

Pentecostal Spirituality and the Luke-Acts Paradigm

Abstract

Pentecostalism, a vibrant movement from its inception, looks into the first-century church, mentioned in Luke-Acts, as its paradigm. The first part of the essay is about Luke-Acts paradigm that delineates the charismatic empowerment of the Holy Spirit, visible manifestation of gifts, mission in terms of *kerygma*, *διακονία*, and *κοινωνία*. The second part deals with unique aspects of Pentecostal spirituality as a result of Luke-Acts paradigm.

Key Terms

Charismatic, Service, Kerygma, fellowship, Counter-cultural, and Transformative.

Introduction

The geographical center of Christianity is shifting from the global North to the global South and within this shift Pentecostal movements are acknowledged as the fast-growing churches in the recent past.¹ Interestingly, one fourth of all full-time Christian workers in the world are Pentecostal/charismatic.² The reasons of Pentecostal growth are directly linked to the way Pentecostals, by means of their spirituality, address the emotional and spiritual problems of people.³ Although Pentecostal spirituality is not appreciated well within the academy, this paper analyzes the normative nature of Luke-Acts paradigm to explain the Pentecostal spirituality. The first part of this article is about Luke-Acts paradigm and the second part is the contextual implication of this paradigm on Pentecostal spirituality. It is presumed that Luke did not believe the radical discontinuity between the pre-seventy and post-seventy CE in so far as the activity of the Spirit is concerned. The wider scope of the study is to expand the dialogue partners of Pentecostal spirituality in the theological landscape.

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¹In 1900, 77% of the world's Christian population was in Europe and Northern America. In 2000, only 37% of the two billion Christians in the world were from the northern continents, while 63% are from Asia, Oceania, Africa, and Latin America. The projections for 2025 are 29% and 71% respectively. Furthermore, 26% of the world's Christians are now "Pentecostal/ Charismatics," a number that will rise to 31% by 2025. At least three-quarters of Pentecostalism today is found in what is commonly called the Southern Hemisphere. Cf. Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 14; Ogbu Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5-6.

²D. Barrett, 'Statistics. Global,' *DPCM*, 810-30. Cf. Steven Jack Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Tennessee: CPT Press, 2010), 25, online version.

³These include sickness, poverty, unemployment, loneliness, alcoholism, addictions, and more importantly the problem related to evil spirits.

Pentecostalism and Spirituality

Pentecostalism and spirituality are difficult terms to define because of their varying emphasis of each aspect by various communities. Pentecostalism has been used to describe a broad spectrum of groups within the Christian Church. I here borrow the working definition of Asamoah-Gyadu,

Pentecostalism refers to Christian groups which emphasize salvation in Christ as a transformative experience wrought by the Holy Spirit and in which pneumatic phenomena including the ‘speaking in tongues,’ prophecies, visions, healing and miracles in general, perceived as standing in historic continuity with the experiences of the early church as found especially in the Acts of the Apostles, are sought, accepted, valued, and consciously encouraged among members as signifying the presence of God and experiences of his Spirit.⁴

The term spirituality also differs from person to person. There is spirituality inside religions and outside of religions. It shows that the drive of spirituality is inherent in human nature; a sense of emptiness, incompleteness, limitation, depravity, anxiety, dissatisfaction, and the like. Some are aware of it and others are not. However, we all try to fill the emptiness or push the boundaries with something and that something is our spirituality. Hence the term spirituality can be roughly be defined as a way to connect to our inner nature and a means to express our inner nature. Within this framework, spirituality functions as a world view and a way of life based on our belief system and practices. Thus, the overview of the landscape of the spirituality of a community unearths the reason for a given set of practices.

Each religion has its own spirituality based on their belief system. Russell Paul Spittler defines spirituality as “a cluster of acts and sentiments that are informed by the beliefs and values that characterize a specific religious community.”⁵ Similarly, Daniel E. Albrecht looks at spirituality as “the lived experience which actualizes a fundamental dimension of the human being, the spiritual dimension, that is the whole of one’s spiritual or religious experience, one’s beliefs, convictions, and patterns of thought, one’s emotions and behaviour in respect to what is ultimate, or God.”⁶ Such belief system along with its practices are connected to spirituality of the believer.

Some people deny the continuous activity of God in the world as God did in the biblical times through the Spirit. Those who keep up a scientific world view as the

⁴ Johnson K. Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics: Current Developments within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 12.

