual power may be wealthy and may upon occasion occupy political positions of leadership, but they are as likely to be poor and lacking in political authority. Then, what is the capacity of spiritual power if not the capacity to coerce? It is the capacity to make decisions with maximum awareness." Morgan Scott Peck, *The Road Less Travelled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth* (London: Rider, 2003), 272. Spiritual power wielded by true leaders is measured by their capacity to consciously serve others rather than control them.

[16] Burns, *Leadership*, 19.

[17] Block, *Stewardship*, 53.

[18] Henri Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York: Crossroad, 2002), 19.

success, and to bring the light of Jesus there."[19] This type of sacrificial leadership—modeled by Christ as well as the figure of the Suffering Servant painted in Isaiah—will be the subject of our inquiry in the following section.

Selected Examples of OT Leaders

Turning to an analysis of data gathered from the chosen Old Testament passages will inform the search for the charismatic models of leadership. One can explore the connection between the servant theme and the Spirit's enablement. As far as biblical tradition is concerned, "It is the presence of the Spirit that validates the leader's appointment for ministry work."[20] One now may proceed to investigate some of the OT instances of such divine appointments legitimized by the Spirit of the Lord. While being far from exhaustive, this survey is limited to three selected cases of charismatic leadership.[21]

Moses and the Seventy Elders

In Numbers 11, one finds an instance of leadership transfer that is validated by the Lord's Spirit.[22] The impact of the Spirit on the emerging institutional

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[19] Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus*, 22.

[20] David G. Firth, "The Spirit and Leadership: Testimony, Empowerment and Purpose," in *Presence, Power, and Promise: The Role of the Spirit of God in the Old Testament*, eds. David G. Firth and Paul D. Wegner (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 264.

[21] Other OT examples abound. The dynamic narratives one finds in the book of Judges are especially illuminating. As Robert Alter noted, "there is a formulaic rhythm of events: Israel's disloyalty to its God, its oppression by enemies as punishment for the dereliction, the crying out to God by the Israelites, God's raising up a judge to rescue them. This process of 'raising up' leaders is what led Max Weber to borrow a term from the Greek and call a political system of this sort charismatic leadership. That is, the authority of the leader derives neither from a hereditary line nor from election by peers but comes about suddenly when the spirit of the LORD descends upon him: through this investiture, he is filled with a sense of power and urgency that is recognized by those around him, who thus become his followers." Robert Alter, *Ancient Israel: The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2013), 135. The book of Judges offers quite a few examples of Spirit-initiated heroic leadership.

[22] "God ordered Moses to bring to him 70 elders who were known to him as leaders and officials among the people (11:16). God would 'take' (Hebrew, *'atsal*, meaning to "reserve" or "withhold") of the Spirit, 'the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them' (11:17b), but not remove it altogether from Moses. Thus, a part of the Holy Spirit was to be withheld from Moses, so as to bestow it on the elders. Accordingly, when God fulfilled his promise, the Holy Spirit came on the elders, as

leadership is facilitated by the "shareable" nature of the Spirit-endowment. Thiselton notes that the

> Spirit's capacity for being "shared out" from one figure to others. The classic example is that of Moses and the seventy elders. . . . Similarly, Joshua derives the Spirit through Moses and the laying on of hands (Deut. 34:9), and Elisha from the gift of the Spirit to Elijah (2 Kings 2:15; cf. 2:9, 13-14). This principle will have considerable consequences in the New Testament for the sharing of the Messianic Spirit by all Christians.[23]

Having a share in one and the same Spirit of the Lord is a striking feature of religious leadership in the OT, which paves the way for the development of the notion of spiritual leadership in the NT.[24]

The appointment of the seventy elders for ministry work is a good example of charismatic leadership for several reasons. First, the ability to delegate ministry work to a number of assistants appears to be an essential skill for a Spirit-empowered leader to develop.

> Jethro encouraged Moses by articulating a spiritual principle of timeless relevance. "If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain" (Exodus 18:23). Jethro placed his advice under the authority of God. God takes all responsibility for enabling His servants to do their work. Some tasks others can do better, and these should be delegated. But even if these secondary tasks are not done perfectly, still delegation is the better part of wisdom. Moses was probably better at judging than any of the seventy associate judges he appointed, but had he persisted alone, his career would have been cut short.[25]

The inability to delegate spells doom for the leader who cannot infinitely stretch his or her limited resources, not the least time and energy. Second,

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evidenced by the fact that they prophesied (11:25). We are not told what was the content of the prophecies, but it was certainly a sign and indicator of the fact that the Holy Spirit was equipping them for the work they would need to do to take some of the pressure off Moses." Walter C. Kaiser, "Pentateuch," in *Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 9.

[23] Anthony Thiselton, *The Holy Spirit—in Biblical Teaching, through the Centuries, and Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013), 5. Admittedly, there are some instances where the Spirit is fully transferred rather than shared—the story of Saul and David remains the most prominent example of such a total transfer of the Spirit.

[24] 1 Cor 12-14 presents a notable NT example of this Spirit-driven reality: those who drank from one and the same Spirit are called to share leadership responsibilities in their common pursuit for the edification of the whole community.

[25] John Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 2007), chap. 3, Kindle.

what is transferred is not only a share in the responsibility for the community but also the Spirit-endowment: the same prophetic Spirit that is upon Moses now empowers his seventy assistants to carry out the tasks entrusted to them.

> It is Yahweh's Spirit who enables seventy elders to function in their role and so to assist Moses. Hence it is the work of the Spirit to initiate them into a new area of leadership, so that it is the Spirit who empowers them for their work while also marking them as those recognized by Yahweh for leadership. . . . Equally, the experience of Eldad and Medad shows that the work of the Spirit cannot be controlled. The Spirit marks out those chosen by Yahweh, but the process by which the Spirit works cannot be restricted.[26]

Firth highlights here an important factor that is often overlooked: neither human agent nor circumstances can control the process of election and empowerment by the Spirit of God who, as it were, "breathes where he pleases" (cf. John 3:8) and is not constrained by one's limited understanding of His ways.

Kings and Prophets

The greatest blessings given by the Lord to His chosen people were the leaders endued with His own Spirit. "God's greatest gifts to Israel, better than the land itself, were men like Moses and David and Isaiah. God's greatest gifts are always the servants through whom He works."[27] And yet, most of the biblical kings were poor role models in that they failed to remain faithful to the Lord, leading the people into unfaithfulness towards God. That critical failure can be explained by the lack of "the 'internalization' of the Spirit's endowment. The Spirit of God works through the recipient's heart and character, resulting in the qualities desired for the ideal king."[28] Unfortunately, very few kings internalized the fear of the Lord despite their divine election and anointing. As William Lyons points out,

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[26] Firth, "The Spirit and Leadership," 264. "Two men, called Eldad and Medad, listed among the elders who are not at the tent of meeting are treated similarly. This indicates that the focus was on the elders and that the location at the tent of meeting was symbolic – that is Yahweh was not confined to that location." Pekka Pitkänen, *A Commentary on Numbers: Narrative, Ritual, and Colonialism* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 109-110.

[27] Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, chap. 3.

[28] Wonsuk Ma, "Prophetic Servant: Ideology of Spirit-Empowered Leaders," *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2020): 219.

The Bible is clear: anointing is initiatory and empowering, while covenantal fidelity or obedience is primary. Many of those called "anointed" in the Bible failed in their ministry; judges, kings, and priests left a sad legacy to history. . . . With the exception of Josiah, however, no biblical king—not even David—fulfilled God's plan for his leaders.[29]

In this context, the prophets emerge to counterbalance or challenge compromised kingship. If a leader is to mediate divine covenantal favor, his or her life and work need to be evaluated strictly by how (un)faithful they are to God, the only real king.[30] Legitimate prophets confront their fellow prophets, priests, and kings over their injustice, infidelity, and idolatry. The prophets constantly claim the inspiration and empowering presence of God's Spirit that, on occasions, allows them to go as far as to represent the people over against royal decrees.[31] Whenever the kings of Judah fail to bring justice to their oppressed subjects and, worse still, pervert justice, the Spirit-led prophets emerge on the scene to urge the unfaithful leaders to embrace their responsibility to serve the poor, the orphans, and the widow, rather than exploit these marginalized groups. Mung observes that

The prophet's portrayal of a Spirit-empowered ruler who judges the poor and the oppressed with righteousness in Isa 11:1-9 stands in contrast with Judah's contemporary leaders who perverted justice to oppress the poor, the widows, and the fatherless in Isa 10:1-4, which recalls Isa 1:23, where

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[29] William L. Lyons, "Anointed by the Spirit of the Lord God: An Ancient Biblical Concept and Ministry to the Poor" (a paper presented at the Empowered21 Scholars Consultation, Bogotá, Columbia: June 2019). Arguably, one could consider Hezekiah as another exception to this rule: "In context [of 2 Kings 19], the phrase, 'for the sake of David my servant,' surely commits to Hezekiah who is the 'model David' as a perfect Torah-keeper (see 18:3). This quite specific promise thus brings to completion the extended prophetic response to the king's prayer." Walter Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000), 514. It seems that Jerusalem is delivered from the Assyrian threat not only for the Lord's own sake but also for the sake of the God-fearing king "who did what was right in the sight of the Lord just as his ancestor David had," if not more so (cf. 2 Kings 18:3; 19:34).

[30] Cf. Wonsuk Ma, *An Old Testament Theology through the Spirit of God*, forthcoming.

[31] "The reported consideration given to Jeremiah by Nebuzaradan indicates that Jeremiah's stance and his leadership were well-known, even to the Babylonians (Jer 40:4). It is not to be thought that Jeremiah was a loner or an oddball figure, but rather that he represented and spoke for a large body of influential opinions that opposed the royal policies perceived as suicidal." Brueggemann, *1 & 2 Kings*, 593.

Judah's leaders failed to bring justice to the fatherless and the widow (cf. 3:14-15; 5:23).[32]

It is noteworthy that Wisdom features quite prominent in such a prophetic mission: the prophets emerge to instruct, enlighten, teach, counsel, and correct.[33]

The Servant of Isaiah 42

The Servant figure[34] from Isaiah 42:1-7 displays a deep understanding of his mission, tenacity, and perseverance. The figure operates in a prophetic, meek, hidden, and self-effacing manner.

> So quiet and unobtrusive is the great Servant's work that many today doubt His very existence. Jesus exemplifies the description of God found later in Isaiah: "Truly you are a God who hides himself" (Isaiah 45:15). This quality seems to be shared among all the host of heaven. Even the picture given to us of the cherubim—God's angel servants—use four of their six wings to conceal their faces and feet. They too are content with hidden service (Isaiah 6:2).[35]

Chosen by the Lord and equipped with His Spirit, the Servant is determined to carry out his missionary task despite the opposition and difficulties. "The close link between the Spirit and mission is unmistakable. The giving of the Spirit is directly linked to the mission of the Servant: 'he will bring forth justice to the nations' (1b)."[36] This daunting mission is accomplished in a way that runs contrary to the models of justice prevailing in the world: "The servant makes God's justice prevail in such a way that his action contradicts the harsh law of the world, which says that what is broken and burns dimly inevitably perishes."[37] According to Wonsuk Ma, a correct understanding of the concept of "justice" is indispensable for grasping the full extent of the Servant's mission:

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[32] Lian San Mung, *The Spirit from on High: The Hermeneutical and Theological Function of Isaiah 32:9-20*, forthcoming, 86n19.

[33] Cf. Ma, *An Old Testament Theology.*

[34] "It is possible that the Servant refers both to Israel and an individual, and the two are organically connected, in the manner that Christ and the church are separate entities and yet intimately connected." Ma, "Prophetic Servant," 222. Isaiah 42:1-7 presents one with the first of the four servant songs found in Deutero-Isaiah.

[35] Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, chap. 3.

[36] Ma, "Prophetic Servant," 222.

[37] Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66*, trans. David M. G. Stalker (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1969), 96.

The scope of his task is now far beyond traditional Israel: he is to establish "justice" to the "nations," as the "coastlands" await his teaching. The presence of the Spirit, therefore, is immediately followed by his "mission": bringing forth justice to the nations (v. 1b). The exact meaning and nuance of "justice" is not clear here, although the link between justice and kingship (or leadership) is a long-established tradition. The word can also be translated as "judgment," which is one of the most important roles of the leader. The rule of justice in the scriptures is often measured by his efforts to protect and uphold the welfares of the lowly and marginalized in society, such as widows, orphans, and foreigners…. Maintaining a just nation also includes the purging of evil and the protection of the weak (e.g., Isa 11:1-5).[38]

Being determined to purge the evil from human hearts and fully committed to minister selflessly to the poor and oppressed are crucial characteristics of servant leadership. This is the type of leadership in which God delights (cf. Isa 42:1). Furthermore, the sacrificial figure of the Servant depicted in Isa 42:1-7,[39] and ultimately fulfilled in Christ, sets a canonical paradigm for charismatic ministry. "Both Isa. 42:1-7 and the Gospels show how God's chosen Agent acts and ministers through the anointing of the Spirit. It embraces both Jesus Christ and corporate Israel, from a canonical perspective."[40]

Attempt at Synthesis

Having discussed the chosen examples of the Spirit-empowered leaders of the OT, one is now in a position to attempt a theological synthesis of the gathered biblical data with the definitions of charismatic leadership analyzed in the first part of the study.

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[38] Ma, *An Old Testament Theology*. "The care for the weak is an essential part of 'justice.' The literary sense is such that he identifies himself with the powerless in society, which is a radical departure from traditional Spirit-empowerment, frequently expressed in physical (e.g., Samson in Judg 14: 6, 19; 15:14) or military (such as Saul, 1 Sam 11:6) prowess." Ma, "Prophetic Servant," 228.

[39] The sacrificial dimension of the Servant's ministry comes to the fore in the fourth servant song (Isa 52:13-53:12) to reveal that "the servant can take the suffering and death that come as a result of serving God and can turn these into an offering to God that contrasts with the unwillingness to yield to God that characterizes the people as a whole." John Goldingay and David Payne, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 40-55* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 1:55.

[40] Mung, *The Spirit from on High*, 19.

Relational Nature of Charismatic Leadership

Relationality appears to be a nucleus of redefined charismatic leadership. Leaders can be called charismatic inasmuch as they engage in ongoing personal relationships with their followers and are committed to fostering their growth. The relational character of charismatic leadership creates a win-win situation: both the leader and the followers are enriched, inspired, motivated, and transformed through the mutual commitment to a shared vision.

In the biblical tradition, the significance of the Spirit-empowered, prophetic leaders lies precisely in their affinity with God: "The close relationship between God and his prophets is 'organic.' . . . Their attitude, life, and ministry are the outgrowth of their continuing internal communion with God. Indeed, the coming of the Spirit symbolizes the overwhelming and continual presence of God."[41] And it is precisely such prophetic "internalized and unrelenting resolve to fulfill the God-given mission"[42] that reveals not only the prophetic but also relational kernel of authentic charisma.

The Spirit-empowered Leader Empowers Others

One of the main advantages of transformational and servant approaches to leadership lies in their capability to empower: "Transformational leadership occurs when a leader inspires followers to share a vision, empowering them to achieve the vision, and provides the resource necessary for developing their personal potential. Transformational leaders serve as role models and mobilize commitment, as well as focus on the followers' needs for growth."[43]

A true leader inspires, motivates, stimulates, challenges, supports, and encourages his or her followers with the aim of fostering their personal growth rather than advancing the leader's own agenda. "Servant leadership views a leader as a servant of his or her followers. It places the interest of followers before the self-interest of a leader, emphasizes personal development and empowerment of followers."[44] Admittedly, empowering is an integral aspect of charismatic leadership as such. And yet, the dynamic paradigms of transformational and servant leadership transcend traditional models by emphasizing the empowerment of followers rather than the leaders. Such a shift in emphasis results in the emergence of a new group of charismatic leaders. "Transcending leadership is dynamic leadership in the

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[41] Ma, "Prophetic Servant," 230.

[42] Ma, "Prophetic Servant," 231.

[43] Smith, et al., "Transformational and Servant Leadership," 80.

[44] Smith, et al., "Transformational and Servant Leadership," 80.

sense that the leaders throw themselves into a relationship with followers who will feel 'elevated' by it and often become more active themselves, thereby creating new cadres of leaders."[45] These traits are detectable in Moses' faithful ministry to his stiff-necked people, the responsibility successfully shared with his chosen "associates."

> Moses followed Jethro's advice and realized several benefits. He was able to concentrate on the biggest problems. The latent talents of many around him were discovered. Those gifted men, who could have become his critics had Moses continued alone, were now allies facing a common challenge. People-problems were solved with efficiency. And Moses laid the groundwork for effective leadership after his death.[46]

The ministry of Moses and his elders was focused on the spiritual growth of the community, even if the desired transformation of the nation turned out to be a long and excruciating process. This particular narrative offers a timeless example of the Spirit-empowered leadership that is relational in nature and transformational in effect.

Charisma Redefined

Both alternatives to the heroic model of leadership—i.e., transformational and servant paradigms of leadership—prove more effective because they throw the idealized leader off the unreachable pedestal to make him or her more approachable and relatable. In fact, the examples of charismatic leaders that one finds in the OT are far from ideal. On the contrary, they present the reader with flawed human beings who, through God's election, become vessels of His Spirit's empowering presence that nurtures character formation without overriding human freedom.

> The Spirit's coming upon the leaders is not just to turn the recipients into a "fighting machine." On the contrary, we can observe God's careful attention to the "formation" of the heroes before, during, and after the giving of his Spirit. However, the effect of the Spirit's presence is contingent upon the human response or the lack thereof. The character formation through the Spirit is a joint work between divine and human.[47]

Leaders formed by the Spirit are real and genuinely human, which makes them charismatic guides on the path towards success. Charisma turns out to be a "saturated phenomenon" (Jean-Luc Marion) of relational nature: it is the interaction between the leader and his or her followers that give rise to

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[45] Burns, *Leadership*, 34.

[46] Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, chap. 3.

[47] Wonsuk Ma, "Tragedy of Spirit-Empowered Heroes: A Close Look at Samson and Saul," *Spiritus: ORU Journal of Theology* 2, no. 1-2 (2017): 35-36.

charismatic leadership, rather than the leader's superhuman, God-like personality. The Servant of Deutero-Isaiah, as well as one depicted in the opening verses of Isaiah 61, remain unmatched examples of such transformational outworking of charisma.

Relational conceptions of charisma carry significant transformational value precisely because the leaders endowed with authentic charisma are capable of self-sacrifice and remain responsive to the emotional and spiritual needs of their followers. The first and last word of charismatic leadership is love that translates into responsibility. "The loving person is frequently in a dilemma, caught between loving respect for the beloved's own path in life and a responsibility to exercise loving leadership when the beloved appears to need such leadership. The dilemma can be resolved only by painstaking self-scrutiny, in which the lover examines stringently the worth of his or her 'wisdom' and the motives behind this need to assume leadership."[48] The root of spiritual wisdom is to assume responsibility instead of assuming control. This is especially true when it comes to exercising relational leadership.

Conclusion

> The mode by which [Spirit empowerment] is demonstrated varies considerably, but is relevant to the specific needs of the people at that time. Thus, Joseph provides wisdom needed by Pharaoh, the seventy elders take on administrative work, and Joshua succeeds Moses in providing military leadership.[49]

What people of our time need above anything else is the recognition of their hunger for meaning and affirmation. Frighteningly often, people are also in need of deliverance from some emotional or spiritual oppression. Transformational and servant *modi operandi* seem to equip followers to meet these challenges.

The Servant of Isaiah 42: Toward a New Paradigm of Charismatic Leadership

The unassuming and humble figure of the Servant is certainly countercultural: his unassertive and other-oriented leadership style runs contrary to the prevalent model of modern leadership that is self-assertive and self-seeking. The Servant's agency is *par excellence* transformational in that it brings righteous judgment and much needed teaching to the nations. "Leaders can also shape and alter and elevate the motives and values and goals of followers through the vital teaching role of leadership. This is

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[48] Peck, *The Road Less Travelled*, 139.