⁵ Russell Paul Spittler, “Spirituality, Pentecostal and Charismatic,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1096.

⁶ Daniel E. Albrecht, “Pentecostal Spirituality: Looking through the Lens of Ritual,” *Pneuma* 14/ 2 (Fall 1992), 108-109.

only reality consider the supernatural world view as pre-modern and pre-scientific and thus, they deny the supernatural intervention in the world history including miracles. Another group who supports a cessationist view holds that extraordinary revelations of the Spirit ceased at the end of the apostolic age.⁷ While taking Luke-Acts as a paradigm, Pentecostals are neither materialists nor limit the activity of God in the world to the apostolic age alone rather Pentecostals continue to witness the activity of God in the history along with their present experience in the community.

The Normative Paradigm of Luke-Acts

Since the same pattern of early Jerusalem church had not repeated within the twenty to twenty-five years in Antioch or Corinth or Philippi, a question comes as to how far one can take Luke-Acts as a paradigm.

Moreover, can theology and doctrine be derived from stories? Can we look at the apostolic experience as normative? Is what the Apostles did normative for all Christians for all time? Hollenwegger argues that “Didactic portions of Scripture must have precedence over historical passages in establishing doctrine.”⁸ In a bit different way Gordon D. Fee stipulates that if historical narrative is used for doctrine then the point made in a story must be repeated elsewhere in didactic Scripture.⁹ However, Roger Stronstad believes narrative is fine for deriving doctrine.¹⁰ If one cannot take the Acts of the Apostles normatively, then the question is whether the literary genre takes away the divine inspiration of the scripture. Diverse literary genre in the Bible points to the early Church’s openness to appreciate the variety.

Ben Witherington gives two aspects of hermeneutics in relation to the above questions: first, Luke intended his audience to learn and do as a result of hearing or reading Acts; and second, at a canonical level at which the church judged Luke’s work as Holy Writing.¹¹ It is also probable to believe that Luke believed that God continued to act in his own day in similar fashion to the way God in the person of the Holy Spirit acted in the early apostles. Luke neither intended that the apostolic age is unique and unrepeatable nor he believed that his period of writing has a radical discontinuity from the apostolic age.

⁷ Cf. Marius Nel, “Pentecostal talk about God: Attempting to speak from experience,” 2, available online, *HTS Theologese Studies/Theological Studies* 73/3, a4479. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v73i3.4479> (accessed on 26/8/2020).

⁸ Walter J. Hollenwegger, *The Pentecostals* (London: SCM. Publishers, 1972), 11.

⁹ For instance, it is fine to understand that murder is wrong from the story of Cain and Abel since “Thou shall not murder” is repeated in the 10 Commandments. Fee states, “I have failed to find a hermeneutical articulation that took me by the hand and showed me how one goes about doing this—that is, establishing something normative on the basis of historical precedent alone.” Gordon D. Fee, “Response to Roger Stronstad’s The Biblical Precedent for Historical Precedent,” *Paraclete* (Summer 1993): 11–14.

¹⁰ Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1984).

¹¹ Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 98.

In relation to various criticisms against the normative value of Luke-Acts, Joel B. Green mentions that the purpose of Luke was not validation but signification—Luke is not proving that something happened in history, but rather communicates what these events signify.¹² As early Christianity was moving from “eye-witness” to the third quarter of the first century, Luke’s historiography concentrated the significance of the universal spread of the good news both in the social scale and in geographical scale outward to the world—to all people throughout the Empire. Thus, having the normative position of the Acts in mind, what are the ways Luke-Acts is paradigmatic to the Pentecostal spirituality.

The Spirit as Charismatic Empowerment

There is a scholarly debate over the “salvation/charismatic” nature of Lukan pneumatology. F. F. Bruce and J. D. G. Dunn are of the opinion that Lukan pneumatology is not charismatic but it is more of initiatory and soteriological.¹³ Dunn argued that Luke understood the Spirit primarily as the presence of salvation, the kingdom of God, and “sonship.”¹⁴