[49] Firth, "The Spirit and Leadership," 268.

transforming leadership."[50] The Servant presented in Deutero-Isaiah is deeply concerned with the welfare of his oppressed and marginalized followers. Self-abasement and unwavering commitment to the service of others make him a paradigmatic example of charismatic leadership. It turns out that Spirit-empowered leaders come to serve their followers rather than rule over them.

> Their prophetic mission and royal dignity is expressed in readiness to serve, in keeping with the example of Christ, who "came not to be served but to serve" (Matthew 20:28). If, in the light of this attitude of Christ's, "being a king" is truly possible only by "being a servant," then "being a servant" also demands so much spiritual maturity that it must really be described as "being a king." In order to be able to serve others worthily and effectively, we must be able to master ourselves, possess the virtues that make this mastery possible. Our sharing in Christ's kingly mission—his "kingly function"—is closely linked with every sphere of both Christian and human morality.[51]

Moreover, the biblical standard of servanthood marks a radical shift in one's understanding of empowerment. The Servant is not only tenacious in the face of hardships and adversities, but also agrees to be depowered, as it were, in order to empower others.

> The consequence of the servant's power and authority is more related to 'depowering' than 'empowering', experiencing difficulties and combating adversaries, while paying tender care to the powerless. The crux of the empowerment is located in his tenacity and resolution to accomplish a God-given task. Here, the nature of empowerment is radically different from its earlier usage. Power or empowerment can be seen as a capacity, a persevering or persistence in fulfilling God's mission, especially in the face of adversaries, difficulties and even persecution. There is a very strange reference to weakness, suggesting that empowerment is to minister in weakness to the weak (vv. 2, 4).[52]

An unwavering resolve to carry out God's mission characterizes servant leaders who have the courage to come in weakness and trembling to empower others for the work of ministry. The transforming effect of the Spirit's empowerment becomes evident when the self-serving bias of a heroic leader gives way to community-building servant leadership.

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[50] Burns, *Leadership*, 706.

[51] John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis* 21 (Rome, 1979), http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis.html#%2451.

[52] Ma, "Isaiah," 37.

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Direct Mentoring as a Model of Discipleship in Multigenerational Contexts: Experiences from an African Pentecostal Church

Christian Tsekpoe

Abstract:

The need to re-enact best practices of discipleship models from Scriptures in contemporary terms is imperative for Christian mission. In doing this, the church should be mindful to interpret such scriptural models of discipleship in the contexts of place and time. Many researchers on contextualization are, however, guilty of focusing on mission in geographical contexts (place) to the neglect of mission in generational contexts (time). Using ethnography and personal observation as an insider researcher, this paper analyzes the origins and historical development of direct mentoring as a model of discipleship in the Church of Pentecost, Ghana. The paper argues that differences in generational cultures can create a generational gap and impinge on effective discipleship in Christian mission, just as the differences in geographical cultures can negatively affect mission and discipleship. The paper ends by contending that direct mentoring as a model of discipleship can mitigate the generational gap problem and at the same time contribute effectively to transforming discipleship in multigenerational contexts.

Key words: direct mentoring, contextualization, Pentecostal-Charismatic mission, transforming discipleship

Discipleship in African Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity

Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship was the theme for the 2018 World Council of Churches (WCC) Conference on World Mission and Evangelism held in Arusha, Tanzania. As a Pentecostal pastor with interest in discipleship, this theme immediately sparked in me the desire to understand more deeply the role of the Holy Spirit in discipleship that leads to the transformation of people, their worlds, and their systems. As a result, my expectations for attending the conference focused on this theme. Whether these expectations were met or not, one imprint the conference had on my ministry was a continuous reflection on the Church's call to transforming discipleship through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In my reflections, I thought of the fact that it was not coincidental for the 2018 WCC conference held in Africa to have the said theme. The Church in Africa, as in the case of other non-Western worlds, has grown in numerical terms with a great proportion of Pentecostal-Charismatic denominations who lay much emphasis on the empowerment and the practical manifestations of the Holy Spirit. Africa is therefore a good place to reflect on the theme, "Moving in the Spirit." On the other hand, whether they are right or wrong, many people (both insiders and outsiders of African Christianity) are disturbed about the lack of transformation within the African communities in spite of the large numbers of congregants who profess to be Christians on the continent in contemporary times. Thus, a reflection on "Called to Transforming Discipleship" was also apposite in Africa. This is not to claim that other parts of the world do not need the movement of the Spirit or transforming discipleship.

In a commentary about the Arusha conference written by Ken Ross and published in 2020, he indicates that the need for transformation in our world today is known globally.[1] He further intimates, "Whether our analysis is political, economic, ecological, or personal, it is likely to tell us that what is needed is not some gentle amelioration but rather something that is a game-changer."[2] The Arusha conference proposed discipleship as the "driver of the transformation that our world so desperately needs."[3] We must therefore conclude that the subject of transforming discipleship is significant for global Christian mission. This notwithstanding, my bent towards discipleship in African Pentecostal-Charismatic contexts is born out of my insider motivations and current demographic statistics of global Christianity, which suggests that Pentecostalism in the non-Western world (including Africa) has become a force to reckon with in contemporary Christian mission engagements.[4]

The expression of Christianity in Africa is visible in different forms. One does not need to carry out any academic research to discover large numbers of people going to church each Sunday morning and even within

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[1] Kenneth R. Ross, *Mission Rediscovered : Transforming Disciples* (Geneva: WCC Publications & Globethics.net, 2020), 10.

[2] Ross, *Mission Rediscovered*, 10.

[3] Ross, *Mission Rediscovered*, 10.

[4] Kwabena J Asamoah-Gyadu, *Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity: Interpretations from an African Context* (Oxford: Regnum, 2013); Craig V. Gelder, "The Future of the Discipline of Missiology: A Brief Overview of Current Realities and Future Possibilities," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 38, no. 1 (2014): 10–16; Todd M. Johnson, "Counting Pentecostals Worldwide," *Pneuma* 36, no. 2 (2014): 265–88; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "Mission in Pentecostal Theology," in *Christian Mission, Contextual Theology, Prophetic Dialogue: Essays in Honor of Stephen B. Bevans, SVD*, eds. Dale T. Irvin and Peter C. Phan (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2018), 79-97.

weekdays. The ubiquity of church buildings as well as billboards, posters, electronic and social media handles that give publicity to church services, prayer meetings, and other Christian activities within the continent are evidence that Africa, indeed, has become a heartland of Christian vitality.[5] What is not too clear to both participants and observers of African Christianity is the extent to which these large numbers of people who go to church are being transformed into disciples of Christ.

Although it is not in doubt that mission is the *raison d'être* of the Christian church,[6] it is not an exaggeration to agree with Allan Anderson that the Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition has positioned itself proactively as the most successful missionary movement of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.[7] They understand the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as seen in Acts 2:1-4 as empowerment for mission in fulfilment of Jesus' promise found in Acts 1:8. At its early stages, however, Pentecostal mission limited itself to evangelism, where the emphasis was on bringing converts into the church. Discipleship was taken for granted and as such, there were no intentional structures developed for discipleship. This character of reducing mission to soul-winning has been a major weakness of African Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity. Referring to the Arusha conference's proposal that discipleship is the driver of the needed societal transformation, I argue that the lack of intentionality in discipleship is a major factor contributing to the seeming paradox between current statistics of Christian population and societal development in Africa.

Current conversations among church leaders and events within the African Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition, however, reveal that there is a growing recognition of the fact that Christian mission must not be limited to preaching the gospel and bringing large numbers of converts into the church. It must embrace all that will make the good news profitable to the converts and the communities in which they live. Thus, some Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in Africa have begun responding to the urgent need to intentionally intensify discipleship and prioritize it as a core mandate of their missionary vocation. Ghana's Church of Pentecost is a typical example of such a Pentecostal denomination that has become very conscious of transforming discipleship in contemporary times.

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[5] Christian Tsekpoe, "Discipleship and Ordained Ministry in the Church of Pentecost, Ghana" (a Paper presented at the Conference of World Mission and Evangelism, Arusha, Tanzania, 2018).

[6] David J Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission Twentieth Anniversary Edition* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 28.

[7] Allan H Anderson, "The Emergence of a Multidimensional Global Missionary Movement: A Historical Review," in *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, eds. Wonsuk Ma, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, and Kwabena J. Asamoah-Gyadu (Oxford: Regnum, 2014), 12.

A Brief Historical Background to the Church of Pentecost

The origin of the Church of Pentecost (CoP) can be traced to the local initiatives of a group of young people who used to meet for prayers in Asamankese, a town in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Peter Anim, who was originally a Presbyterian and lived in Anum Bosso (also in the Eastern Region of Ghana) later moved to Asamankese and joined this group in 1917 and subsequently emerged as the leader of the group.[8] Anim afterwards got to know about the teachings concerning the Holy Spirit by reading *The Apostolic Faith* magazine, a publication of the Apostolic Faith Church in the USA. Anim's desire for the baptism in the Holy Spirit, as taught in the magazine, motivated him and his followers to pray regularly for this experience. Peter Anim eventually affiliated the Church he led with the UK Apostolic Church in 1935, an event which led to the sending of James McKeown, a British Apostolic Church missionary, to Ghana (then, Gold Coast) in 1937.[9] Peter Anim's group merged with a similar group led by Kweku Gyimah from Akroso and continued to grow as the Apostolic Church Gold Coast under the leadership of James McKeown, who was its first superintendent.

Through different schisms and splits, this church produced three Pentecostal denominations in Ghana. The faction McKeown led became autonomous from the Apostolic Church UK in 1953 and subsequently changed its name to The Church of Pentecost in 1961. McKeown continued to serve as the chairman of this church until 1982 when he eventually retired and returned to the UK. The church, however, continued to grow under different African chairmen and has been recognized as the largest Protestant denomination in Ghana since 1989.[10] As of December 2019, the CoP claimed a total membership of 2,973,830 in Ghana. This is said to account for approximately 9.8 percent of the total estimated

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[8] Prophets D. A. Ntiaku and J. A. Okumfo, interview by author, Kwao Yeboah, a village near Asamakese in the eastern region of Ghana, April 27, 2015.

[9] Subsequent to his affiliation with the Apostolic Church UK, Anim affiliated the group with the Faith Tabernacle Church and later to the Apostolic Faith Church, all in the USA. See, Kingsley Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, 2001); Yaw Bredwa-Mensah, "The Church of Pentecost in Retrospect: 1937-1960," in *James McKeown Memorial Lectures: 50 Years of The Church of Pentecost*, ed. Opoku Onyinah (Accra: The Church of Pentecost, 2004).

[10] Ghana Evangelism Committee, "Report on National Church Survey: Facing the Unfinished Task of the Church in Ghana" (Accra, 1989); Ghana Evangelism Committee, "Report on National Church Survey: Facing the Unfinished Task of the Church in Ghana" (Accra: Ghana Evangelism Committee, 1993); Richard Foli, *Church Membership Trends in Ghana* (Accra: Methodist Book Depot, 2001).

Ghanaian population of 30,280,482. The Church also has branches in 105 nations worldwide, giving it a total global membership of 3,474,241.[11]

The Origins of Direct Mentoring in the Church of Pentecost

One outstanding discovery I have made researching the CoP is how James McKeown used direct mentoring as a model for discipleship and leadership training throughout his missionary work in Ghana. In my personal interviews with older members of the Church, who claim to have known McKeown and what he stood for, it became clearer to me that McKeown was convinced that leaders who understood and worked with God's mission could only be raised if converts were effectively and genuinely discipled.[12] To be able to fulfil this mandate, McKeown adopted a direct mentoring model. Mentoring has been defined as "a relational experience in which one person empowers another by sharing God-given resources and a lifelong relationship, in which a mentor helps a protégé reach his or her God-given potential."[13] I use direct mentoring in this article to mean an intentional mentoring relationship where the mentor and the protégé meet regularly on a one-on-one basis in a consistent manner for the purpose of nurturing and training. In this case, the protégé learns by observing and participating. The mentor is able to model life and ministry by sharing practical experience while providing guidance and motivation, as well as emotional and spiritual support, to the protégé.

McKeown carried out direct mentoring by intentionally bringing young Ghanaians, who could be potential leaders, closer to himself as interpreters and friends. He taught them, travelled with them, introduced them to resources for Christian maturity, and gave them the opportunity to observe his personal life. He also gave them opportunities to practice what they learned.[14] This approach is reminiscent to Jesus's mentoring approach as found in the biblical narratives recorded in the Synoptic Gospels. Jesus travelled with the disciples, modelled his ministry and life for them to

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[11] Eric Nyamekye, "The State of the Church" (an address presented at the 44th session of the General Council Meetings of the Church of Pentecost, Church of Pentecost General Headquarters, June 2, 2020).

[12] Apostle Rigwell Ato Addison (retired minister of the CoP), interview at his residence, Nungua-Accra, by author, February 20, 2018; Elder S. Y. Sackey (retired elder of the CoP), interview at his residence at Gomoa Otsew Jukwa in the central region of Ghana, by author, May 2, 2015).

[13] David Hilborn and Matt Bird, *God and the Generations: Youth, Age and the Church Today* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002), 170.

[14] Addison, interview, Feb. 20, 2018.

observe, taught them, and gave them the opportunity to practise ministry.[15] With this approach, the disciples were able to sustain and extend Jesus' mission with responsible freedom beyond Jesus' earthly ministry. Although, it may not be convenient for the contemporary church to apply this model directly by asking disciples to leave their homes and follow a mentor, the principles of this direct mentoring model can be contextualized and extrapolated for effective discipleship in Christian mission, especially in multigenerational contexts.

In the CoP, Rigwell Ato Addison stressed that "McKeown never went to preach or travelled without going with a friend. He always had a younger person by him wherever he went." The reason was two-fold: first, since he could not speak the indigenous Ghanaian languages, he needed an interpreter to aid his communication with the indigenous people. Secondly, he was deliberate in using this model to train and disciple young people. Addison himself was one of the young people who benefitted from McKeown's direct mentoring model by serving as one of McKeown's interpreters and following him to many places. Through this relationship Addison developed many leadership skills and acquired vital Christian values and virtues. Addison recollects that the first sermon he ever preached was a sermon he heard from McKeown.[16] Addison recalls that at the age of 25,

> McKeown recommended that the church should sponsor me to attend Billy Graham conference for the youth in London, UK . . . At this conference, he told one Elim pastor that if they want someone to preach, he [McKeown] had a young chap who can preach and as a result, I was given the opportunity to preach at the Elim Church in the UK. He sat there in the congregation while I preached, and I could see that he was happy. It is a memory I will not forget.[17]

By identifying the potentials in the younger generation of leaders and training them, McKeown was seamlessly transferring leadership to the next generation without much generational rift. Such people became the leaders in the Church and contributed significantly to the growth of the CoP after McKeown's retirement. Ato Addison, for example, became the General Secretary of the CoP. He also served as a missionary for the CoP in Nigeria and Australia. After he returned to Ghana from missions, he continued to

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[15] Günter Krallmann, *Mentoring for Mission: A Handbook on Leadership Principles Exemplified by Jesus Christ, 2nd ed.* (Hong Kong: Jensco, 1992), 124; Hilborn and Bird, *God and the Generations*, 124.

[16] Addison, interview, Feb. 20, 2018.

[17] Addison, interview, Feb. 20, 2018.

serve as an Area Head for the Church in Kumasi and Accra until he retired from active ministry in 2013.

At the time of this research, Addison continues to serve as a trustee for the CoP and a resource person in leadership training programs although he has retired from active pastoral ministry.[18] Whether consciously or unconsciously, McKeown achieved two objectives. His mission incarnated into the Ghanaian context without unnecessarily imposing his British culture on the church in Africa. Secondly, the direct mentoring approach bridged the gap between his generation and the next generation after him thereby mitigating largely the generational rift. Direct mentoring continued to develop in the CoP to become a model for discipleship and leadership training in the Church from an informal state until some formal structures emerged in contemporary times.

The Development of Direct Mentoring Structures in the CoP

Although discipleship and leadership training have been part of the CoP's mission approach right from its inception, there were no formal structures for these practices. Discipleship was carried out as mentorship or, more appropriately, apprenticeship where learning took place practically through instruction, observation, and practice. Thus, matured church members were expected to mentor younger ones in Christ-like living, personal commitment, and devotion to God, church and community. These were carried out through personal relationships, interactions, church meetings, and conventions. The informal nature of the apprenticeship system seemed to have fit well in the Ghanaian scheme of life because, in Africa, as has been the case elsewhere, apprenticeship has been a basic tool for informal education.

In CoP local congregations for example, mature members as well as ordained lay leaders and pastors of the Church are expected to provide direct mentorship to each member of the congregation. This practice continued in its informal state until 2013 when in a five-year vision document of the Church, dubbed "Vision 2018," an outline for direct mentoring was formally written and disseminated to local congregations for implementation. The document stated:

> Since the future of every institution depends on the young generation catching the vision of the leaders or adults, there will be a deliberate attempt to mentor the children and the youth to know Christ in a personal way, grow in Him, and also understand the Church's beliefs and practices. Paul

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[18] Christian Tsekpoe, "'Local Species' in African Soil: The Development of James McKeown's Mission Models and Their Implications for the Church of Pentecost, Ghana" (PhD Thesis, London: Middlesex University, 2020).

> tells Timothy, "What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching" (2 Tim 1:13, NIV). Again, he says, "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men" (2 Tim 2:2). Impacting people greatly depends upon their being with you, doing, seeing, hearing, and understanding the rationale behind your actions. A Biblical form of parenting such as Moses to Joshua, Naomi to Ruth, Mordecai to Esther, Jesus to the twelve apostles, and Paul to Timothy will be followed.[19]

This passage accurately captures the CoP's model for direct mentoring anchored on similar models as found in the Bible, where the mentee or protégé is given the opportunity to see, hear, do, and attempt to understand the rationale behind the mentor's actions. Following the vision document, a letter was written to all local congregations of the CoP to explain how this intentional mentoring was going to be carried out. The letter outlined the various steps that needed to be taken to ensure that this was done effectively in the local congregations.[20] The pastor together with the local presbytery are expected to make this a core aspect of their responsibility. Ideally in the CoP, each church leader is expected to have a maximum of ten protégés for effective mentoring. Through this direct mentorship system, members of the Church are expected to be discipled into mature Christians, firmly established in the Church, and also portraying Christlikeness in their communities.[21]

Direct Mentorship as an Aspect of Ministerial Formation

Apart from the formal structures of discipleship and mentoring that have emerged in the local congregations, by September 2014, the direct mentoring model of leadership training had also been formalized in the training of CoP ministers at the School of Theology Mission and Leadership (STML). This is done in a two-fold manner. First, all the students in training are divided into smaller groups and mentors (who are lecturers) are assigned to them. On average, each lecturer is given ten students. Within the period of one year, which the students spend on campus, these mentors develop personal relationships with their mentees, guiding them on issues pertaining to life and ministry. There is a special time on the timetable once a week where students do not meet in classrooms but meet with their mentors to discuss practical ministerial issues and also to strengthen the bond between the mentors and their

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[19] The Church of Pentecost, "Vision 2018" (Accra: The Church of Pentecost, 2013), 22.

[20] See Opoku Onyinah, "Pastoral Care in the Church of Pentecost," *A Pastoral Letter*, June 7, 2013.

[21] Tsekpoe, "'Local Species' in African Soil," 99.

protégés. Secondly, the students are assigned to mature and experienced pastors who are already pastoring in the field. Students are expected to spend each weekend with these mentors during the one-year period of training. An average of two students are assigned to a pastor. Students normally leave campus on Friday afternoons, spend the weekend with their mentors, and return to campus on Sunday after church.