However, the charismatic role of the Spirit in Luke-Acts is presented by Robert Menzies who argued that Luke retained the Jewish notion of the Spirit which was understood almost exclusively as the source of inspired speech, revelation, and esoteric wisdom—not as a gift a person needs to receive in order to experience salvation, nor as the source of spiritual/ethical renewal, nor as the power of miraculous activities in the physical realm (such as healings).¹⁵ In this connection, for example, Menzies argues that Luke changes Matthew’s “Spirit of God” [Matt 12:28] to “finger of God” [Luke 11:20] to avoid the impression that the Spirit effects exorcisms. Contrary to Dunn, Menzies argues that Jesus’ reception of the Spirit at his baptism (Luke 3:21-22) is not the means of his own inner experience of the kingdom of God and of eschatological Sonship, rather—as the paradigmatic sermon in Nazareth indicates (Luke 4:18-21)—it is the endowment of Jesus, as the prophet like Moses, to proclaim the messianic fulfilment of the hopes of Isa 61:1-2.

The phrases like “filled with the Spirit” and “baptism in the Holy Spirit” have more reference in Luke-Acts than Paul. For instance, while Paul has a singular use of the

¹² Joel B. Green, “Internal Repetition in Luke-Acts: Contemporary Narratology and Lukan Historiography.” In *History, Literature, and Society in the Book of Acts*, ed. Ben Witherington (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 288.

¹³ F. F. Bruce and James D. G. Dunn approach Acts 2:1–21 with the presupposition that the Day of Pentecost is a day of salvation; they opine that the experience of the Spirit initiates an individual into the Christian faith through conversion. For instance, Bruce describes the Baptism of the Spirit as “something that took place once for all on the Day of Pentecost when He poured forth the promise of the Father on His disciples and thus constituted them the new people of God.” F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), 35.

¹⁴ James D. G. Dunn, “Baptism in the Spirit: A Response to Pentecostal Scholarship on Luke-Acts,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3 (1993): 3-27.

¹⁵ Robert P. Menzies, *Empowered for Witness: The Spirit in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: SAP, 1994), chaps. 2-5; R. P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts*, JSNT Supplement 54 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 48; cf. Max Turner, “The Work of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts,” *Word & World* 23/2 (Spring 2003), 147-48; R. P. Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts*, JSNT Supplement 54 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), 48.

phrases “baptism in the Spirit” (1 Cor 12:13) and “filled with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18), Luke has twelve uses of the same two phrases (“filled with the Holy Spirit”: Luke 1:15, 41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9; 13:52; and “baptism in the Holy Spirit”: Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5; 11:16). Luke regards the gift of the Spirit to believers exclusively as a prophetic/charismatic empowerment for service and mission. It means the “Spirit of prophecy” is by its very nature a gift granted to those who are already “saved.” The Spirit in Luke-Acts is called an additional gift. “Additional” means the second blessing apart from the salvation by the grace.¹⁶

What is the difference between baptism in the Holy Spirit in the letters of Paul and Luke-Acts? For Paul, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to join with the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:12) as an initiation experience. In Luke-Acts, the disciples are promised they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5), and this is specifically elucidated as “power from on high” to witness (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). When the Spirit comes on the Day of Pentecost, Peter explains the gift in terms of the promise in Joel 2:28-32 for the expectation of an outpouring of the Spirit as the “Spirit of prophecy” (Acts 2:16-21, 33). And it is precisely this gift that Peter promises to all who repent and turn to Christ according to Acts 2:38-39.

Similarly, Roger Stronstad, who prefers on literary analyses of Luke-Acts, describes Lukan pneumatology not as initiatory, but charismatic, vocational, and prophetic.¹⁷ According to him, the Spirit inspires prophecy, worship, witness, and guidance for the inauguration, development and expansion of a new charismatic community.

Demand for Visible Manifestation

The Acts of the Apostles gives the visible manifestation of the Holy Spirit in various episodes. In Acts 2:33, Peter reported, “which you see and hear,” concerning the reception of the Holy Spirit and the speaking in tongues, to the listeners. The visible manifestation of the Spirit, appears in Cornelius episode (Acts 10:44-46) and on the Ephesian disciples (Acts 19:6). Peter and his companions agreed to give baptism to the household of Cornelius only after seeing their reception of the Holy Spirit. About this Dunn comments, “Luke characteristically thinks of the Spirit as making a tangible, visible impact on a human life, and characteristically in terms of inspired speech.”¹⁸ Another example is Samaritan episode.