It is expected that while the students are with their mentor-pastors, there are different ministerial skills they can acquire. These may include evangelism and church planting, disciple-making, visiting and praying for the sick and the needy, organizing water baptisms, dedication of children, and conducting marriage ceremonies and funerals. It may also include praying for people to receive Holy Spirit baptism accompanied by speaking in tongues. In addition, students have the opportunity to observe their mentors' personal conduct, their relationship with their spouse and children, relationships with the lay leaders they work with as well as relationships with chiefs and community members. In short, the model is based on the principle that "some things are taught, others are caught." Emmanuel Anim describes this model of direct mentoring as the "Apprenticeship or Asamankese[22] Model." Anim noted, "This model takes it roots from the informal ministerial training that ministers of The Church of Pentecost in Ghana received from the 1940s to the early 1970s."[23]

After the minister completes his training and is posted to the field, another mature minister, who is now his direct supervisor, referred to in the CoP as the "Area Head" takes over the direct mentoring responsibility. There are opportunities for people to be mentored at almost all levels of the Church. Even though this model is not unique to the CoP, the uniqueness of its practice is traced to McKeown's commitment and consistency in making sure that people are deliberately discipled and that next generation leaders are intentionally raised using biblical principles. This approach provides opportunity for the older generation to be meaningfully engaged in God's mission while the balance is achieved in transferring leadership responsibilities to the younger generation.

The Need for Direct Mentoring in Multigenerational Contexts

After a century of Pentecostal-Charismatic mission in Africa, an obvious challenge the tradition faces is how to disciple the next generation

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[22] Asamankese is a town in the eastern region of Ghana. It is the place where the James McKeown started his ministry in Ghana. This town is considered as the birthplace of McKeown's direct mentoring model.
[23] Emmanuel K. Anim, "Models of Theological Education and Pastoral Formation: A Pentecostal Perspective," *Pentecost Journal of Theology and Mission* 2, no. 1 (2017): 43–60.

effectively without losing the founding vision of its pioneers. The desire to preserve and transmit the legacies of the founding leaders to succeeding generations has caused the older generation in many of these churches to replicate outmoded church practices in contemporary contexts to the detriment of effective discipleship. On the other hand, there is the uncertainty of the extent to which the younger generation can be trusted to develop new models of Christian mission that would speak to their unique and changing contexts without destroying the sound biblical foundations upon which the tradition anchors its mission. This paper proposes that the direct mentoring approach of the CoP as described earlier can be critically contextualized in contemporary terms as an effective model for discipleship in multigenerational contexts.

As indicated earlier, the CoP has had its own share of the tendency to protect and defend the practices, traditions, and theological distinctiveness of the Church for posterity. Prophet MK Yeboah, who was the chairman of the CoP from 1988 to 1998, was noted for constantly lamenting about *asɔre no daama* (the future of the Church). This concern carries his doubt about the extent to which the Church can survive in the face of globalization, which carries with it the ideologies of postmodernity, materialism, and secular humanism among others. This challenge is neither new nor unique to the CoP in Ghana. In his PhD research, Caleb Opoku Nyani studied second-generation members of the CoP in the UK, who either grew up or were born in the UK. His studies revealed that the greatest frustrations of these second-generation CoP members in the UK is their inability to fit into the socio-cultural and theological contexts being preserved and promoted by their parents who migrate from Ghana to the UK.[24]

Apart from the CoP, other churches within and beyond the Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition in Africa seem to be battling with this challenge.[25] This tendency to preserve known cultures for succeeding generations seems to be one of the major challenges the Christian church has always faced in its mission history. David Bosch observes that "there have, of course, always been Christians (and theologians) who believed that their

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[24] Caleb Opoku Nyanni, "The Spirits and Transition: The Second Generation and the Church of Pentecost-UK" (PhD Thesis, Birmingham: The University of Birmingham, 2018), 303-316.
[25] See David George Burnett, "Charisma and Community in a Ghanaian Independent Church" (PhD Thesis, London: School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 1997), 265-66; Timothy John Padwick, "Spirit, Desire and the World: Roho Churches of Western Kenya in the Era of Globalization" (PhD Thesis, Birmingham: The University of Birmingham, 2003), 191-2; Tsekpoe, "'Local Species' in African Soil," 25-26.

understanding of the faith was 'objectively' accurate and, in effect, the only authentic rendering of Christianity."[26]

In order to mitigate this generational gap problem, which is a challenge to effective discipleship in multigenerational contexts not only for the CoP and the Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition but also for many Christian denominations in contemporary times, I propose that the direct mentoring model must be strengthened by using the principles of critical contextualization in our discipleship approach. For example, since missiology does not disparage the fact that Scripture, tradition, local particularities, and globalization will continue to determine what is contextual and consequently the success of Christian mission,[27] this same parameter could be applied in the attempt to disciple the next generation. The older generation should be encouraged in their direct mentoring approach to trust the younger ones and guide them to shape their own theologies and mission praxis without imposing old and outdated models on them. The Cape Town Commitment of the Lausanne Movement cogently contended:

> Children and young people are the Church of today, not merely of tomorrow. Young people have great potential as active agents in God's mission. They represent an enormous under-used pool of influencers with sensitivity to the voice of God and a willingness to respond to him . . . As we see in the Bible, God can and does use children and young – their prayer, their insights, their words, their initiatives – in changing hearts. They represent "new energy" to transform the world. Let us listen and not stifle their childlike spirituality with our adult, rationalistic approach.[28]

There is therefore the need for not only the Pentecostal-Charismatic tradition, but also for the entire Christian community in Africa and beyond to rethink direct mentoring by actively involving the youth and children in their decision-making process as well as the formation of contemporary theologies and mission praxis. The direct interaction between the mentor, who in most cases is an older person and the protégé, who is mostly a younger person, has the potential of reducing prejudices among the generations. Moreover, frequent mutual interaction among the generations in faith relationships can engender learning of new things by both the old and new generations from each other.

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[26] Bosch, *Transforming Mission, 185*.

[27] See Tsekpoe, "Local Species in African Soil," 240; Burnett, "Charisma and Community in a Ghanaian Independent Church," 276.

[28] The Lausanne Movement, *The Cape Town Commitment: A Confession of Faith and a Call to Action*, *The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation*, accessed November 12, 2019, www.lausanne.org /content/ctc/ctcommitment: The Lausanne Movement, 2011.

Just as it is generally accepted that there are elements in every culture that point to Christ and others that point away from him,[29] so also there are elements in the culture of every generation that either point to or away from him. As such, just as missionaries are consciously trained before being sent into geographical cultures different from their own, so also the older generation should be intentionally trained and exposed to the danger signs of entering into generational cultures different from theirs. The older generation must be assisted to learn how the principles of critical contextualization can be applied in multigenerational contexts.

This, I argue, has the capacity to respond to the current generational gap problem in contemporary Christian mission. It also has the potential to drive the church's transforming discipleship agenda into the foreseeable future. Until the older generation learns to courageously trust the younger ones with responsible freedom to transform some existing mission models and introduce contemporary approaches that could speak readily to their own contexts, the church may not experience the desired discipleship that can lead to the transformation of contemporary society.

Undoubtedly, the mission of the church goes beyond the Sunday worship service and ministry in church buildings. The church's mission encompasses the transformation of world systems and structures. Using a direct mentoring approach can give opportunity to the protégé not only to observe the worship service of the mentor but also the holistic life and ministry of the mentor beyond the church building. Brian Wakeman indicates, "Whether it is business management, nursing, teaching, or any other profession, trade, or role, mentoring can help people acquire the expertise to perform well, to serve the human race, and to create work and prosperity."[30] The church's direct mentoring approach should therefore be given a broader scope to help the next generation use their God-given potentials to serve humanity in all spheres of life for the purpose of societal transformation. Since Pentecostals place much emphasis on the power and the practical demonstration of the works of the Holy Spirit, direct mentoring can help the church achieve the aim of "Moving in the Spirit" whilst fulfilling the call to "Transforming Discipleship."

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[29] Kwame Bediako, "Gospel and Culture: Some Insights from the Experience of the Early Church," *Journal of African Christian Thought* 2, no. 2 (1999): 8–17.

[30] Brian E. Wakeman, "A Christian Perspective on Mentoring," *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 29, no. 4 (2012): 281.

the Pentecost University, Accra, Ghana, and the national chairman of Home and Urban Missions Committee of the Church of Pentecost.
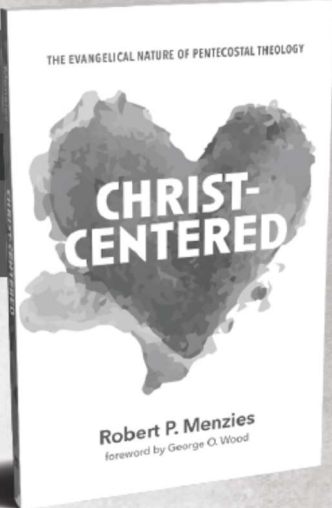
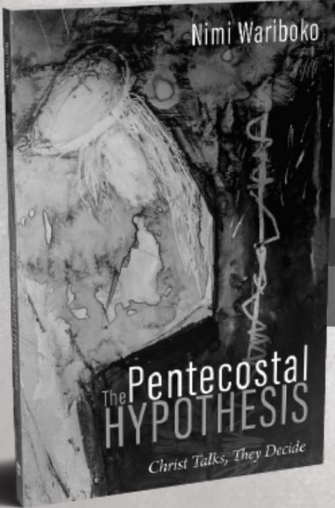# Global Christianity: Where Are We and How Did We Get Here?[1]

Part I of "Global Christianity Today, the Pentecostal-Charismatic Faith, and Its Theological Education for Tomorrow"

Wonsuk Ma

Abstract

Utilizing the statistics available, this study presents an overview of the two-millennium developments of global Christianity, observing significant shifts, followed by a focused look at the status of global Christianity in our time (1900-2050). The latter includes an examination of Christianity in each continent. This global and historical overview serves as the foundation for two subsequent studies.

Keywords: global Christianity, south-north shifts, growth rates

Introduction

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed a stream of studies on the change in global Christianity. The general argument concludes that there has been an end to Western Christian dominance, and the rise of "new" Christian heartlands with their impact on the nature of the Christian faith. For instance, Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* stirred the long-held assumption of Christianity as a Western religion.[2] The acceleration of connectivity and mobility has impacted every aspect of our lives, and religions have undergone various changes. The radical changes in global Christianity are part of the changes in the world. Nowadays, studies on global or world Christianity flood the bookshelves, and Christian publishers continue to add new material on the subject.[3]

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[1] The formative concept was presented at the Online Gathering of the Asia Pacific Theological Association, Sept 2020.

[2] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997).

[3] For example, see the recently launched series, Understanding World Christianity (Fortress Press).

The most significant publication in global Christianity is the third edition of the *World Christian Encyclopedia*.[4] First pioneered by David Barrett, an Anglican missionary to Kenya,[5] by its second edition,[6] the *Encyclopedia* had become *the* reference source for the study of global Christianity. The groundbreaking role of the statistical presentations in the first edition is considered by the team of the third edition as:

> [T]he first attempt to quantify the entire religious and nonreligious worlds; more specifically, it was the first research project to present the world's Christians in a single grouping, including 24 million adherents of previously unquantified African independent churches.[7]

Now closely linked with the Center for Study of Global Christianity (CSGC), the approximately two-decade gaps between the editions of the *Encyclopedia* have been filled by annual updates by Todd Johnson and his CSGC staff, published in the *International Bulletin of Mission Research*.[8] Also, the appearance of the *Atlas of Global Christianity* (2009) served as an intermediary update between the latter two editions of the *Encyclopedia*.[9]

This study is an informed bird's-eye view observation of global Christianity. Its scope is both historical and geographical. We begin with a sweeping survey of the two-millennium church history. Then, we zero in on the twentieth century and then the geographical spread of Christianity in our time.

Overview of Church History

The *Atlas* presents several iconic graphs and images brilliantly presenting the development of global Christianity in its history. Despite questions on

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[4] Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds., *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019). *WCE* (2019), henceforth.

[5] David B. Barrett, ed., *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World, AD 1900-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

[6] David B. Barrett, George Thomas Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson, eds., *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[7] Gina A. Zurlo, Todd M. Johnson, and Peter F. Crossing, "World Christianity and Mission 2020: Ongoing Shift to the Global South," *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 44, no. 1 (January 2020): 8.

[8] This annual update first appeared in the mid-1990s. For the latest, see Gina A. Zurlo, Todd M. Johnson, and Peter F. Crossing, "World Christianity and Mission 2021: Questions about the Future," *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 45, no. 1 (January 2021): 15-25.

[9] Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross, eds., *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

the accuracy of the statistics and the methodology used to generate the numbers, one critical value of the statistical presentation is the establishment of trajectories to trace the changes in global Christianity through its history. As long as the same method is consistently applied, the trajectories are reliable. I will display three observations in the development of global Christianity over the last two millennia.

"The Three-Quarter Circle"
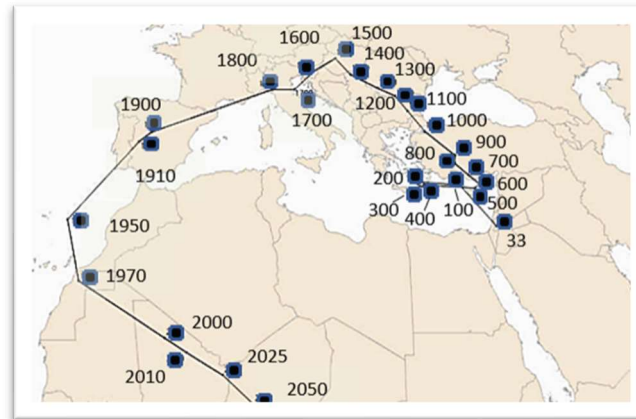
One of the visual illustrations is the "Trajectory of the Statistical Centre of Gravity of Global Christianity."[10] One noticeable change is the radical shift in the sixteenth century shown in at least two ways. The first is the direction of the expansion. In the first fifteen centuries (until AD 1500), the center moved consistently northwest, except for the first four formative centuries. Then, it made a drastic turn to the southwest, almost 90 degrees, for the next five centuries (1500 to the mid-1900s). Then, from the mid-1900s, the demographic center of global Christianity has made another sharp turn, yes, almost 90 degrees again, to the southeast. By looking at the trajectory in the map, the faith has made a three-quarter circle from its birthplace. If this is compared with other global religions such as Islam and Hinduism, the scope and intensity of the changes in global Christianity would be immediately evident.

The second observation is the acceleration of changes from the sixteenth century. For instance, in the nineteenth century, the center of Christianity moved from northern Italy to central Spain (a distance of 1,278 km). This is compared with the move in half a millennium between 1000 and 1500 from the northwest of Turkey to Hungary (1,080 km). The rate of

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[10] *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 53. The map is slightly modified to highlight the statistical centers.

changes in the twentieth century is more staggering, a whopping 4,315 km![11] One may ask if the distances always reflect the extent and intensity of changes. Regardless, everyone would agree that the rate of change has accelerated in recent decades and will continue.

Toward One-Third of the Population

The "mother" table[12] out of which the above map was produced also includes the Christian proportion of the world population in each century. I used the data of the table to create a graphic presentation. Christianity has grown
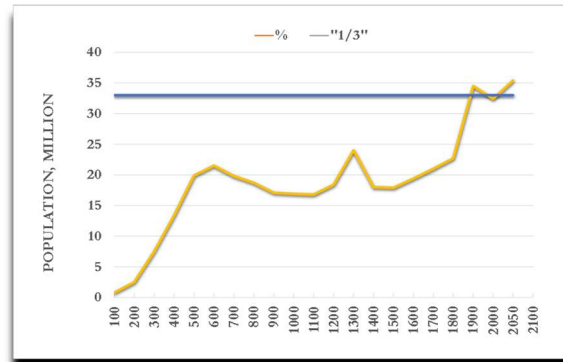
steadily toward one-third of the world's population (the straight horizontal line). Although it surpassed the one-third mark briefly in the early twentieth century, only around the present time, has global Christianity achieved this milestone and expects to sustain its growth beyond it. Another question may be raised: Is it significant to set the one-third population mark as a milestone? This graph is another illustration of Christian statistics: its value lies not only in the individual numbers but also in trajectories connecting them. The upward trend emerges, even if one may question the validity or timing of the crossing of the one-third mark.

The graph also identifies two historical points of major setbacks to the continuing growth of Christianity. We would easily suspect the first as the rise of Islam in the seventh century and its ensuing expansion in the ancient Christian heartlands in the Middle East and North Africa. It took seven centuries to recover the previous peak of the Christian ratio against the world population. The second setback is recorded in the fourteenth century, and the most significant force was the rise and expansion of the Ottoman Empire. This Turkish empire spanned territory from Northern Africa, the Horn of Africa, and Western Asia to Southeastern, Central, and part of Eastern Europe as well as the Caucasus. It also conquered Constantinople and ended the Byzantine (Christian) Empire (AD 1453). The graph indicates that there were another five centuries before Christianity recovered its fourteenth century level. The growth of Christianity has

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[11] *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 53.

[12] *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 53.

competed with the growth of population and other religions. We will visit the third and recent setback below.

South-North Oscillation

Another graph from the *Atlas* reveals millennial shifts of global Christianity between the southern continents (Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania, or the "Global South") and the northern ones (Europe and North America, or the "Global North").[13] According to Johnson's calculations, from the beginning of the church to the tenth century, more Christians lived in the Global South than in the North. As observed in the above map, until the fifteenth century, Europe held the majority of the Christian population. The rise of Islam in the seventh century further accelerated this northwestward movement, as this new religious force systematically wiped out the Christian presence in Northern Africa and the Middle East, the heartland of early Christianity.[14]
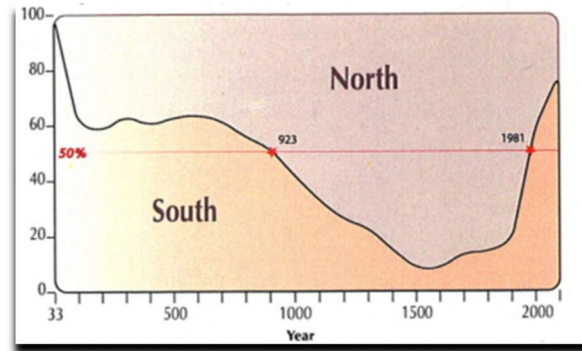
In the next millennium (until the early 1980s), Christians were concentrated in the Global North. For instance, according to the same table, 92% of the world's Christians were found in the North in the sixteenth century. We may also recall that this was the same century when global Christianity shifted drastically as its center of gravity turned toward the southwest. In the "one-third" graph, we also observed that the second setback of Christian growth occurred because of the influence of the Ottoman Empire from the fourteenth century, and it lasted approximately five centuries.[15] The "Age of Discovery," led initially by Catholic kingdoms through their maritime expeditions, saw newly conquered and subsequent Christianized lands in the southern continents. The beginning of this

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[13] *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 58-59.

[14] I found helpful the century-by-century briefs by Patrick J. Johnstone, *The Future of the Global Church: History, Trends and Possibilities* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 34, 35. See especially chapters "The Empires of AD 700" and "The Christian World of AD 600-700."

[15] Johnstone, *The Future of the Global Church*, 48-55 for the period of Ottoman influence.

southward shift was not due to the decline of Christianity in the North. Latin American states and the Philippines are prime examples of the era, further tilting the Christian balance southward. This graph reminds us that Christianity began as a "Southern" religion, and it was only in the second millennium that it turned to become a "Northern" or Western religion. We are the first generation of global Christianity as the "Southern" religion, for the second time.

An Observation

Any development of a religion, especially on a global scale, involves a complex dynamic, and politics always play a large role. Johnstone's presentation demonstrates the impact of the empires on the expansion and recession of Christianity. The other actor in the shaping of Christianity is competing religions. In particular, Christianity's constant engagement and struggle with Islam since the latter's birth is most pronounced, as it often combines religion and politics in its identity.

Andrew Walls, one of the most eminent modern-day mission historians, provides an intriguing observation that the two religions evolve on different dynamics: a serial move for Christianity and a progressive one for Islam.[16] His conclusion is based on the comparison of the retention of their believers by each religion. He argues that Islam has performed better than Christianity claiming that "lands that became Muslim have remained Muslim. The same cannot be said of the lands that became Christian."[17] While Islam possesses the "resilience" which Christianity lacks in retaining its believers and territories, Christianity expands ahead of Islam. How can this be explained? Walls attributes it to the dynamic nature of the Christian faith: "withering at the [previous] centre . . . was accompanied or closely followed by blossoming at or beyond the margins."[18] This serial movement describes the life-cycle of a Christian center: birth, strength, giving birth to another territory, and then recession. In part, this theory explains the constant motion of the numerical center of global Christianity in every era.

However, pioneering new territories in the "serial" movement of Christianity is more than a passive response to a push. The push is often an adverse socio-political and religious force oppressing a Christian community. However, the Christian faith from its beginning has been inherently missionary, which Walls cites as his second general observation.

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[16] Andrew F. Walls, "Mission History as the Substructure of Mission Theology," *Swedish Missiological Themes* 93, no. 3 (2005): 367–68. An abbreviated version is found as "Christianity across Twenty Centuries," in *Atlas of Global Christianity*, 48–49.

[17] Walls, "Mission History," 368.

[18] Walls, "Mission History," 368.

Christian expansion occurs as the faith crosses ethnic and cultural boundaries. The persecution against the Jerusalem church (Acts 8) resulted in the dispersion of the Jewish Christians, spreading the Christian message even to non-Jews. And this development also shifted the Christian center from Jerusalem to Antioch and then to Ephesus. The "invasion" of Islam over Christian Northern Africa and West Asia caused the reach of the gospel to the vast areas of today's Eastern Europe and Russia. The conversion of the barbarians also coincided with the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the rise of the Byzantine Empire, causing another shift of the center of Christianity. This makes Christianity a religion of pilgrimage without a permanent center comparable to Mecca for Islam.

As the faith is transmitted to a new socio-cultural context and expressed in another language, Christianity undergoes an adaptation process, or the "translation" of the gospel to be relevant to the local culture, expressed in the vernacular language. Walls argues that the incarnation of Jesus Christ in human flesh is both the central affirmation of Christian revelation and a form of translation.[19] This process is also found in the transmission of the life and work of Jesus Christ. Even though Jesus and his disciples spoke Aramaic, the writers of the New Testament wrote in Greek, translating concepts and terms into another language. This principle of the translation of the faith was formalized by the Jerusalem Council so as to not impose circumcision and the Torah on non-Jewish Christians (Act 15). Hence, Paul had to condemn Judaizers in Galatia who insisted on the preservation of the Jewish element in non-Jewish believers. This receptor-oriented transmission of the Christian message into vernacular cultures is the genius of the Christian religion and has repeated itself throughout its history. As a consequence, there are myriads of local versions of Christianity today, as well as different faith traditions often expressed in the various denominations. This constant interaction of the Christian message with the receptor culture, language, and thought patterns has kept Christianity as a dynamic and living religion, despite its disadvantageous serial movement. This dynamic nature of the Christian faith in local and vernacular expressions has led Walls to believe:

> Much confusion in Christian-Muslim relations has arisen from the assumption that the Qur'an is for Muslims what the Bible is for Christians; rather, the Qur'an is for Muslims what Christ is for Christians.[20]

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[19] Walls, "Mission History," 373.
[20] Walls, "Mission History," 373.

However, this translation process goes beyond finding an equivalent expression of a word or concept in another language; it expands its theological horizons as the Christian faith encounters new local issues unknown to the previous context. This "theological expansion," a term coined by Walls, leads to theological creativity in negotiating with the local culture and its thought system. The gospel has to answer local questions in a way that the local receptor can meaningfully comprehend. This process, according to Walls, implies not "substituting something new for something old, but turning what is already there."[21] Through this process, the gospel gradually impacts and transforms the receptor culture and society. On the other hand, when this process of translation or meaningful transmission is overlooked, the receptors inherit only forms and rituals but not the message of the Christian faith. This "translation" theory is one way of explaining the process through which the Christian faith encounters, negotiates, and eventually transforms the receptor culture.[22]
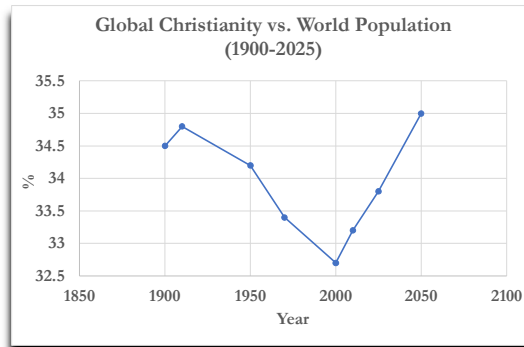
Global Christianity in Our Day

As noticed in the earlier map and graphs, the changes in global Christianity in the twentieth century and beyond are unprecedented. This section will elaborate on several key points, and they are discussed in the context of the larger picture of the development of global Christianity.

(Un)Growth and Expansion

The third setback of Christian expansion took place in the twentieth century. The visual presentation of the Christian proportion of the world population shows the high watermark in 1910 (34.8%) when the first international missionary conference took place in Edinburgh. Unfortunately, global Christianity declined in its proportion of the

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[21] Walls, "Mission History," 375.
[22] Many followed and developed this theory, e.g., Lamin O. Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, 2nd ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).

population until the
end of the century
(32.7% in 2000)
before it began a
growth momentum.

Annual Growth Rates (2000-2020)

World Population: 1.20%
Christianity: 1.19%
Islam: 1.93%

This "decline,"
however, should be
understood within
the reality of a
tremendous increase
in the number of
Christians. In the
"declining" twentieth century, the world's Christians almost quadrupled—
from 558 million in 1900 to 1,986 million by the end of the century.[23]
Africa led the race, followed by Asia, as we will see in detail below. The
twentieth century was also the century of global mission with the historic
Edinburgh Missionary Conference for mission cooperation, the increase of
schools of mission, increasing mission research, and the rise of non-western
mission forces. This exponential growth and development led one mission
scholar to call it "the Unexpected Christian Century!"[24]

Yet, the picture of the "decline" is a serious concern as this is a race
with the growth of the world's population and other religions, especially
Islam. However, unlike the first two setbacks, Christians cannot blame
Islam for this decline. Indeed, many have questioned why the continuous
advancement of Islam, as a "progressive" religion through its existence
even up to the early twentieth century, has also experienced a somber
setback in the West.[25] Despite its serious challenges to Christian
advancement, this time, Islam is not responsible. Then, the attention is on
Christianity itself: What went wrong after the historic commitment to
cooperation in mission at the Edinburgh conference? How about the
general sense that the noble goal to "evangelize the world in this
generation" was reachable as the Christian West ruled the majority of the
world? The two world wars, fought mostly among Christian nations, do not
entirely explain the decline, nor does the independence of the colonized
southern countries. Despite the exponential growth of the Christian

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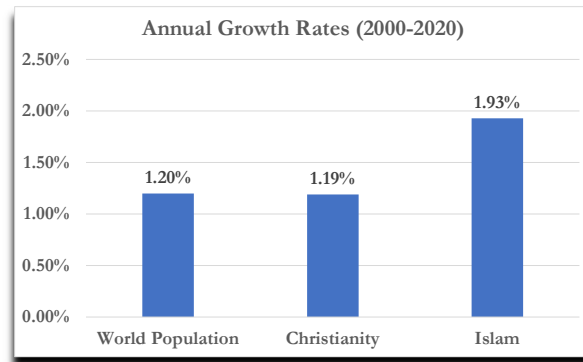
[23] All the data for this discussion, unless stated otherwise, is taken from Todd M.
Johnson et al., "Christianity 2017: Five Hundred Years of Protestant Christianity,"
International Bulletin of Mission Research 41, no. 1 (October 2016): 41–52.
[24] Scott W. Sunquist, *The Unexpected Christian Century: The Reversal and Transformation
of Global Christianity, 1900-2000* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015).
[25] For instance, Bernard Lewis, *What Went Wrong? The Clash between Islam and
Modernity in the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

population, Christianity lagged behind the population growth. During the same period, Islam excelled. One answer would be the decline of Christianity in the West from the middle of the previous century. Still, the same question is raised: What happened to the optimism of the western Protestant church, which led the Edinburgh strategy? Another argument may be the population explosion in the twentieth century: from 1.6 billion in 1900 to 6 billion in 2000. But Islam surpassed this. Part of the answer may lie in the "serial" nature of the Christian movement. For non-territorial Christian churches, especially evangelicals, each generation is a new mission field. There is much to look at and learn about in the century, about Christian glories and failures.

The growth curve of Christianity for the new century, therefore, is a refreshing reality. This growth is partly attributed to the slowing of population growth, although the population still outgrew Christianity by a 0.01% margin in 2020. As observed earlier, however, the race between Christianity and Islam has been complex. The slight edge which Christianity has held in the total number of adherents so far may come to an end. Johnson and his team compare the annual growth rate between 2000 and 2020: 1.19% for Christianity versus 1.93% for Islam. The accuracy of such a small gap can be easily contested as publications such as the *World Christian Encyclopedia* have to process a massive amount of data. For instance, Johnson and his team downgraded the Christian annual growth rate and the population growth rate in their latest presentation from their 2017 report.[26]

The Widening North-South Gap

The *World Christian Encyclopedia* presents the profile of an average Christian today as "a non-White woman living in the Global South, with lower-than-average levels of societal safety and proper health care." This is a radically different profile from a hundred years ago—a "White, affluent European."[27] Part of the ongoing shift in global Christianity is the parity between the Global South and the North: the South continues its growth trajectory and the North its declining trend. As seen in the graph, in 1900, 82% of the world's Christians lived in the North and only 18% in the South. In 2020, the balance was completely reversed: 33% in the North and 67% in the South.[28] Today we witness Walls' assertion that the growth and contraction of Christianity takes place simultaneously.[29] The overview of each continent below will elaborate on this widening south-north chasm.

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[26] Johnson et al., "Christianity 2017: Five Hundred Years of Protestant Christianity," 47-48.
[27] *WCE* (2019), 3.
[28] *WCE* (2019), 4.
[29] Walls, "Mission History as the Substructure of Mission Theology," 368.

North/South distribution

1900	82%	18%
2020	33% 67%	

% of all Christians in: Global North | Global South
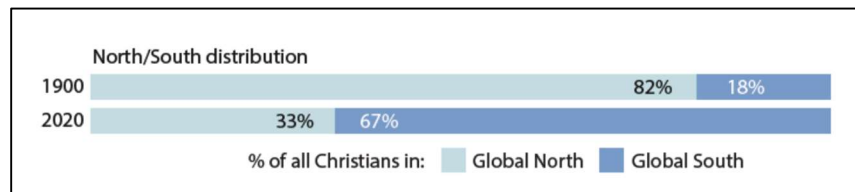
Equally concerning is the rate of the south-north gap. The graph illustrating the distribution of global Christians between the Global South and North (above) reveals that the rate of the current south-north shift is almost a "J" curve. Such stiff change happened only once, in the first century, when Christianity reached European territories. With a small number of Christians, a relatively minor movement (such as Paul's missionary journey to Europe) impacted the balance. This accelerated gap can only be explained by rapid growth in the Global South and a fast decline in the North. Then how can we expect that Christianity will reverse its downward trend and begin to grow against the world population? If the Global North consistently bleeds, the only possibility is the growth in the South, large enough to compensate for the loss and to still add more members. To achieve this is a goal that is more than ambitious, particularly given the massive number of people it will require to claim one more percent of the world's population. Surprisingly, this is what the demographic watchers anticipate!

Continentally Speaking

In the study below, the analysis of the macro landscape of Christianity includes global and continental (or regional) information. Each overview will follow the same discussion: the development of the Christian movement between 1900 and 2050 along with the consideration of significant trends.

Africa

Africa witnessed the most dramatic change in the religious landscape. The graph illustrates it among the three major religions in Africa: African traditional religion, Christianity, and Islam (by millions). Christianity began as the smallest among in the group in 1900. However, by the end of the twentieth century, Christian growth outpaced Islam, and the gap is expected to grow wider. The annual growth rates of Christianity and Islam in 2000-2020 were 2.82 and 2.45%, respectively. African Christianity has been growing fastest among the continents. Four Christian megablocks in 2020 were: Protestants (258.0 million), Catholics (236.1),

Pentecostal/Charismatics (230.2), and Evangelicals (161.7). Surprisingly, the Catholics recorded the highest annual growth rate of 3.02%.[30]

There are two particular observations of African Christianity. The first is the rise of non-missionary and indigenous forms of churches. The rise and growth of African Initiated or Independent Churches in their incredible diversity
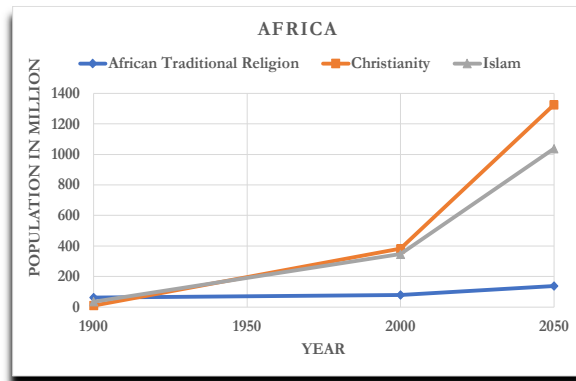
added a large number of Christians to the total Christian population. Making up the bulk of the Independent Church in the *Encyclopedia's* categorization, they are also spread within the existing churches such as Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches.[31] They engage with African cultures taking their religious worldview, traditions, and symbols of Christian worship and spirituality. They also tend to be more Pentecostal and Charismatic in their beliefs and practices. Healings and exorcisms, therefore, are a regular part of their Christian life. The second observation is its relationship with Islam. Even though Christian presence in Africa goes all the way to the beginning centuries, when the modern Protestant European missionaries arrived on the continent en masse in the nineteenth, Islam had established its strongholds, especially in the northern and Indian coastal regions. With the fast expansion of Christianity, its engagement with Islam has become more frequent and more violent. Considering Walls' general observation, African Christianity demonstrates that it can flourish where Islam has a long historical presence. Christian growth has been a Sub-Saharan phenomenon as Christianity declined in Northern Africa. Overall, however, Africa has been and will lead the growth of global Christianity.

Asia

Asia remains the least Christianized continent today, only 8.2% of its massive 4.6 billion. In comparison, Islam claims 27.4% and Hindu 22.8%, followed by Buddhism's 11.6% of the population.[32] Indeed, all the major

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[30] The data is from *WCE* (2019), 8-9.

[31] *WCE* (2019), 9.

[32] *WCE* (2019), 10.

religions, including Christianity, were born on this continent. The established religions, therefore, pose the most severe challenge to the development of Christianity in Asia. For this reason, the growth of Christianity is encouraging. Its growth rate is only second to Islam among the six major religious groups. Indeed, it grew in the twentieth century twice as fast as the general population.[33]

As in Africa, Christianity has fared differently in various parts of this vast continent. West Asia, the birth and initial strongholds of Christianity, has steadily lost Christians due to immigration to the West caused by religious and political conflicts. At the same time, East and
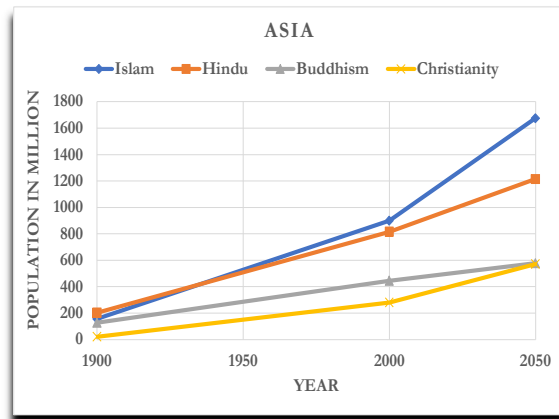
Southeast Asia have experienced the rise and growth of Christianity. The most crucial is the re-appearance and rapid expansion of the Chinese church from the 1980s after the Cultural Revolution. Estimated between 30 million in the government report to 100 million,[34] Christianity has the highest annual growth rate of 1.42% among all the religions. Within the Christian groups, "Protestants" grew at an unprecedented rate of 3.71%![35] Johnston points out that, unlike most other Asian countries, the majority of Chinese do not regularly participate in religious activities.[36] Although less dramatic, the Indonesian church also contributed to the growth of Asian Christianity. In this majority Muslim nation, Christianity grew at the annual rate of 1.40%, faster than Islam at 1.30% from 2000-2020.[37] Other growth points such as the Philippines and South Korea have added to not only the net growth of Asian Christianity, but also the eastward turn of the trajectory of the statistical center of global Christianity from the 1950s. Equally significant are the political changes, especially in the final quarter of the previous century. With the fall of Communism, many countries opened their doors to outside influences, including Christianity. Countries like

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[33] *WCE* (2019), 10.

[34] *WCE* (2019), 195 reports 80.0 million Christians in 2020.

[35] *WCE* (2019), 195.

[36] Johnstone, *The Future of the Global Church*, 98.

[37] The 2020 Christian population was 33.2 million; see *WCE* (2019), 394.

Nepal, Mongolia, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia received missionaries both from the West and non-West. It is encouraging that Asian churches became active in missionary outreach. Persecution is also a part of Christian life in many parts of Asia doming both from religious and political systems. Like in Africa, Asian worldviews allow Christians to maintain a ready openness to the supernatural work of God. Nonetheless, the future growth of Christianity will come at a high cost.

Europe

For the past 120 years, Europe's Christian population has declined from 95% (1900) of the population to 76% (2020). Far more serious is the secularization trend: the combination of agnostics (13.5%) and atheists (2.1%) made up 15.6% of the population in 2020. Because of this steady loss of Christians and the decline of the overall population, the United Kingdom, for example, saw only 20% of all live births baptized in the 1990s (compared to 60% in 1950).[38] In such contexts, a relatively small presence of Muslims (7.2% in 2020) pose a serious threat to Christianity.[39] As the overall population shrinks, the number of Muslims has steadily increased through migration from Asia and Africa, biological multiplication, and the "progressive" dynamic of Islam. And Islam alone has registered positive growth while Christianity has constantly shed its membership, and this is what worries Christian observers.

In this grim prospect, there are several sectors which present small but important positive signs. The first is the immigrant Christian communities, not only from Africa and Asia but also from Latin America and Eastern Europe. In the United Kingdom, the *Encyclopedia* calls the growth of Black and Minority Ethnic Christians "the most significant change in contemporary British Christianity."[40] The massive immigration from the 1950s onward has significantly changed the traditional "White British" demography, especially in urban centers. The intakes consist of diverse religious groups such as Hindus and Muslims. The same population movement has also helped the growth of Christianity. The *Encyclopedia* reports that in 2012, around 40% of regular church attendants were either Black or Asian.[41] The largest church in London is a Nigerian congregation. Similar scenes are common in large cities in Europe. In Norway, when I attended an ecumenical mission conference, an Ethiopian (Lutheran) choir of immigrant Christians added vibrancy and liveliness to the increasingly nominal host churches. The other encouraging sector is the Pentecostal-

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[38] *WCE* (2019), 833.
[39] *WCE* (2019), 12.
[40] *WCE* (2019), 835.
[41] *WCE* (2019), 835.