The Samaritan episode is a unique incident for consideration. The Samaritan mission by Philip and the subsequent visit of Peter and John to Samaria gives another insight of the visible manifestation of the Spirit (Acts 8: 4-24). Many Samaritan men and women received water baptism as a response to the ministry of

¹⁶ Turner, “The Work of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts,” 147.

¹⁷ Roger Stronstad, “The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke Revisited,” *Defining Issues in Pentecostalism: Classical and Emergent*, ed. Steven M. Studebaker (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2008), 101-122.

¹⁸ Dunn brings a balanced approach of equal emphasis to salvation and physical manifestation in Luke. He asks, “is there any justification in the text for the further deduction that Luke intends to limit the effect of the Spirit in a life to such inspired speech, to ‘prophecy’ as distinct from ‘salvation’?” J. D. G. Dunn, *The Christ and the Spirit*, Vol. 2: *Pneumatology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 227.

Philip (Acts 8:12: “*But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike*”). In 8:16, Luke explicitly tells that none of them received the Spirit. Later when Peter laid his hands on those baptized Samaritans, they received the Spirit (Acts 8:16-17). C. K. Barrett is quite right in rejecting the incident as an example of “early Catholicism” (*Frühkatholizismus*).¹⁹ Dunn, who keeps a view that the central concern of Lukan pneumatology is conversion-initiation, comments on this episode that the Samaritans were not in any full sense Christians until they received the Spirit. Dunn writes, “The implication, then, is that Luke understood the Samaritans’ faith to be defective to some degree.”²⁰ The questions come as to if Luke keeps the real conversion of the Samaritans in mind. If conversion and reception of the Spirit are two sides of the same coin as Dunn argues, then why the Spirit was withheld till the arrival of Jerusalem apostles? Witherington is of the opinion that because of the long-standing antipathy and hostility between Jews and Samaritans (cf. Jn 4:9), confirmation of the true conversion would be needed by the mother Church in Jerusalem.²¹ The confirmation comes in the form of the Samaritans receiving the Holy Spirit when the apostles laid their hands on them, the same sort of confirmation Peter later remarks on as a proof that God also accepts Gentiles (Acts 11:15-17).

How did the people come to know that the Samaritans received the Spirit when Peter laid his hands on them? Or at least Simon, the former sorcerer, was impressed by what he saw (Acts 8:18). As an answer to this question, Dunn comments that most probably tongues and prophesy (the inference is in relation to Acts 2:4; 10:44-45; 19:6 and 1 Cor 14:14).²²

Two things are important in this episode: first, it is a guarantee of Church membership, as Menzies notes, “it is unlikely that the Samaritans would need any further assurance of their incorporation into the Church after baptism”;²³ and second, the people could identify the authority of apostles through the visible manifestation of the gifts. Although, critical of the necessity of miracles and such evidences in his own day, Severus of Antioch, one of the earliest Christian interpreters (in *Cat. Act.* 10.44) contended that in apostolic times “those who received holy baptism both spoke with tongues and prophesied in order to prove that they had received the Holy Spirit.”²⁴ However, we are not sure how long in the church had the visible manifestation as an approval of the reception of the Spirit.

¹⁹ Barrett makes clear that Luke appears to have no hard and fast views on the relation between baptism and the Holy Spirit. Cf. Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 287.

²⁰ Dunn, *The Christ & the Spirit*, 220, 216-21.

²¹ It must be recognized that the water baptism is administered prior to the Spirit “falling” on the Samaritans, whereas in Acts 10:44 belief and Spirit precede the administering of water baptism, and in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch later in Acts 8 Spirit and water may have been received virtually simultaneously. Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 289.

²² Dunn comments, most likely, tongues as occurred in Acts 8:17, though it is not mentioned. He continues, Luke intended to portray ‘speaking in tongues’ as ‘the initial physical evidence’ of the outpouring of the Spirit. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, 189-90.

²³ Menzies, *The Development*, 250.

²⁴ Quoted by Keener, *Acts*, 827, footnote 408.

The Spirit and *Kerygma* in Luke-Acts

The regular references of the Spirit in Luke-Acts are for the mission. The formula “filled with the Spirit” is in relation to the empowerment and sharing of the Gospel (Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 13:9 cf. Luke 10:21; 12:12). Luke’s quotation from Isa 61:1 in Luke 4:18 (i.e., “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news”) is again points to the same. Similarly, in Acts 1:8, the resurrected Jesus commissions his disciples upon reception of the Spirit to take the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. Witherington comments that Acts 2:1-21 is set as the agenda of Acts as Luke 4:18-21 functions in the Gospel.²⁵ Thus, the reception of the Spirit and the proclamation of the Gospel are interlinked in Luke-Acts. The spread of the Gospel to the least, last, and lost, is made clear in both passages.

The Church’s mission, in Peter’s reply (Acts 2), is to be characterized by three things such as, visions and divine guidance, bold witness in the face of intense opposition, and signs and wonders.²⁶ Luke mentions that these three things will continue to mark out as signs of the last days. Thus, the Holy Spirit empowers the Church for the mission and ministries in various contexts.²⁷ The emphasis on the Spirit underlined the dependence on God’s power and activity. Moreover, Luke does not give any clue that the spirit inspired utterances and miracles disappeared at the missional activities of early church in the late first century.

The Spirit and Service

While Paul gives emphasis to the Spirit in relation to salvation or sanctification, Luke brings importance to the aspect of service.²⁸ The Spirit in Luke has a vocational purpose and equips the disciples for service. The selection of the seven deacons in Acts 6:1-7 explicitly portrays this purpose.²⁹ One of the qualifications of this new leadership is “full of the Spirit and wisdom” (6:3). The ministry of deacon is specified as an ordained ministry. J. B. Shelton argues that the Spirit empowers disciples to witness—witness to the ministry of Jesus and to bring about the working of salvation in the church.³⁰ Luke describes in detail about the activities of two of the seven, Philip and Stephen. He describes them preaching, teaching, baptizing, and later dying as martyrs.

The term *diakonia* first appears in Acts 1:8 and 1:17, in reference to the Apostles selecting a replacement for Judas in their ministry (*diakonia*) to be witnesses of the

²⁵ Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 69-70.

²⁶ Robert P. Menzies, “Acts 2.17-21: A Paradigm for Pentecostal Mission,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 17/2 (December 2008): 200-218.

²⁷ Cf. Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 123.

²⁸ R. Strongstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1984), 12, 55, 64, 81-82.

²⁹ Being full of the Spirit is a recurring theme in the Acts of the Apostles and echoes one of the characteristics assigned to the development of Jesus (Luke 2:40, 52).

³⁰ J. B. Shelton, *Mighty in Word and Deed: The Role of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1988), 6, 10, 26, 120.

gospel. Apart from Acts 6:1, 2, 4, the term *diakonia* occurs later in Acts 20:24 and 21:19. Luke uses *diakonia* in the latter passages to describe the ministry Paul received from Christ to be his witness. When Luke uses *diakonia* it is always within the context of the mission (ministry) received by Christ to be His witness, spread the gospel and/or make disciples.³¹ For Luke, *diakonia* is equally important as preaching, teaching, and baptizing people. Thus, the service aspect in mission is important for Luke. The disciples are empowered by the Spirit for the holistic mission of the Church.

Unintelligible Spirit-Inspired Speeches

Often Acts 2 is cited to invalidate the unintelligible spirit-inspired speech or particularly the unintelligible tongues. We made an axiom that spirit-inspired speeches are always intelligible with respect to Acts 2. However, Acts of the Apostles does not always follow such a pattern. The difference can be identified when we compare Acts 2 to Acts 10. While Acts 2 is empowerment and enablement of witness, Acts 10 is a story of the conversion of Cornelius' household. Nothing is said in the latter text about foreign languages or witnessing to foreigners through pneumatically inspired speech. Although the Spirit-inspired speech in Acts 10 is unintelligible, the companions of Peter attested that the Holy Spirit descended on Gentiles the same way as it had been descended on the 120 people at the Upper room (Acts 10:45-46). Similarly, the disciples in Ephesus also had an experience of speaking in tongues after their baptism (Acts 19:5-7). Luke differentiated tongues and prophesy separately in Luke-Acts to show the equal importance of intelligible and unintelligible spirit-inspired speeches in the early Church.³² The Spirit inspired speeches in Luke-Acts is a sign of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, which in turn function for the advancement of the Gospel.