Charismatic and Evangelical churches. They are relatively small in size (15.9 and 21.1 million, respectively) compared to the historic Catholic and Orthodox churches (248.4 and 205.1 million in 2020, respectively). But their annual growth rates are 0.58 and 0.41, respectively, compared to -0.10 and 0.25%, respectively.[42] However, due to their small sizes, it will take the big two, accounting for 60.1% of the total European Christians, to alter the future trajectory of Christianity.

Latin America

Among the three continents of the Global South, Latin America is radically different from the other two. Since the sixteenth century, the continent has remained predominantly Christian. Thus, a casual observation detects only small changes. But there has been a decline nonetheless: Christians accounted for 95.2% in 1900, and 92.1% in 2020, and the 2.1% loss represents 14 million people! It is the "Non-religious" who grew fastest: 4.1% annual growth compared with 1.16% for Christianity. Also notable is the increase of Spiritists. Still a relatively smaller number (14.4 million in 2020), it ranks second after Christianity among the religions.[43]

While the continent has remained saturated with Christianity for centuries, the internal shifts in recent decades are significant. The first is the shrinking of the Catholic Church from 89.9% in 1900 to 76.4% in 2020. It is expected to slide further to 69.0% by 2050. In the same period, Independents grew from 0.1% to 8.8%, and are projected to reach 10.9% in 2050. More impressive are Pentecostal/Charismatics who grew from 0.0% (1900) to 29.4% (2020), and could reach 31.2% in 2050.[44] Today, Catholics and Pentecostal/Charismatics are the two largest Christian families on the continent. As a large portion of the Catholic Church has turned Charismatic, as in the Protestant churches, Latin American Christianity is becoming increasingly Charismatic. This renewal force, for example within the historic churches, may have sustained the vibrancy of Christianity.

It appears that any saturated Christian religion may head towards one of two futures: nominalization leading to a decline or the renewal of faith resulting in missionary vision. If the path of European Christianity is the former, Latin America may be the latter. After a long missionary tradition in the Catholic Church, in the twentieth century the Protestant churches began to send their missionaries. The 2020 figures place Brazil as the second top missionary-sending country in the world with 40,000

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[42] *WCE* (2019), 12.
[43] *WCE* (2019), 14.
[44] *WCE* (2019), 14.

missionaries, surpassed only by the USA (135,000), and followed by South Korea (35,000).[45]

North America

Christianity in North America, particularly that of the United States of America (US), has been the global center of influence, practically in every aspect of the Christian life. Its innovation, diversity, and massive resources

have made US churches the leading force for the shaping and expansion of global Christianity.

However, like the other parts of the Global North, North American churches have steadily declined: 97.1% of the population in 1900, 72.6% in 2020, and expected to record 65.7% in 2050. The annual growth rate between 2000-2020 was 0.27% (against 0.83% for the population), significantly lagging behind the population growth. In the same period, Islam grew from 0.0% (1900) to 1.7% (2020), and is expected to reach 2.9% in 2050. The annual growth rate of 1.7% is twice as fast as the population growth and more than six times that of Christianity! Buddhism is also part of this religious race. However, the "Non-religious" has been fastest growing category at a whopping 3.37%, 12.5 times faster than Christian growth! This category accounted for 20.5% of the total population of the continent in 2020 and is expected to reach 25.8% in 2050.[46] The decline of Christianity, therefore, has occurred on two fronts: immigration (adding to the non-Christian population) and secularization.

However, immigration has also contributed to North American Christianity. While Protestants recorded the largest loss, from 48.9% of the total Christian population in 1900 to a mere 15.6% in 2020, Catholics increased due to immigration (especially from Latin America) from 15.9% of the Christian total in 1900 to 23.8% in 2020. The Evangelicals declined until recently (50.9% of the total Christians in 1900, and bottoming at 18.3%), but now have recovered and should reach 20.5% in 2050. Its

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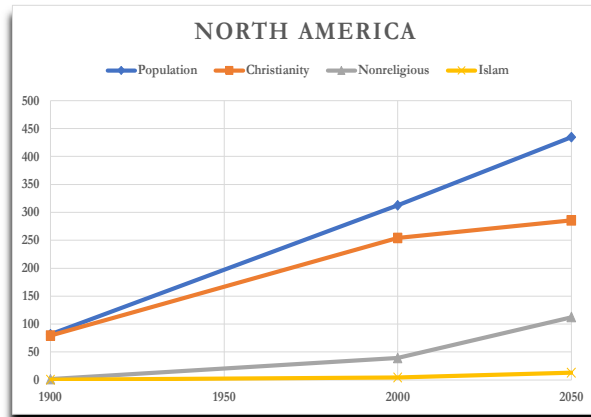
[45] *WCE* (2019), 32.
[46] *WCE* (2019), 16.

annual growth rate (0.83%) is identical to the population growth. The most dramatic is the rise of Pentecostal/Charismatics: from 0.1% (or 46.1 million) in 1900 to 18.4% (or 67.8 million) in 2020, expected to grow to 20.5% (or 89.0 million) in 2050. It is recording the highest annual growth at 1.17%.[47] Nonetheless, the US leads globally in the missionary movement, theological education, disaster relief, and publications. While historic churches struggle to arrest the steady decline, new forms of churches continue rising to respond to the changing social contexts, successfully attracting the younger generations. With the onslaught of secularization and immigration, the decline seems inevitable as in Europe. On the other hand, the pioneering experimental spirit may give birth to new forms of the church, reversing the downward spiral and influencing struggling churches all over the world.

Oceania

The smallest of all the continents, Oceania, consists of Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and various island nations of the Pacific. Christianity has steadily declined throughout the twentieth century: from 77.4% of the population in 1900 to 65.1% in 2020, and is expected to slide further to 60.5% in 2050. As is always the case, however, the Christian landscape in Oceania differs remarkably among the regions. Australia and New Zealand, which have the largest number of residents on the continent, lost their Christian share from 97% of the population in 1900 to 54% in 2020, following the path of European Christianity. Both secularization and demographic changes due to immigration are the main causes of the decline. However, Melanesian Christianity grew from 15% of its population in 1900 to 95% in 2020! Papua New Guinea's Christian population grew from 4.0% (or 46,900) in 1900 to 95.2% (or 8.7 million) in 2020.[48] This significant growth took place after its independence from Australia in 1975.

It is the "Non-religious" who gained most from Christianity's losses, growing from 0.7% of the population in 1900 to 25.3% in 2020, more than a quarter of the entire population. This category ranks second after the steady waning of Christianity. By 2050, they are expected to claim close to one-third of the population (29.2%). Because of the relatively small population of Oceania, the development of any segment would impact the continental religious landscape. Among the large Christian groups, Evangelicals (at an annual growth rate of 1.25%), Pentecostal/Charismatics (2.08%), and Independents (2.12%) have recorded encouraging growth numbers, although the Evangelicals tread behind the 1.54% annual population growth. They make up 30% of Oceanian Christianity.

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[47] *WCE* (2019), 16.
[48] *WCE* (2019), 627.

A closer look at Christianity in each continental reveals the remarkable diversity in their development (both growth and decline) and the contextual dynamics influencing how Christianity travels. The parity between the Global North

Annual Christian Growth Rate (2000-20)

Africa 2.82; Asia 1.52; Europe 0.03; Latin America 1.16; North America 0.27; Oceania 0.63; World 1.19
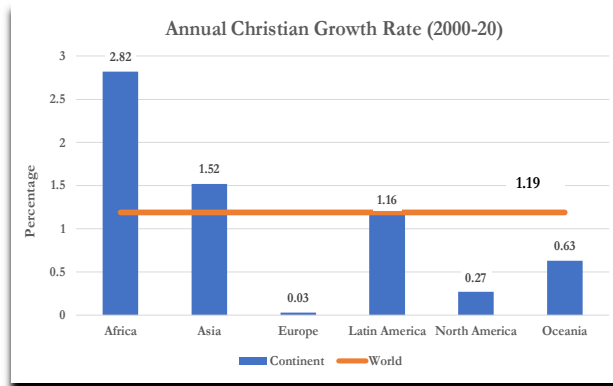
and South is remarkable' . The annual growth rates seen in the table illustrate the North lagging below the world's population growth, while the South is outgrowing it. The net global gain, despite the steady loss in the North, is fueled by the growth in the South, whose population accounts for 85.7% of the world.

After So Many Numbers . . .
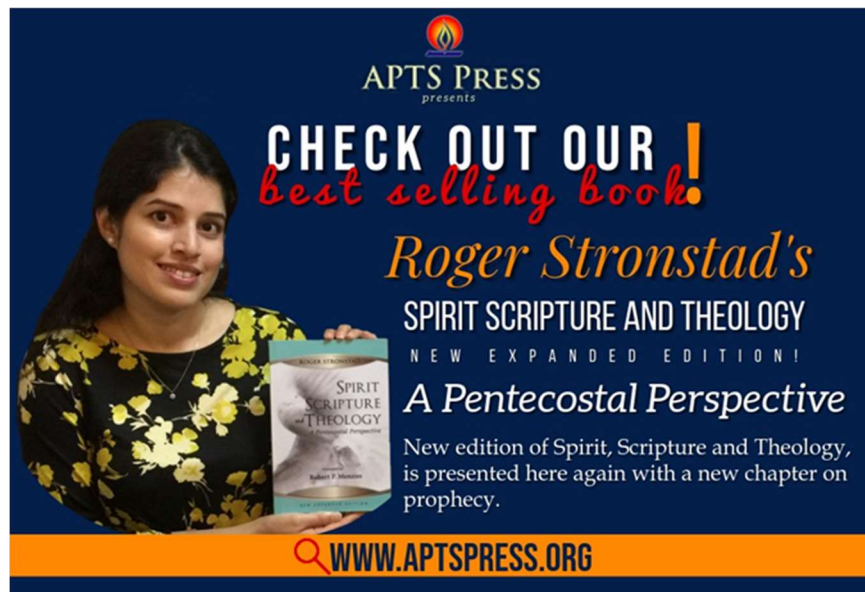
This study began with the objective to study global trends in Christianity. Because the scope has been global, the study only looked at the world and continental scenes. Local (including national and regional) studies are essential to reveal the living nature of the Christian faith. But this study did not intend to deal with this dimension, rather it sought to extrapolate key trends using the statistics. Thus, this study has been full of numbers, making it challenging for readers to fully process. However, the numbers serve as dots that we can connect for the emerging trends. Through the study, several megatrends of global Christianity have surfaced for the period between the beginning of the last century and the middle of the current one. For this reason, I am less concerned about the questions raised around the accuracy of the data. As long as the same criteria are consistently applied, I am confident that we can generate various trajectories and establish key trends.

While the numbers say a lot, they do not contain the dynamics and stories. For example, the "One-Third Graph" does not tell us what events took place in the seventh century and why Christianity suffered for the next seven centuries. Only historical information would reveal the reasons for the sudden interruption in the trajectory. For example, the south-north shifts of Christianity are more than the replacement of numbers: the context impacts the shaping of Christian faith, including its spirituality and worship, theology, and mission. The deeply engrained vestiges of

Christendom are one example, which requires a critical evaluation by the global Christian community.

   To crack the numbers, this study started with a historical overview through its two-millennium life, then took a closer look at modern-day developments. The study also visited each continent to overview recent developments with projections for the next decades. I am well aware that the study needs to overview the major Christian families, and this will be part of the following study.

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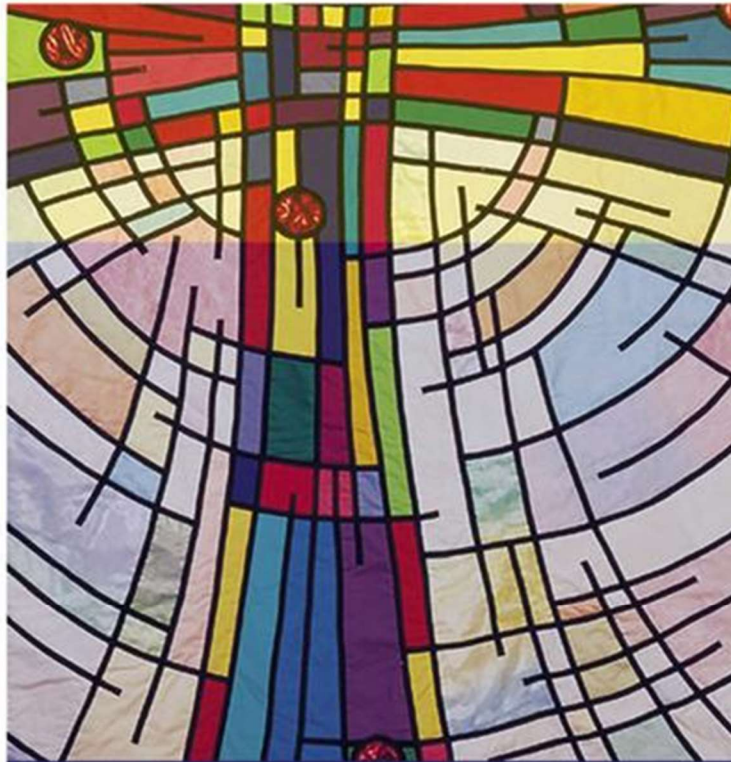
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Called to God's Mission: Report of the Third Round of the International Dialogue between Representatives of the World Communion of Reformed Churches and Representatives of the Pentecostal World Fellowship, 2014-2020

> Introduction for *Pentecostal Education* readers,
>
> Classical Pentecostals, now representing the Pentecostal World Fellowship, have engaged in a bilateral dialogue with members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches for about 25 years. In spring 2020 the two teams published their third common document that focuses on the theme of mission in their respective traditions. The dialogue partners reflected on how mission relates to the topics of salvation, the work of the Holy Spirit, the church and eschatology. As a result, a deeper mutual understanding evolved on what mission means to the two church traditions, be it from the reading of Scripture or with regard to practical engagement. This document is significant not only in terms of what the two groups can affirm together, but just as importantly how they can build relationships, deepen their understanding of discipleship and work toward common witness. At the beginning of this process was the joyous affirmation that it is God who calls the church to mission.
>
> Jean-Daniel Plüss

I. Introduction

Scripture:

> [16]For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. [17]"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17)[1]

> [14]But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how

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[1] All citations of Scripture used throughout this report are from the New Revised Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? [15]And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:14-15)

[18]And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. [19]Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20]and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

1. We live in exciting times! Many are responding to the gospel and many more are engaged in God's mission (*missio Dei*) among all people. How can we engage in God's mission authentically? What constitutes mission today? How does mission engage people in our communities? How do we read the signs of our times in a way that helps us respond to God's call to mission? This document is a testimony to how Pentecostal and Reformed Christians respond together to God's mission into which we have been called. We are exploring together what we think is important for the mission of the Church today.

2. The Reformed and Pentecostal representatives, meeting from 2014-2020, are grateful to God and are encouraged by what we share in our vision of God's mission and how we respond to it. Through these years, the Rev. Dr. Karla Ann Koll served as the Co-Chair for the Reformed team, while the Rev. Dr. Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. served as Co-Chair on behalf of the Pentecostals. Given the topic of "Mission," the dialogue members thought it was essential to experience something of different parts of the world where mission is an ongoing reality. As a result, they met at the Reformed retreat center, Megbékélés Háza, in Berekfürdő, Hungary, 16-21 November 2014; at the St. Paul Cultural Center in Antalya, Turkey, 1-7 December 2015; at the Latin American Biblical University in San José, Costa Rica, 2-6 December 2016; at the Alphacrucis College in Parramatta, Australia, 1-5 December 2017; in Legon, Accra, Ghana, 29 November-4 December 2018; and at the Asia Pacific Theological Seminary in Baguio City, Philippines, 23-30 October 2019. On two occasions, drafting groups met, first from 18-22 August 2019 at the home of Jean-Daniel and Susan Plüss, in East Booth Bay, Maine, to begin a draft for use in Baguio, and then at the World Communion of Reformed Churches office in Hannover, Germany, 5-8 March 2020 to complete the drafting process.

3. Participants have wrestled with their differences and engaged in a process of discovering commonalities regarding their participation in God's mission. As we have spent several years together on our common journey, we have been surprisingly encouraged by the realization that we have sensed the Holy Spirit moving among us. The Lord of the Church prayed

that his followers should be one for the sake of the one mission. Yet very often, what the world experiences is our divisive tendencies in mission, leading to confusion and apathy. In addition, religious sentiments have often been drawn into conflicts and violence in the world today in a manner which beckons us to come to new understandings of engagement in God's mission. With so much at stake, the different Church families in the world cannot afford to engage in mission in a manner that promotes division and competition.

4. This report builds upon the work of the first two rounds of the Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue, "Word and Spirit: Church and World (1996-2000)," and "Experience in Christian Faith and Life (2001-2011)." Both of these reports briefly mention the importance of God's mission in the world (*missio Dei*). This document takes the focus on mission further.

5. Reformed and Pentecostal churches have a rich history of engaging in mission. They have responded in their own ways to the task to which they were called and the challenges they have met. Much has changed in the field of mission over the past century. For instance, mission no longer originates largely with professional missionaries. Mission is no longer viewed according to a "sender-recipient" paradigm. It originates everywhere and it goes everywhere. Like much of the Church, the centre of gravity for Reformed and Pentecostal churches now lies in the Global South. Today, the whole church is involved in mission, which is multidirectional. Since the world of the 21st century is interconnected, Pentecostal and Reformed churches increasingly face similar issues. With such changes in mind, participants in this third round of our dialogue decided to offer a more globally inclusive and theologically nuanced understanding of mission that takes seriously these and other recent changes in mission thinking and practice.

6. At its best, all theology, including a theology of mission, needs to be dialogical. By recognizing this fact, we become more aware of how we use words to describe our theological understandings. In listening carefully to one another, sometimes we find that we use words differently, often leading to different practices. Thus, participants have tried to engage each other's theological language with great care and mutual respect. Each Christian and each church perceives God's call to mission within a particular context, a particular theological tradition, and within a particular ecclesiastical structure. Reformed and Pentecostal Christians have sometimes perceived God's call to mission differently and have acted accordingly. At times, this has generated tensions between them. Even within both church families, the understanding and practices of mission may vary widely. Yet, we realize that God's mission is one because God is one. This dialogue process has offered us the opportunity to explore

different understandings and practices of mission. It has allowed us to identify points of convergence as well as tension, to ask questions of one another, and to encourage one another to greater faithfulness.

7.   We began our work together, reading the signs of the times as we thought about the mission in which we are engaged. This led to the formulation of the following questions, which guided the discussions and that appear in the four sections of this report:

- How does our understanding of the nature and scope of salvation influence the way we think about and practice mission?
- How do we view the issue of power and the role of the Holy Spirit when we speak about mission?
- In what way does the unity of the Church impact the nature and effectiveness of mission?
- How do our views of eschatology affect our practice of mission?

8.   Since both traditions embrace a diversity of missiologies, we have tried to formulate a vision of the mission of God (*missio Dei*) that Pentecostal and Reformed Christians can live out together. We wish to encourage other Pentecostal and Reformed Christians to join us and engage with this vision. We need one another and we want to encourage further dialogue and common witness as we live toward the Kingdom of God.

II. Mission and Salvation

Scripture:

> [9]… you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. [10]Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

> [13]You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. [14]You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. [15]No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. [16]In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16)

> I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. (John 10:10)

> Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. (Mark 16:15)

[19]For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; [20]for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope [21]that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. [22]We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; [23]and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. (Romans 8:19-23)

[16]When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, [17]and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: [18]"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, [19]to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." [20]And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. [21]Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:16-21)

Question: How does our understanding of the nature and scope of salvation influence the way we think about and practice mission?

Affirmation of Fundamental Principles

9. We believe that salvation and mission are at the heart of Christian faith, which has led us to raise the following questions: Do we mean the same thing when we talk about salvation? What role does evangelization play in our understanding of mission? Is mission limited to ensuring the salvation of people?