κοινωνία of the Community (2:42-47)

Acts 2:42-47 functions as a summary passage that deals with the interior life of the community.³³ The new converts devoted themselves to five things: first, the teaching of the apostles; second, fellowship/ *κοινωνία*; third, the breaking of the bread; fourth, prayer; and fifth, sharing things in common. The fellowship in a wider sense contains the breaking of the bread, prayer, and sharing—the physical fellowship and the spiritual fellowship. In conjunction with other texts like Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7, 11 all suggest the breaking of the bread was a full meal along with an act of worship that involved eating, praying, teaching, and singing in homes.³⁴ As a result, 2:47 narrates that the numerical expansion of the believing community. The essential feature of the community was internal harmony and ideal *κοινωνία*.

³¹ Matthew Newsome, "The Ministry of the Deacon," www.testeverythingblog.com/the-ministry-of-the-deacon-9861abc27ca6 (accessed on 13/2/2021).

³² In Pauline epistles, tongues are always unintelligible and therefore, Paul commands the churches to exercise it with the help of the gift of interpretation.

³³ Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 159-60.

³⁴ Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 160-61.

Such an ideal condition was the propaganda of the utopian societies in the Greco-Roman world.³⁵ And such ideal conditions were seemed to be practiced in some form at Qumran community out of their demand of ritual purity (1QS 5:1-3; CD 9:1-15) and not of ideal friendship (1QS 9:3-11). Luke witnesses the *κοινωνία* as the foundational aspects of the early Christian community which is not an impossibility as we have some parallels of it from the Greco-Roman and Jewish world.

Pentecostal Spirituality

Pentecostals consider the experience of the Holy Spirit as the foretaste of the Kingdom of God. Pentecostal theology accents the Holy Spirit as actively moving, working, and personally transforming human beings, institutions, and communities in the world.³⁶ Harvey H. Guthrie defines spirituality as the integration between spirit and body.³⁷ In Pentecostal understanding believers are endowed with the Spirit of God to experience divine within the human limits. The spiritual experience after the conversion is seen as God's presence in believers' life. Therefore, human spiritual experiences produce vitality that makes believers feel more alive and connected. In a way Pentecostal spirituality overcomes the dichotomy between God and world. Based on the Luke-Acts paradigm as explained above, the following features are part of Pentecostal spirituality.

Transformative and Experiential

Book of Acts witnesses the transformation of individuals simultaneously with the advancement of the Gospel. Pentecostal spirituality is oriented towards transformation of individuals, families, churches and societies. Teaching in the Pentecostal churches gives emphasis to the need of transformation in the individual and family life.

Luke-Acts emphasizes the transformation of individuals. Harvey Cox continues two things in relation to the experiential aspect of Pentecostal theology: first, it is formed out of their experience of God in Christ through the Holy Spirit; and second, it is transformative theology that intends to transform the people of different characters into the character of Christ.³⁸ The empowerment liberates her/him from former addictions and habits and produces 'the fruit of the Spirit'.

³⁵ Such Hellenistic proverbial descriptions are available in Plato, *Republic* 449C; *Critias* 110 C-D; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1168B; Philo, *On Abraham*, 235. Cf. Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 160-61, 162.

³⁶ Nimi Wariboko and Amos Yong, eds., *Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology: Spiritual Presence and Spiritual Power* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2015), ix.

³⁷ Harvey H. Guthrie, "Anglican spirituality: An Ethos and Some Issues," *Exploring Christian spirituality: An Ecumenical Reader*, ed. Kenneth J. Collins (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 162.

³⁸ Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: the Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-first Century*, 1995, 71, as quoted by Jacob Mathew, "Pentecostu Faith Movement and Indegenous, Contextual Realities & Relevance: A Theological Analysis," *SATHRI Journal* 9/2 (October, 2015), 48.

Holistic Salvation

Luke-Acts paradigm describes the salvation as both internal and external well-being. The mission command in Luke 9:1-2 gives equal importance to preaching the good news, healing the sick, and casting the demons. Pentecostals explain that the Holy Spirit ceaselessly gives physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual vitality. Young So describes that the Holy Spirit makes people to be vital subjects who actively participate in God's vision and action.³⁹ Similarly, Steven Land says, Pentecostals view the human being as 'one spirit-mind-body' and respond to the divine spirit in these ways: 'raising the hands in praise, clapping to the glory of God, extending the right hand of fellowship, joining hands to pray.'⁴⁰ Thus, the three nature becomes one in the Holy Spirit.