10. Both the Reformed and Pentecostal participants agree on the following: Salvation comes to us by grace through faith. It is the work of God, accomplished through the redemption of Christ, and its completion or application by the Holy Spirit. This means that it is always God who takes the initiative in creation and in salvation. Salvation is something that God does in and for us, but also through us for the sake of the whole world. Once we have received this free gift of salvation, our gratitude is expressed in faithfully responding to God's mission to witness in life, word, and deed "the mighty acts of God who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (1 Peter 2:9). This means that mission is primarily the activity of God, and not merely a human response to God's wonderful deeds. Such mission leads to discipleship and human flourishing. By participating in God's mission, we are fulfilling our Lord's call on us to be the salt and light to the world. (Matthew 5:13-16)

11. God's mission has always been done in particular cultural, economic, political, religious, social, etc. contexts. Many of these contexts have greatly changed, having been shaped by newer global and local realities. These changes hold implications for the mission of the church: it is challenged to read the signs of the times, understand them, and take seriously the changing contexts, in order to remain faithful to its engagement in God's mission.

12. Mission has often been done in a context of survival, which has been expressed in different ways historically, geographically and culturally. Older fears and anxieties of survival have sometimes found new forms and ways of expression. Today, in some contexts, survival means dealing with difficult economic challenges, as well as climate change, and other ecologically related challenges. In other contexts, survival is defined by persecution or suffering for the faith. In still other contexts, survival means wrestling with dwindling church membership in the midst of secularization and challenges posed by social issues.

13. The mission of the church is first God's mission, the *missio Dei*. It is to embody and proclaim the gospel, the "Good News" about the restoration of God's rule over all human life and all of creation. The Church is a sign, a foretaste, and a servant of the Kingdom of God in the world. While realizing that the Kingdom of God is God's initiative, the Church can testify to its nearness in its life, words, and deeds. When the Church strives to reflect the community of love, justice, freedom, and peace, it lives up to fulfilling its mission.

14. God's plan of redemption embraces all humanity and all creation (Mark 16:15; Genesis 12:1-3; Isaiah. 49:6; 52:7-10; John 3:16; 12:32; Colossians 1:19-20; 1 John 2:2; Revelation. 5:9). Because salvation relates to all of life, mission is best understood as an all-encompassing life ministry, an invitation to life in Christ. "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). In other words, the mission of God is holistic and comprehensive; it takes care of the totality of life—including human life and that of all creation. This means that salvation has individual, communal, and cosmic dimensions. To emphasize one over the others leads to serious errors in our understanding of salvation and in the way we conduct mission. Salvation is a spiritual reality that impacts life as a whole. As a divine intervention into the world, it has material, physical, social, economic, and political consequences. Salvation cannot be understood only in this-worldly terms, only in otherworldly terms, or only in future terms. Salvation has a past, present, *and* a future reality. The mission of God embodies and mediates that reality in the world. The purpose of mission is not only the salvation of all humanity and all creation but above all serving God's glory. (Romans 11:33-36)

15. The reconciling love of God moves us in our response to the mission of God, which has many dimensions in different contexts. Evangelism in its different forms is one dimension of mission. It includes proclaiming verbally, the Kingdom of God, the "Good News" of the power of God for salvation (Romans 1:16) to people who have not heard, or who have heard but have not yet accepted, or who have been alienated from God, and inviting them to participate in God's marvellous light. It means being contextually aware and being sensitive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 11:1-18; 15). Paying attention to the contexts must give room for openness to imagination inspired by the Holy Spirit in Christian witnessing that takes seriously the cultures and realities of the different communities of the recipients of the gospel. If the gospel of the Kingdom of God is to address real needs and to be heard as "Good News," it needs also to challenge and confront every idol in all of our societies (e.g. mammon, Matthew 6: 24) and invite people to conversion in Christ.

16. *Evangelism* of individual people, that is, proclaiming the message about the gift of being "born again" (John 3:5-8) is part of the mission of the church, but it cannot be limited only to that. *Evangelization* includes evangelism, but it is more than evangelism. Evangelization also includes proclaiming the message about God's rule or reign over the whole of human life, and the message about the possibility of human flourishing as a gift from God in the midst of suffering, weakness, poverty, and illness. It also includes the call to act responsibly for our fellow human beings and for all of creation.

17. In both of our traditions, there have been misunderstandings of salvation and misguided practices in mission. We have often reduced the gospel to individual and future salvation, separating soul and body, the spiritual from the physical, time and eternity, history and Kingdom, salvation and social action, earth and heaven. We have tended to label particular evangelizing attitudes and practices too quickly, as otherworldly and indifferent to social concern, just as we have tended to label concepts of holistic mission and forms of social concern and care too quickly, as merely social or ideological programs. Both of our traditions should avoid such dichotomies, any dualism that separates the various aspects of human life.

18. Both of our traditions point towards a need to confess and repent from our stereotypical misreading of each other's concepts and practices by which we have tried to justify our own concepts and practices as superior to those of the other. We are able to confess together that all of human life arises from creation; all of human life has been overwhelmed by sin; all of human life is being restored in Jesus and by the work of his Spirit. Thus, the Church proclaims this comprehensive restoration in its life, words and deeds.

19. Witnessing to God's justice is an essential dimension of mission: mediating life and contributing to life-giving and life-flourishing initiatives and structures. In many communities, people have very little opportunity to experience the fullness of life for which Jesus Christ came, often because of the selfish or uncaring actions of people in their locality or nation, and sometimes from faraway lands. The pattern for mission follows Christ as "Prophet," "Priest," and "King." Thus, God's mission always includes the prophetic activity of exposing the injustice, oppression and violence that rule in all domains of human life, and of challenging societal values and realities that go against God's will and therefore contradict life. Following the Lord Jesus's reading of the Isaiah passage in Luke 4:16-21, God's mission always includes generating justice, freedom, peace, and life-flourishing vision and the priestly activities of forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing. God's mission always includes the royal activity of being a protector and advocate of the weak and lowly, of the powerless and the marginalized. This entails commitment to transformation in educational, health, and other social spheres.

Differences in Emphasis

20. While Reformed and Pentecostal Christians affirm the understanding of salvation and mission together, in our dialogue it became clear that at times, our traditions express themselves using different vocabularies. Christians in the other group do not always understand this. In the course of this dialogue, we encountered the richness of both traditions and learned a great deal from each other. We believe that these different emphases can enrich one another's perspectives in their common witness.

Justification and Justice: The Reformed Understanding of Mission and Salvation

21. For the Reformed, there is an integral relationship between justification and justice. This has been prominently expressed in the association with the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*.[2] Reformed Christians express the strong conviction that the renewal of life (sanctification) that accompanies justification strengthens us to live (more fully) in gratitude and joyful obedience to God. This is a gift of God's grace at work in our lives. We may have confidence that the good work that God has begun in us, will be brought to completion (Philippians 1:6). We have nothing that

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[2] In the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (JDDJ) the Roman Catholic Church, Lutherans, Methodists, Reformed, and Anglicans express a fundamental consensus on one of the most contentious theological conflicts of the Reformation. In the letter of association with that document, the World Communion of Reformed Churches laid out the integral connection of justification, sanctification, and justice according to Reformed understanding. Their ecumenical partners welcomed it. See http://wcrc.eu/jddj.

we have not received. Even our capacity to respond to God is God's gift to us. So also is our perseverance in faith. Good works reflect the effect of God's grace in us, faith that is active in love.

22. Justice is not simply the ethical outworking of justification as a kind of second step; rather it is already entailed theologically in justification, as such. Justification is both a "declaring righteous" *and* a "setting right." This insight may be at the root of John Calvin's insistence that justification and sanctification are inseparable (*Institutes*, III.2.1); they are to be thought of as a two-fold grace (*duplex gratia*).[3]

23. In their emphasis on the sovereignty of God, Reformed believers affirm that God is sovereign over all of life, not just the narrowly religious or spiritual aspects of individual lives. They assert with the Psalmist that, "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it" (Psalm 24:1). God has entered into covenant with all of creation (Genesis 9:8-12), and God's covenant of grace intends a "setting right" that is world embracing, including even political, economic, and ecological realities. All of God's covenantal acts are acts of justification and justice.[4]

24. We acknowledge that justice, like justification, is God's work in and among us. Our understanding of justice has been obscured and our enactment of justice hampered by our sin. It is God, who will bring about the fulfilment of justice. Even so, we understand ourselves to be called to join in God's world-transforming work. This has been underscored in such modern-day confessions as the Accra Confession (Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth) and the Belhar Confession.[5]

Holistic Salvation: The Pentecostal Understanding of Mission and Salvation

25. Pentecostal thinking regarding salvation leads to the view that the saving of souls is the most urgent and priority task of mission. This includes an emphasis on salvation, sanctification, Spirit baptism, divine healing, and the in breaking of the coming Kingdom. Believers are constantly urged to experience the empowering work of the Holy Spirit, as well as to become committed evangelists instrumental in the conversion of others. Healing and miracles play a significant role in mission and point towards a holistic understanding of salvation, which has been labeled an example of the "materiality of salvation." What this means is that for Pentecostals the

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[3] WCRC JDDJ Association §16.

[4] WCRC JDDJ Association §17.

[5] WCRC JDDJ Association §§ 17, 20. The Accra Confession was adopted in 2004, while the Belhar Confession was developed in South Africa during the Apartheid era. Both are faith-based confessions intended to counteract injustice.

body is significant, hence, the emphasis upon divine healing, and this points toward their holistic understanding of mission.

26. Pentecostals employ the term holistic salvation to refer to the spiritual-bodily-social-political-economic dimensions of the abundant life. Grounded in the love of God, holistic salvation takes seriously the plight of the "least of these," that is, the most vulnerable among us, as central to Christ's message of hope and healing. As we are called to feed the hungry and house the homeless, we seek to empower them to provide for themselves and their families as well as to join with those who are most marginalized and vulnerable in ending hunger and homelessness (Luke 4:18-19; Matthew 25:34-40).

27. As the Church lives out its mission in the world, it engages in ministries of compassion, serves others, and participates in works of justice that seek to transform the societal structures by the power of the Holy Spirit. Committed "not only to the task of making prophetic denouncement," the Church is called fully to "support and encourage those among us who are attempting change"[6] in and social transformation of the society towards a just order. *Social holiness* and *just compassion* are terms that capture the multiple dimensions of holistic salvation. "Social holiness" is a phrase that holds together "righteousness and justice" (Proverbs 21:3). "Just compassion" refers to how compassion and justice are interrelated, as expressed in Jeremiah 9:24, which links compassion or "kindness, justice and righteousness."

Common affirmation

28. These differences in emphases on mission and salvation among Reformed and Pentecostals are not issues that divide us. They are sources of mutual enrichment of our understanding of salvation and mission, and they lead us towards a future together in which we can be more faithful witnesses to the Lord Jesus Christ. Both Reformed and Pentecostal Christians recognize and affirm God's grace in salvation, and the way we understand justification and justice and holistic salvation point in the same direction. It is clear that we have more elements that we can affirm together. Many Pentecostal and Reformed Christians may not be as aware of this fact in the communities in which we live and engage in mission. Therefore, the way ahead includes sharing these affirmations widely and in formats that can communicate our understanding of our calling into mission and our common witnessing.

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[6] Racial Reconciliation Manifesto, viii, adopted by the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America, in 1994, http://pccna.org/documents/1994manifesto.pdf. Accessed March 7, 2020.

II. The Holy Spirit and Mission

Scripture:

He said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts. (Zechariah 4:6)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' (Acts 1:8)

[17]"In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. [18]Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." (Acts 2:17-18)

[4]My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, [5]so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God. (1 Corinthians 2:4-5)

For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. (1 Thessalonians 1:5)

The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let everyone who hears say, 'Come.' And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift (Revelation 22:17).

Question: How do we view the issue of power and the role of the Holy Spirit when we speak about mission?

Affirmations

29. As members of Reformed and Pentecostal churches, we affirm the following claims together:

30. The work of the Holy Spirit needs to be understood within the context of the Triune God. God is one, and the mission of God cannot be divided. The highest way to affirm the work of the Holy Spirit is to acknowledge that it is the Spirit of Christ that is revealed, the Lord and Giver of Life (John 16:14; 1 Corinthians 12:3). Just as God has been self-giving in the incarnation of Christ, so also is God self-giving in the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Just as Jesus Christ was given to the world (John 3:16-17), the Spirit of God is promised to be poured out upon all flesh (Acts 2:17). The Holy Spirit is the gift of God for the reconciliation of the world (2 Corinthians 5:18-19) so that in the end God may receive all glory.

31. "Life in the Spirit is at the core of the Church and is the essence of its mission."[7] The Holy Spirit is sovereign over mission: the Spirit pursues the mission of the Triune God in space and time and calls "Christian communities to respond with personal conversion, and […] discipleship" that collaborates "with God for the transforming of the world (1 Thessalonians 3:2)."[8] When the disciples met Jesus Christ as their risen Lord, he promised (Acts 1:5, 8) and gave them the Holy Spirit as the gift of God, an advocate and enabler to be witnesses to the end of the earth (John 16:7-15; 20:22, Acts 2). The account of the first Christian Pentecost reveals God's Spirit as a gift to the church and to the life of the world.

32. It is in Christ and through the Spirit that believers receive God's loving grace as a gift (Romans 5:5; Ephesians 2:8). Gratitude for salvation received calls for a response. This is how God sent the disciples out into the world to God's mission (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:13-15). As the priesthood of all believers, we are called to proclaim the mighty acts of God in word and deed (1 Peter 2:9; Acts 2:11).

33. One can describe both of our theologies as theologies of *encounter*. In the Spirit, people are called to an encounter with God through Jesus Christ, which is life transforming. The transformation to a life that enables us more and more to become Christ-like continues in the process of discipleship,[9] experiencing and practicing reconciliation, the call to be faithful witnesses, and the call to serve others, as we follow Jesus in God's mission. Pentecostal and Reformed Christians emphasize their personal relationship with God in their confession of Jesus Christ. They also underscore the importance of a communal relationship with God. Reformed Christians express this in the language of the covenant that is professed in baptism and deepened in the life of the communion of believers. In each case, discipleship is affirmed as communities of believers hold that the Holy Spirit nurtures them through the life of the Church.[10]

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[7] Together Towards Life, §3.

[8] "Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship: The Arusha Call to Discipleship," published by Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. See: https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/mission-and-evangelism/the-arusha-call-to-discipleship.

[9] For more on discipleship see the document of the second round of the Reformed-Pentecostal Dialogue: "Experience in Christian Faith and Life," Section II, § 44-72

[10] The second round of the Reformed-Pentecostal dialogue focused on "Experience in Christian Faith and Life" and referred to the work of the Spirit guiding the church in worship, Section I, § 32-43.

34. Pentecostal and Reformed Christians acknowledge individual and collective responses to the Holy Spirit's leading. Either of these Christian families would want to state that both aspects are important. The individual response recognizes the Spirit's leading in the experience of a personal calling and gifting by the Triune God. At the same time, the collective response sees the individual believer as a member of a community of faith that is formed by discerning, confessing, and witnessing God's will, and by striving to be reformed together according to the Word of God. We see that both responses are provoked by the urgencies of the call to mission. They are part of the larger conversation of the Church, which draws upon the narrative of the Holy Spirit's mission in history. Through the Holy Spirit all believers are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses in heaven and on earth, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of their faith (Hebrews 12:1-2; Acts 5:31).

35. When God sends, God also gifts. Gifting is the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, an act of God, gifting us to the world. In the mission of God (*missio Dei*) all followers of Christ are gifted in one way or another, and like "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" we serve others (1 Peter 4:10-11). We agree that all gifting comes from the self-giving God, and we receive it for service to all creation and for the glory of God.

36. Even as God sends and gifts, God also empowers (Acts 1:8; Romans 15:17-19; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11). Our churches speak about empowerment in mission. However, we also call for caution, since power can be corrupted in the actions of believers, or even confused with very selfish human claims of power. Power is expressed in various dimensions, such as spiritual, ecclesial, emotional, psychological, cultural, political, economic, and military. Hence, we believe that we need careful discernment (Romans 12:2)[11] (a) of the understanding of empowerment, (b) of the social context of empowerment, and (c) of past shortcomings. This discernment regarding power is guided by God's authority (1 Corinthians 12:10), as a self-emptying power that brings wholeness to life (Philippians 2:5-11).

37. All claims to empowerment require discernment in connection and keeping with God's mission. The Holy Spirit empowers the community of believers to live out the Christian life in witness and service in the Church and in the world. Empowerment is reflected in a spirituality that grows out of the ongoing encounter of the believers with the Triune God, taking seriously the presence and the authority of the Holy Spirit at many levels. The encounter with the Holy Spirit provokes a profound transformation wherever the people of God gather in Jesus' name (Matthew 18:20). The

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[11] See "Experience in Christian Faith and Life" § III, ¶ 73-116.

Holy Spirit has the power to change how one lives one's life and how one ministers to others, both inside and outside the believing community. In consequence, the spirituality of encounter lives out the priesthood and prophethood of all believers for mission.

38. God has given gifts to all Christians. They are empowered both as individuals and as Christian communities. In becoming empowered, individual believers and communities of faith learn to become attentive and sensitive to the presence and movement of the Holy Spirit in areas where they do not necessarily feel at home. The mission of God empowers believers to enable contextualization. God has been self-emptying in the coming of Jesus Christ and the giving of the Holy Spirit, so also the Church in mission is to be self-emptying; it does not attempt to impose its own cultures on others (Zechariah 4:6). The mission of God transcends all cultural and political identities.

39. It would be a fallacy to understand empowerment in an exclusively individual way. Likewise, all discernment of this power will take into account the social context in which this power is exercised. God invites Christians to participate in God's mission, which aims at the transformation of the life of the world in its entirety. Christians are empowered to be witnesses, to proclaim the gospel in word and deed. They evangelize, engage those with means to share power and resources, and cry for justice. They care for the vulnerable. They educate, and make space for those whose voice is muted. The context shapes the way Christians are called, respond, and participate in God's mission. In impoverished communities especially, whether rural or urban, ministries of empowerment often serve as lifelines. Empowerment is informed by the reading of biblical texts that proclaim the imminence of radical transformation, such as Acts 2:17-21; Luke 4:18-20; or Matthew 25:31-46. Ministries of healing, deliverance, and liberation allow new communities of life to come into existence, embracing relationships between those who are hungry, ill, incarcerated, or homeless and those who are not. Ministries of empowerment proclaim the hope of Christ and the hope of God's world-to-come to those who are marginalized. The Holy Spirit fosters hope-bearing and life-giving practices of faith for individuals and communities, where God's wonder is displayed.

40. The Holy Spirit empowers individuals and churches to engage in advancing justice, reconciliation and peace. As witnesses to the life affirming and reconciling work of the Holy Spirit, communities of faith offer glimpses of God's Kingdom. Within large parts of global Christianity, churches address unjust social, racial, economic, and political systems. They challenge racial, ethnic, gender, and class exclusions (Galatians 3:28). When the congregations participate in God's mission in the world, the Holy Spirit works through these believers and the community of faith on their life-

affirming pilgrimage toward the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7). As Pentecostal and Reformed Christians, we encourage others to join with us in these actions.

41. It is always important that we take the time to discern our past shortcomings: Although we see the Holy Spirit leading God's mission in the world, we must confess that our mission endeavours have often fallen short of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Missionary zeal does not automatically sanctify either its means or ends. The colonial entanglement of the Western churches has sadly marred the Church's mission by the political, economic, and cultural ambitions of the Western churches in which the power exercised was not God's power (Matthew 6:10, 13). Similarly, any self-centered accumulation of wealth or power (social, political, personal, etc.) by Christians and their leaders must be addressed critically. When power appears in new guises, such as in neo-liberal capitalism or in cultural or even religious imperialism, the Church is called to vigilance.

42. When "empowerment" language is used in the pursuit of mission, we must carefully discern whether we refer to human power or are embracing the power that is a gift from God for the life of the world (John 6:51). As the Pentecostal and Reformed participants of this dialogue, we affirm together God's authority as a self-emptying power to bring wholeness to life.

Differences in Emphasis

43. While there is far-reaching consensus on the understanding of mission, there are still differences of emphasis that *affect* the practice of mission. Pentecostal and Reformed Christians follow distinctly different traditions to discern God's guidance for the work of mission. While Pentecostals tend to cherish gifts as imminent expressions of divine power, *exousia* (Mark 6:7), Reformed Christians take a more critical perspective on power. For both traditions, the final authority rests with God. Any form of human power must, therefore, be carefully scrutinized to determine whether it is really ordained by God, because power can be corrupted and can even become an exercise in human idolatry.

44. This difference of emphasis has led to differences in the ways that we conduct mission. Historically, Pentecostal mission has been much more fluid than their Reformed counterparts have; it still allows for many more initiatives that are spontaneous. Even when Pentecostal churches have established mission boards, they still emphasize the urgency to proclaim the gospel. Where there is a possibility to proclaim the gospel, the opportunity should be used. Pentecostals embrace the expectation that something extraordinary will happen because of their encounters with God. They know that these experiences can inspire spontaneous mission work by individuals as well as entire congregations. Such "faith mission" is

often borne by personal initiative, and, at times, it has demonstrated astonishing and positive results. The Reformed members of the dialogue team realized that Reformed congregations also respond to the encounter with God spontaneously, and they saw how the too scrupulous weighing of pros and cons could jeopardize opportunities for mission.

45. In some situations, however, such activities, borne out of the sense of urgency, demonstrate limited sensitivity to cultural and political contexts. They may also display limited accountability with regard to the use of resources and the implementation of programs. Here, the Pentecostal members of the dialogue joined the Reformed members who call for the need for greater discernment by the larger Church. The mixed experiences of the history of mission have led both traditions to increased scrutiny of their own mission work. Even so, discernment has become broader and deeper. Reformed missions today aim at processes of global discernment that privilege the voices of those who, in the history of mission, have not been heard. People must not anymore be seen as "objects of mission." They must be heard and recognized as partners. These processes of discernment are demanding and often conflictual. They slow down decisions and may appear to delay the progress of the Kingdom. Likewise, the Pentecostal participants encourage their churches and mission boards to increase their engagement in such processes of discernment and the God-given transformation they enable.

46. The Pentecostal and Reformed participants in this dialogue wholeheartedly rejoice over the consensus they have achieved around the subject of mission. Both traditions see their churches as collaborators in the mission of the Triune God. The Holy Spirit calls into discipleship and empowers individuals and communities to witness the coming of the Kingdom in words and deeds. God has been self-emptying in the coming of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit empowers us toward a self-emptying mission, which forsakes our own interests and overcomes all cultural, political, and religious prejudices. Both Pentecostal and Reformed participants acknowledge God's presence in the advancement of justice, reconciliation, and peace, and in their mission, they strive to overcome unjust social, racial, economic, and political systems.

47. In the dialogue, we have discovered that the two approaches are not contradictory and they can even become mutually enriching. The Pentecostal sense of urgency that is prepared to take risks for the advancement of the Kingdom often excites Reformed Christians. At the same time, Pentecostal Christians understand that there is a serious commitment in the Reformed processes of discernment that might be worth exploring. Here Pentecostals and Reformed can learn from and correct each other.

III. Mission and the Unity of the Church

Scripture:

> But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

> [1] I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4:1-6)

> [20] "I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, [21] that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. [22] The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, [23] I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (John 17:20-23)

Question: In what way does the unity of the Church impact the nature and effectiveness of mission?

48. Both the churches of the Reformed family and those that are part of the Pentecostal family have long histories of evangelization and of mission. Jesus linked the unity of his followers, the Church, and its mission to the world, in his prayer to the Father recorded in John 17:21-23. All participants in this dialogue are motivated by the instructions that Jesus first gave to his disciples. They were told, "Go therefore and *make disciples of all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20). Mark's account expands the scope of our mission, when it records Jesus's command, "Go into all the world and proclaim the "Good News" *to the whole creation* (Mark 16:15). Shortly thereafter, the Holy Spirit gave the Church the power necessary to fulfill the divine mission that God gave to them (Acts 1:8). The transformation of their lives provided strong evidence of the power that the "Good News" of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection had brought to them. As a result, they became compelling witnesses to what Jesus had done. They began in Jerusalem, moved through Judaea and Samaria, traveling in ever expanding circles, while turning the world upside down (Acts 17:6).

49. Our churches, therefore, believe and teach that our engagement in mission is central to our own discipleship. As a result, we have sent missionaries everywhere. Our message, the "Good News," which is the actual meaning of the term "gospel," is a message of reconciliation. God has provided for our reconciliation to God as well as with each other, through the atoning death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Yet almost from the time they came together, followers of Jesus found differences among them that threatened their unity and the mission to proclaim the "Good News" to the world. The apostles reminded the followers of Jesus repeatedly how important their unity was to their message. They urged love, patience, gentleness, and humility as characteristics intended to preserve and nurture their unity (Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 4:1-3). Still, the history of the Church through the centuries has all too often stood out in stark contrast to the message of reconciliation. For a variety of reasons, our churches, Reformed and Pentecostal, have had little to do with one another. The task before us, then, asks us to reflect on the nature of the Church, and to determine whether, or to what extent, our actions that seem to exclude one another have an impact on the message of reconciliation that we proclaim in word and deed.

50. The Greek word *ekklēsia*, translated "church," derives from the verb *kaleō*, meaning "to call." Thus, the word *ekklēsia* refers not primarily to a static structure or to an institution. It refers to all those who God calls out from the world through Jesus Christ, and by the one Spirit, places them into the one body, a dynamic body called the Church (1 Corinthians 12:13), before sending them into the world. As a result, the Church is sometimes described as the "Body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:12; Romans 12:4-5). It is like a living body with many members, each of whom play a specific or unique role. Collectively these members are also called the "people of God" (1 Peter 2:9). Christ expected the Church to live and work together as one body, that is, as one people, with all of them working *together* with Christ's one purpose in mind. As such, the Church is made up of reconciled people who now follow Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22), for Christ alone is head of the Church (Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18).

51. Jesus, the head of the Church, calls his followers to be alert to the many biblical signs that surround them (Luke 21:25-36), including false and deceptive messianic claims, wars and rumors of wars, pestilence, famines, and earthquakes (Matthew 24:4-8). Today the world is experiencing things that have not occurred before within human memory—issues like the recent and extraordinary changes in the worldwide climate, the most massive migration of people the world has ever seen, and the spread of newer nationalisms, just to name a few. Jesus calls upon us to discern such phenomena, to ask ourselves what their meaning might be, and to make

appropriate responses. All too often, people respond to these challenges by retreating into the "safety" of their own cultural groups, which isolates them from one another, yielding fear and mistrust between them. It is the missionary calling of the Church to reflect and act against such isolation in the light of the coming Kingdom of God.

52. Within this new or current context, the Church has a powerful, alternative message to proclaim. It is a message of "Good News!" While the world responds to these challenges with division and animosity, God calls the Church to proclaim with a single voice and purpose, the "Good News" of God's reconciliation supported by their transformed lives, which has brought them together as the one "people of God." It speaks to the deepest needs, hopes, and dreams of people who are in crisis. As the Apostle Paul wrote, Christ Jesus "has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us…that he might create in himself one new humanity…thus making peace…" (Ephesians 2: 14-15). In Christ, we are all children of God—"neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free nor is there male and female"—we are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26-28). This is the "Good News" of the gospel, a foretaste of the coming Kingdom of God.

53. The prophet Isaiah rejoiced over those "who bring good news, who announce salvation, who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" (Isaiah 52:7). Jesus claimed that "the Spirit of the Lord" was upon Him, and the Spirit "had "anointed him to bring good news to the poor," "to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18-19). As a result, Jesus went throughout Galilee, "proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness among the people" (Matthew 4:23). This message, given to the Church, is surely "Good News," a refreshingly new message to be proclaimed to the world through word and deed.

54. The Church was born on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41). The earliest followers of Jesus quickly recognized that Peter's proclamation on that day, the "Good News" he brought regarding Jesus, had transformed them, and the Holy Spirit had formed them into a new community, empowered and sent throughout the world as witnesses of the "Good News." They wanted to be with one another and learn together at the feet of the apostles, in preparation for the missionary task. They found it important to break bread together (Acts 2:42). They engaged in prayers and in mutual sharing; they found themselves strengthened by one another in unity. They were a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) and a new people (Ephesians 2:15) who lived under a new commandment, the commandment of love (John 13:34; 1 John 3:23-24) that compelled them to move out and into the world. Jesus

had passed along to his followers both the message of salvation that caused Isaiah to rejoice, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; 2:4) such as he received, to proclaim the "Good News" to the "poor." "Go into all the world and proclaim the "Good News" to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15; cf. Matthew 28:19), Jesus commanded them. Now it was their task, and the Spirit gave them the ability to proclaim that message through their words and actions. They took the "Good News" to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

55. This important account regarding the birth of the Church reveals the simplicity that marked the Church when it began. Their earliest confession became "Jesus is Lord," made possible only by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3). They had the Torah, the prophets, and the teachers of wisdom on which to draw, but they gathered at the feet of those who had walked, lived and worked with Jesus. They worshiped and lived together. They sang and embraced the charisms of one another (1 Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 5:17-20). While all of these things remain essential to the Church, many of them have become sources of division. Baptism serves as a sign of incorporation into the community of faith, into the one Body of Christ, yet disagreements over issues of practice obscure its intended purpose. Likewise, the Lord's Supper or Eucharist, which was intended to serve as a visible sign of corporate "communion" marked by grace as they "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes," often acts as a wall of separation (1 Corinthians 11:20). It is little wonder that we find many believers today yearning for the rediscovery of our unity in forms that challenge us to greater faithfulness, and add to the integrity of the "Good News" that God has made possible, our reconciliation to God and to one another.

56. We may be separated from the earliest disciples by 2000 years, but through their faithfulness and perseverance in bringing the message of "Good News," the Church has spread around the world, and come to us. Jesus's command to "Go" has now come down to us, his followers today. We still have the "Good News" to impart. It is the message of God's love, grace, peace, hope, and justice, a proclamation that the Kingdom of God is coming, indeed, that it has begun to penetrate the world through the Word and Spirit, and in signs and wonders. From that perspective, God calls the Church to bear witness to the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God. The Church is God's means to carry out his mission to reach the world with this amazing news! We have a privilege and a challenge before us. Either we are missional or we are not. The question is, "Are we up to the task?"

57. If Scripture teaches us that there is only one Church, it also suggests that within that one Church there is great diversity. One way the Apostle Paul described the Church was as a single body, with Christ as the head. He

noted that we are each members of that body with different roles to play, different functions to fulfill, and that we possess the Holy Spirit's power to fill those roles appropriately and effectively (1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:11-15). On a larger scale, we see that the Church spread across the world as seen through the eyes of the biblical writers, just as it continues to spread today. It encountered different cultures in the ancient world, Jewish, Greek, Roman, Ethiopian, and Egyptian. The followers of Jesus engaged with men and women, rich and poor, slave and free, and the "Good News" transformed all of their cultural differences in such a way that they became one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28).

58. Although the simplicity of the gospel was intended to bring freedom and newness of life, it was compromised by setting up boundaries of communion that need review. Through the centuries, we have divided into many thousands of churches, thereby denying both the unity and the catholicity of the Church. We have too easily become satisfied to live as the Church in division. We have grown so used to living this way that we have lost the common memory of the oneness of the Church and the urgent need to resolve our differences. Jesus prayed for the oneness of those who follow Him (John 17:21-24). Paul repeatedly addressed disunity in the Church (1 Corinthians 1:13; Galatians 2:11-3:5; Philippians 4:2-3, etc.). John addressed the issue (3 John 9-11). Moreover, the writer to the Hebrews exhorted, "Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many (Hebrews 12:14-15).

59. Through the centuries, the growth and power of the institutional Church came under increasing scrutiny and suspicion. In spite of the efforts that the Reformers made to renew the one Church, even their work has fragmented over time. The Apostle Paul celebrated diversity in the Church as a positive feature, when all members worked together for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:12-26; Ephesians 4:11-16). Together, we recognize that institutional or denominational boundaries are often helpful because they provide accountability. Yet, we have seen a growing movement into various forms of diversity that are completely independent of one another. We have seen the spread of individualized forms of spirituality designed for different age groups, different educational backgrounds, different cultures, races and ethnicities, different liturgical preferences, different economic levels, and the like. Today, instead of recognizing one Church working together in multiple congregations, a form of unity in reconciled diversity, each "church" justifies its own *raison d'être*. The result is that we have become isolated from one another in our discrete and unconnected ecclesial cultures in much the same way that the world has gone.

60. Recent decades have seen phenomenal growth among the churches, especially in the Global South, with many churches and agencies engaged in mission. On the one hand, mission has been a uniting force, bringing Christians with different doctrinal perspectives and forms of ecclesial organization together in common witness, as was experienced in the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910, and in many subsequent gatherings, as well as local endeavors. On the other hand, many times mission efforts have been carried out in ways that deny the unity of Christ's Church. Some groups have spent more energy attacking the beliefs and practices of other Christians than in announcing the "Good News" of the gospel.

61. The Reformed participants in this dialogue reminded the Pentecostal participants that the unity of the Church is both a gift and a calling from God. It was purchased through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God has given this unity to us freely. The Pentecostal participants noted that many early Pentecostal leaders, such as William J. Seymour, yearned for unity between all the People of God, claiming, "The Apostolic Faith Movement (an early self-designation for Pentecostals) stands for the faith once delivered unto the saints…and Christian unity everywhere."[12] Yet, all of us have allowed this unity, this gift, to be mutilated by our actions and our inaction. The result is that we have compromised both the mission that we are supposed to carry out, and the message that Jesus gave us to proclaim and embody, the "Good News" that reconciliation is now here and available to all who will accept it! That is the message of the gospel. Yet, Bishop Lesslie Newbigin pointed out long ago,

> The disunity of the Church is a denial of the promise and a contradiction of the purpose for which the Church is sent into the world. How can the church give to the world the message that Jesus is able to draw all men to Himself, while it continues to say, "Nevertheless, Jesus is not able to draw us who bear his name together"? How will the world believe a message, which we do not appear to believe ourselves?[13]

62. Jesus prayed for our unity "so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (John 17:24). We recognize that in Christ, we share a unity that many describe as spiritual.

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[12] William J. Seymour, "The Apostolic Faith," *The Apostolic Faith* [Los Angeles, CA] 1:1 (September 1906), 2. This statement was published numerous times in subsequent issues, and in tract form, signed by William J. Seymour.
[13] Lesslie, Newbigin, *Is Christ Divided? A Plea for Christian Unity in a Revolutionary Age,* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1961), 9.

Still, we believe that while our life "in Christ" provides the *basis* for our unity, we are called to *manifest* that unity before the world. This is why we work toward a growing collaboration with one another, engage in theological dialogue, and cooperate on missional projects from, with, and between local congregations. Together, we support those groups that organize to provide aid to the needy, work to end world hunger, support the care and nurture of children, work in peace-making endeavors, provide for the care of God's creation, and many other things. We are grateful for the improving relationships that makes cooperation and partnership in such ministries possible!

63. Together, we realize that the Spirit of God is at work in the world, calling people to follow Jesus, gathering them, sometimes in new ways that we do not always understand or appreciate. The Bible itself is deeply contextual. It is received and applied in consistent ways and manifested through thousands of cultural expressions. The Word of God goes its own way and creates new contextual churches, and expressions of worship and spirituality. It has the power to transform lives, and it calls each of us to participate in the lives of one another, to love one another in ways that stretch us (Leviticus 19:18; Luke 10:27; 1 John 4:20-21; James 2:15-16). In so doing, it encourages us to recognize the significance of the ongoing transformative work of the Spirit that brings the gospel close to the hearts, communities, and cultures of humankind.

64. Today, we observe the development of Christian expressions in wide variation. There are historic churches with well-developed forms and rituals. There are churches that appear to be freewheeling, though the insider can explain the order that may look like chaos to others. There are large churches and small churches, cathedrals, and house churches, emerging and emergent churches, churches without walls, growing numbers of migrant churches, legal churches and those neither recognized, nor allowed, persecuted churches, networks of Christians concerned about the same issues, digital churches, churches focused on evangelization or healing or creation care or peace making. Different contexts demand or result in different manifestations of the one Church. In many places, especially where churches represent a minority religion, where laws exclude them, even where they are explicitly persecuted, they may organize themselves in different ways, but they still bear witness to the power of Christ in their lives, making them one people. They often bear witness to the "Good News" in surprising and creative ways. In short, there are a multiplicity of churches, in any number of formats through which Christians desire to do the will of God.

65. These myriad manifestations of the gospel are contextualized and the movement of the communities of God's people may at times make it

difficult for us—as a part of the variety of Christians in the world—to recognize, accept, and feel at home among all these manifestations of the Body of Christ. They challenge us to learn to be cautious in our condemnations and aversion against the broad spectrum of churches, and to discern where the Spirit of God is at work and active, empowering the people of God to declare in word and deed the "Good News" of the gospel. More than ever, we need the gift of the Spirit to recognize our sisters and brothers, to help each other in a common way of discipleship, and to be able in a pastoral attitude to build each other up in communion. Thus, we will be able "to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that [we] may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:18-19).

66. What do we have when everything is said and done? Does the unity of the Church affect the effectiveness or the nature of mission? Absolutely! All of these expressions of the Church, working together come under the mandate, "Go and make disciples." Everyone is to proclaim the coming Kingdom of God. All of us are calling people to be reconciled with God and with one another. As Reformed and Pentecostal followers of Jesus, we are part of the "All." Our common task is to carry the "Good News" to everyone, informing them of the reconciliation that Jesus paid for, through his death and resurrection, and demonstrating the power that we have received through the Holy Spirit, to make a difference in the lives of all with whom we come into contact, and beyond. By bearing witness to our unity, we will make a difference in the world.

IV. Mission and Eschatology

Scripture:

[18]He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. [19]For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, [20]and through him, God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross. (Colossians 1:18-20)

[18]I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. [19]For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; [20] for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope [21]that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. [22]We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains

until now; 23and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? 25But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. (Romans 8:18-25)

36"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 37For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. (Matthew 24:36-37)

11Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, 12waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? 13But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. (2 Peter 3:11-13)

Question: How do our views of eschatology affect our understanding of mission?

67. God's purpose, the *missio Dei,* is to reconcile all things on heaven and on earth (Colossians 1:20). Eschatology, the study of the last things, attempts to describe the actualization of God's intentions toward creation, the future reality of God's salvation. The vision the Church proclaims of God's future determines the way the Church understands its participation in God's mission. How the Church perceives what God has done, is doing, and will do, shapes how the Church lives out its role in God's mission today. Indeed, mission engagement needs an eschatological horizon that communicates hope in a world marked increasingly by fear and despair. We affirm that the future belongs to God and this affirmation allows us to engage confidently in mission.

68. Jesus entrusted the mission to his followers and he promised to return (Matthew 28:19-20; John 14:3; Acts 1:11). The context of mission today is marked by contrasts. More people from more cultures and in more places in the world are followers of Jesus Christ than ever before. A larger percentage of the world's population claims the name of Jesus than at any point in the past. At the same time, violence of different kinds continues to cut lives short. Millions flee their homes and their countries in search of refuge. In many parts of the world, people are suffering because of their faith. In secular societies, meaninglessness plagues young and old alike. Changes in climate are yielding devastating consequences for the earth's inhabitants. All of creation is, indeed, groaning with the sufferings of this present age. Yet we know that God's liberating work continues and we are called to be a part of it (Romans 8:18-25).

69. The first Christian communities lived, expecting Christ's imminent return. The only New Testament book written in the apocalyptic genre is Revelation. It begins with the words, "The Revelation (*apocàlypsis*) of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:1). Yet, an apocalyptic worldview infuses the entire New Testament. In this worldview, often expressed through an array of figures, symbols, colors, and signs, hope is focused upon a transcendent reality beyond time and space, from which God will ultimately act in a dramatic way to set all things right. Believers looked through and beyond calamities and current sufferings to God's promised future. Within the New Testament, it is possible to trace theological shifts as communities wrestled with the delay of the expected *Parousia* and learned to live their faith in the resurrected Christ into the future. Those who were watching for the return of the Son of Man in the clouds were admonished also to see the Son of Man in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, and the prisoner (Matthew 24:30, 25:31-46). Communities suffering persecution were admonished to hold fast and await God's coming by leading lives of holiness (2 Peter 3: 11-12). Followers of Jesus carried the "Good News" of the gospel to other peoples and places, making disciples and forming communities (Matthew 28:19-20).

70. The social upheavals in Europe at the time of the Protestant Reformation raised fear and anxiety about the coming end of history as well as expectations of dramatic interventions by God. Calvin, himself a refugee, preached in the context of this apocalyptic fervor to a congregation in Geneva composed of many refugees and the Christians who had welcomed them. Calvin assured those fleeing persecution that their eternal destiny was in God's hands, not under the control of any political or ecclesiastical authority. Trusting in Christ's return to bring the fullness of God's Kingdom, Christians would be able to persevere through any hardship. In the meantime, the Church was to focus on the preaching of God's Word and caring for people's well-being, offering hospitality, and organizing the community to protect and promote the common good. In subsequent centuries, among members of Reformed churches in many places who gained positions of political and economic power, the focus on transforming culture remained, while the longing for Christ's return faded. Other Reformed Christians, especially those who lived in marginalized communities, continued to look for Christ's second coming.

71. Pentecostalism was born at the beginning of the twentieth century with a heightened expectation of the Lord's imminent return. They viewed the outpouring of the Spirit, evidenced by gifts such as speaking in tongues, as one of many signs of the latter days. Early Pentecostals understood themselves as a Restorationist movement living as the earliest followers of Jesus did in New Testament times. The brevity of time remaining before

the end of history made the work of mission an urgent necessity to reach as many as possible with the word of God's salvation, following the risen Christ's command to preach the gospel to all creation (Mark 16:15). Indeed, Pentecostals soon organized beyond the level of the local congregation to engage in global mission efforts. Many early Pentecostal congregations were multi-ethnic and multiracial communities that included immigrants who were often instrumental in spreading the Pentecostal messages to their home countries and beyond.

72. Today, both church families find their concepts of God's time being challenged. After the first generation, Pentecostals began to navigate the tension between their belief in the imminent second coming, the biblical command to evangelize the world, and their willingness to join society with biblical convictions. With a firm belief in the "Blessed Hope," Pentecostals engage increasingly in holistic missions, from building schools, colleges, rescue shelters, and hospitals, to establishing ministries that serve and empower people on the margins of society as Christ rebuilds new lives. The notion of intensifying crises throughout the world have led the Reformed to a rediscovery of the apocalyptic worldview of the New Testament. The Accra Confession states that we "live in a scandalous world that denies God's call to life for all" (§7). As increasing economic inequality demonstrates, economic systems defended and protected by political and military might, are matters of life or death. The confession therefore responds with a sense of eschatological urgency and rejects any claim of economic, political, and military power which subverts God's sovereignty over life and acts contrary to God's just rule (§19).[14]

73. Eschatology attempts to describe the points of continuity and discontinuity between the present and the future. Jürgen Moltmann has used the Latin term *futurum* to describe the future that develops out of the dynamics of the present, whereas *adventum* refers to that which is completely new and breaks into the present from the future.[15] For Christians, the completely new thing that God has done is to raise Jesus from the dead. The surprise of Easter is that God raised not just any man, but this Jesus, condemned and crucified by the imperial power of Rome. The risen Christ, as the first fruit of the new creation, comes to us from the future that God has for all of creation (I Corinthians 15:20).

74. The surprise of Easter is followed by the surprise of Pentecost, when the disciples spoke in tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:4), and people

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[14] The Accra Confession (Covenanting for Justice in the Economy and the Earth): http://wcrc.eu/accra

[15] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996, Kindle location 496.

from many places and cultures heard the manifold deeds of God preached in their own languages (Acts 2:11). This inbreaking of God's Spirit created a new community that broke bread together and shared all things in common (Acts 2:42-45). All participants in the dialogue agree that the Holy Spirit was sent to empower the Church to witness to Christ as they go to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). We are called into mission by God, and commissioned by the risen Christ, to preach the "Good News" of God's salvation to all nations by the power of the Spirit.

75. We recognize that, at times, eschatological theories have played an important role in our respective traditions. However, Jesus reminded his followers that only the Father knows the day and hour of his return (Matthew 24:36). Our dialogue stressed our need for an eschatological vision that shapes how we are to live out God's mission in the world today as we await Christ's coming. Like the first Christians, we are asking how we should live in a world filled with uncertainty and missed expectations. We are called both to lead lives of personal holiness and to challenge both personal and corporate sin as we wait for the new heavens and the new earth (2 Peter 3:8-13), striving to be light and salt in the world (Matthew 5:13-14). In Christ, we are already part of the new creation that God is bringing about (2 Corinthians 5:17).

76. Our traditions have understood the relationship between eschatology, God's judgment and mission in different ways. The Church is called to remain faithful to the end and to share the "Good News" of God's salvation through Christ with all who will hear. Thus, Pentecostal mission efforts have focused mainly on evangelism even as they have pointed to the return of Christ. Pentecostals understand that as they follow Christ, they are to take note of their lives, measuring them by the expectations that God has revealed in Scripture. In this way, they walk daily along a path of self-discernment and judgment, so as not to live and act in a manner unworthy of their calling (Ephesians 4:1; Philippians 1:27; 1 Corinthians 11:27). At altar calls and during times of self-examination before communion, Pentecostals repent, knowing that Christ "who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Furthermore, they understand that Christ condemns all corporate sins and systemic evil (Colossians 2:8-15). As a result, they also remind us of the final judgment and the separation that will occur when Christ returns (Matthew 7:21-23, 25:31-46; Luke 13:22-30).

77. Reformed churches have emphasized that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). The focus for Reformed Christians is on the judgment that has already taken place on the cross of Jesus, God's "no" to human endeavors. In the resurrection of Jesus, God's new life breaks into the world. In the expectation of the second coming, we

anticipate the triumph of God's justice as we engage in mission. Every move toward justice is an inbreaking of God's life, a foretaste of God's just Kingdom that will come in fullness when Christ returns. Thus, a commitment to justice is at the heart of a Reformed understanding of mission. In spite of our differences in emphasis, together we look for the triumph of God's justice.

78. As followers of Christ, we share one hope. We pray together to God, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The Kingdom of God has come near in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Through Christ, we have been reconciled to God and are now ambassadors of reconciliation and agents of healing, inviting others to share our hope in Christ as we work for justice. As in Jesus's ministry, we look for signs of God's Kingdom wherever the sick are healed, captives are freed (Luke 11:12), and the "Good News" is preached to the poor (Luke 4:18-19). With joy and thanksgiving, we participate in God's mission, knowing that our efforts alone will not bring the Kingdom of God to fruition. We trust in God's promises and his trust opens us up to be surprised by God as we wait with patience for that which we cannot yet see (Romans 8:25; 1 Corinthians 13:12-13).

79. God is faithful! Christ is coming! To live eschatologically is to celebrate God's new creation of which we are a part. As ambassadors of God's future, we work ceaselessly for transformation in our confidence that God's justice will triumph. We invite others to place their trust in Jesus and to live their lives in service to God's coming Kingdom to participate with us in fulfilling our call to the *missio Dei*.

V. Where Do We Go from Here?

Commitments on the Way Ahead

80. The Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 brought together Protestant and Anglican ecumenists, theologians, and missionaries from much of the world to review the current state of mission and the Church and to plan for the twentieth century. One of their significant emphases was their call for unity in mission. While Pentecostals were not present in that conference, we who participated in this round of dialogue believe that our respective Church families would do well to follow the hope of those conference participants, and work together as mission-oriented churches, wherever possible. All Christian ecclesial families have learned much from this important missionary conference, lessons that may be used as we work together to spread the "Good News."

81. As Pentecostal and Reformed brothers and sisters, who have come to know and respect one another, together, we commit ourselves:

- To encourage and promote dialogue among Reformed and Pentecostal Christians in different contexts.
- To follow the Holy Spirit in embracing God's mission as God gives it to us, and not expect the Spirit to follow us, or our ideas.
- To learn from others regarding what the Holy Spirit is doing among them, in order to obtain a more holistic understanding of mission
- To discern the work of the Holy Spirit together, within the context of the broader Church (1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 John 4:1-6) in order to discover where God is leading us in accord with the Divine mission.
- To discern and study issues surrounding injustice and the exercise of power, in order to distinguish more clearly between the authority or power that originates with God, and the claims to power that human beings sometimes make, especially when they abuse power in the name of God.
- To be more faithful to God in our engagement in mission for transformation as both Church families agree that the way we understand justification and justice, and holistic salvation point in the same direction.
- To participate together in a Holy Spirit related mission that relies upon:

  1) Relationship building. We are only one Church if we are consciously in relationship with each other;
  2) Integrity in discipleship (being one in Christ; as a spiritual practice as well as in submitting to the teachings of Christ);
  3) Serving one another and others through God-given gifting, our histories (experiences) and common witness/action.

Opportunities for Further Agreement

82. While the time that the dialogue teams spent together in this round of discussions allowed them to address a number of important issues related to the subject of mission, we are well aware that we have only scratched the surface. There are many issues which we believe would offer rich and worthy opportunities for further agreement. We note, for example, the following four items that emerged from our discussions, but which were beyond the present scope of our dialogue.

- God's sovereign rule over history.
- The discernment of manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the public square.
- Issues of justice, especially the points where it is more important to obey God rather than any human authority.

- The vision of society, religious freedom, and fundamental values.

83. We agree that while we did not address these issues substantially in this document, at times only mentioning them, we believe that had these issues been discussed, they could make a substantial contribution to our understanding in future conversations between our Church families or in discussions that might take place at local, regional, national, or global levels.

Thanksgiving

84. During our final year together, Professor Teresa "Tess" Chai—who contributed substantially throughout these years, presenting a paper that helped to set the stage for our initial discussions, and offering occasional devotionals, wisdom, and humour—passed away. We wish to thank God for Tess's faithfulness among us and commend her to God's care.

85. We also wish to glorify and to proclaim our praise to Christ Jesus, who has called us together to work on this project. As we spent time together in prayer, Bible study, and discussion, we enjoyed a level of fellowship that we had not anticipated. As we reflected theologically on our subject, we found much more in common than we had expected. Even where we disagreed with how the other understood things, we enjoyed a level of respect that we did not foresee. We believe that these experiences were gifts that God gave to us as we worked to follow his leading. Our prayer is that the Lord will now quicken the hearts of our readers, as they join us in following the mission to which he has called all of us.

APPENDIX

Pentecostal Participants

Rev. Dr. Teresa Chai, 2014[P]-2015, 2017-2018 (Malaysia/Philippines)
Rev. Dr. Shane Clifton, 2017[P] (Australia)
Bishop Dr. David Daniels, 2016-2020 (USA)
Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Grey, 2014-2018, 2020 (Australia)
Rev. Dr. Harold D. Hunter, 2014-2017 (USA)
Rev. Dr. Van Johnson, 2018[P] (Canada)
Rev. Dr. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, 2015[P] (Finland/USA)
Rev. Dr. Wonsuk Ma, 2016[P] (South Korea/USA)
Dr. Jean-Daniel Plüss, 2014[P]-2020 (Switzerland)
Rev. Dr. Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., (Co-chair) 2014-2020 (USA)
Dr. Olga Zaprometova, 2014, 2016-2017, 2019 (Russia)

Reformed Participants

Rev. Dr. Carmelo Alvarez, 2014, 2016 (Puerto Rico)
Rev. Dr. Dario Barolin, 2016 (Argentina)
Rev. Fundiswa Kobo (WCRC Intern), 2014[P] (South Africa)
Rev. Viktória Kóczián, 2014 (Hungary)
Rev. Dr. Karla Ann Koll, (Co-chair), 2014-2020[P(20218)] (USA/Costa Rica)
Rev. Dr. Hanns Lessing, (WCRC Staff) 2017-2020
Rev. Dr. Nadia Marais, 2014-2017[P(2016)], 2019 (South Africa)
Rev. Dr. Setri Nyomi, 2015[P]-2020 (Ghana)
Rev. Dr. Bas Plaisier, 2014-2019 (Netherlands)
Rev. Dr. Anna Quaas, 2014 (Germany)
Rev. Dr. Gabriella Rácsok, 2014-2019[P(2017)] (Hungary)
Rev. Dr. Douwe Visser (WCRC Staff), 2014[P]-2015 (Netherlands)

[P] Presented the position paper on behalf of their team in that year.

The process for this round of dialogue began with papers that were presented and discussed each year from 2014-2018. In August 2019, Karla Koll and Gabriella Rácsok, representing the Reformed team, and Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. and Jean-Daniel Plüss, representing the Pentecostals, met to develop a preliminary draft for the third round of the dialogue. In October 2019, all participants met to discuss the draft, make amendments, and determine that another drafting session was necessary. To that end, Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., Jean-Daniel Plüss, and David D. Daniels met in Hannover, Germany, for the Pentecostals with Karla Koll, Setri Nyomi, and Hanns Lessing. They revised the draft, and in March 2020, sent it to both teams for final review before making final edits and publishing it.

—Easter 2020

Jean-Daniel Plüss (jdpluss@gmail.com), a Swiss Pentecostal, chairs the European Pentecostal Charismatic Research Association and is president of the Fondation du Forum Chrétien Mondial.

Editorial Note: Only a small number of editorial adjustments were made to the original text to improve its reading.

Review

Kim-Kwong Chan, *Understanding World Christianity: China* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2019). Pp. 200. ISBN: 5064-1660-1 (Paper)

As one of the *Understanding World Christianity* series, Chan's book offers a rare chance for English readers to understand the Christian community in China within a real context. The realness can be best perceived by his term "a caged community."

With an emphasis on the Protestant church, Chan's book features what happened within the whole Chinese Christian community including the Catholic and Orthodox from 1949 to 2018. He does not only highlight the sovereignty of the Lord and the heroism of His servants in China, but also illustrates how this faith is generally comprehended and manifested among this widespread community. More than a history book, Chan's insights on the issues faced by the community are up to date and prescient.

Chan's overview in chapter 1 of historical events is comprehensive and enlightening. Not only do readers learn about this community from 635 CE to 2018, they will be inspired by Chan's fresh perspective on a number of issues. For example, Chan argues that the Dutch missionaries who arrived in Taiwan (Formosa) during the mid-seventeenth century should be counted as the first Protestant mission in China rather than Robert Morrison (13-14). Concerning the Japanese invasion of China, one learns that the political neutral stance of many missions was not based on any notion of justice or being apolitical, but rather their political considerations of the situation (17). In spite of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement's (TSPM) loyalty, the Party didn't grant them any special leniency (45).

Chapter 2 presents Chan's sophisticated understanding of the structure of "the cage" in which, in the name of patriotism, the will of the Party overrules the government, and the qualification for being a "citizen" means the unconditional support for the Party's ruler (41). Thus, the dividing line between the official church and the underground church becomes a question of priorities: Which comes first - the love of the nation or the love of the church (60)? When Chan says that the current regime is no exception to the past imperial ones in the governing goals (control, loyalty, and stability) (42), one cannot help wondering if the distinctions between the

ruling ideologies can produce any meaningful difference. And it also is disputable to exclude the Confucius Institute from the Party's apparatus (43). One credit which must be owed to Chan is his elaboration of the wide-spread sociopolitical stances in different regions, which account for the different consequences and reactions to the same policies.

In chapter 3, Chan's meticulous depiction of the Protestant community reveals the composition of the Western denominations before 1949, which inspired the appearance of the Chinese indigenous churches which placed theological emphasis on different areas. The indigenous churches' heritage did not totally disappear and some of them, on the contrary, are still influential both domestically and internationally. Along with new churches which appeared after 1949 with diverse roots and backgrounds, the independent churches have been struggling with the China Christian Council and the TSPM which were also newly founded after 1949. Presently, the two sides are exploring the possibility of future unity because they realize their primary enemy is the strong antireligious forces in the regime (100).

Chapter 4 shows that socio-cultural and geographical diversity is another cause of the complexity of Christianity in China. Chan's exposition of both China's' household registration system and urbanization explains the surge of Protestant conversions in rural areas between 1980 and 2000 (109-110). It also sheds light on the shift in church growth from rural to urban areas. The loss of the former commune welfare system definitely was critical to this rural surge. However, why such a surge did not occur before 1949, when the communal welfare system was not available, is unclear. This seems to render the necessity of future research. Chan conscientiously clarifies the needs, challenges, ecclesial structures, and ways of outreach that existed in the rural, urban, and peripheral areas, which bring to light the reasons for different speeds of growth among Christian communities. The missiological vision and passion demonstrated by Chinese Christians from Wenzhou and peripheral areas promise the future significance of Chinese Christians in the global mission movement. And this significance will always be associated with the heritage of the Western missionaries and the indigenous Christians before 1949.
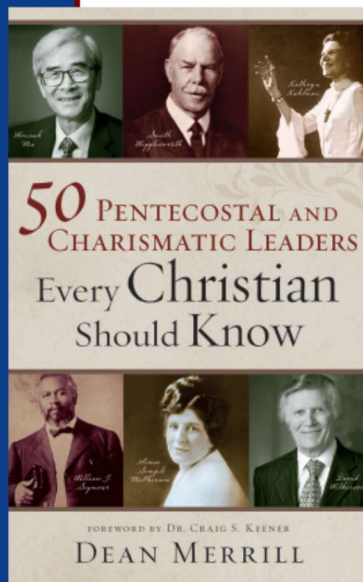
In chapter 5, four individual testimonies render a more comprehensive and deep understanding of Chinese Christians. As Chan says, the majority of Chinese Christians choose this faith for its practical ends, at least in their early spiritual journey. Once becoming more spiritually mature, they have to face two main issues in Chinese Christian living: persecution and identity struggles. Wang Zhiming's story best illustrates how cruel the persecution can be, while Xiaomin and Jin Luxian reveal the struggles with their identities.

In chapter 6, Chan explains that between 1979 and 2018 both the Protestant and Catholic churches went through stages of survival, expansion, and consolidation. The church is currently facing a slowed church growth, and many within the church feel inadequate to provide direction for a new generation raised in a postmodern milieu (181). Likewise, Western church growth methods are not applicable in this sociopolitical context (177). Though the number of Chinese Christians is great, they only constitute a small percentage of China's population. The general population is not only influenced by other religions but also is controlled by the Party, which means that the Chinese Christian community has little to no influence culturally and politically (188). Such difficulties may need divine intervention (181) or more radical means like revolution (188). Believing in the Chinese church's significant impact on the global mission, Chan humorously expresses his critical opinion of the "Back to Jerusalem Movement." Looking ahead, Chan wishes that the Chinese Christian community would strive for unity and being more culturally Chinese.

Indeed, Chan's book has successfully delineated the history of the Chinese Christian community and has painted a fine mosaic picture of it against China's social, cultural, and political fabric.

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