The compartmentalization of human being into body, soul, and spirit is mostly eroded in the Pentecostal spirituality and thus, salvation is both other-worldly and this-worldly. Divine blessings include material prosperity as well. It means the Salvation includes both physical and spiritual well-being.

Eschatological Orientation

The relation between pneumatology and eschatology is clear in Acts 2 because the pouring out of the Spirit is considered as the sign of "last days" (2:17). The quotation from Joel 2:28-32 at Acts 2:17-20 is seen as the sign that the eschatological age has begun, and the promises of the OT era are being fulfilled in the lives of those who follow Jesus.⁴¹ All God's people will have the Spirit and be equipped for witness or service with various gifts in the eschatological age. Simon Chan mentions that the presence of the Spirit makes the Church eschatological in which the "not yet" has in a sense "already" come.⁴²

The understanding of the Church as an eschatological reality is crucial for the Pentecostal spirituality. Thus, the nature of the Church is future oriented. Simon Chan says the future orientation is not about historical future but a future beyond history.⁴³ Such a vision made the early Pentecostals to be filled with the passion of the Kingdom that everything else was made subservient to it. For some members, such an apocalyptic vision resulted in noble services and for others such vision caused terrible results. The powers of the age to come has already in some measures present in the "signs and wonders." The eschatological orientation of Pentecostalism that gives hope of the imminence of the end of the age prioritises Pentecostals to aggressively engage in evangelism. This belief has led Pentecostals to be more concerned with getting "souls saved" than with matters of social

³⁹ Tae Young So, "Pentecostal spirituality as Nurturing Vitality for Human Lives," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 18 (2009), 251.

⁴⁰ Steven J. Land, "Pentecostal spirituality: Living in the spirit," *Christian spirituality*, eds. Louis Dupre and Donald E. Saliers (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 484.

⁴¹ Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 140.

⁴² Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 109.

⁴³ Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, 109.

concern.⁴⁴ The less concern for social actions could be that they long for a world better than the current one.

Counter-Cultural Attitude

Turning the World Upside Down (οικουμένην ἀναστατώσαντες) is said to be a regular accusation raised against the Christians in general and particularly against Paul and Silas at Thessalonica (Acts 17:6). The word ἀναστατώσαντες refers to those upsetting the *stasis* or stable conditions of the city (it can also be ‘subverting the Empire’ as well).⁴⁵ I use this expression in the Pentecostal believers’ life to describe the joy and transformation they experience in the Holy Spirit. Many reports their experience of ‘sacred space’ in which they say “no” to many things they have been doing. The new experience gives them a new sense of self and an awareness in relation to God and others. Such a self-consciousness enables them to redefine the self-identity and priorities. Many people testify that they leave their parental religious and social belongings to embrace and remain in the new experience.

Pentecostals report that they go through this “upside down” experience that what is regarded as the fringe becomes the centre and that which is extraordinary becomes commonplace.⁴⁶ The believers experience unspeakable joy in the worship service through singing, sharing testimony, listening to God’s word, and speaking in tongues. Many a time, forms of worship and spirituality followed in other denominational churches are not followed in the Pentecostal churches. Pentecostals envision a world in which God’s power is available for personal and social transformation. Thus, others accuse Pentecostals as counter-cultural group.

Conclusion

The Pentecostals hold on to the view that the Luke-Acts not only gives the description of the first-century church but also continues to function as a paradigm for twenty-first century to participate in the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit. After analysing the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles, Craig S. Keener comments that Luke anticipates that all believers, including his audience, should share this empowerment.⁴⁷ As such, the Lukan Pneumatology gives the biblical credentials to the Pentecostal spirituality. Since the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts integrates the body, mind, and spirit together in Christ, and thus, the holistic salvation envisioned in the Pentecostal spirituality takes the internal and external well-being of individuals into serious consideration.

⁴⁴ Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 226-229.

⁴⁵ The literal sense of the charge is rebelling against the Roman order and punishable by deportation to an island. For example, Claudius had written a letter in 41 CE to the Jews of Alexandria about Jews who were “fomenters of what is a general plague infecting the whole world” (cf. P. Lond. 1912). It can be suspected that the officials were on the lookout for such people. Cf. Paul W. Walaskay, *Acts* (Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 163; Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 507.

⁴⁶ Frederick L. Ware, “Neo-Pentecostal Spirituality and Theology of Creativity in the Work of Barbara A. Holmes,” *Pneuma* 35 (2013), 81.

⁴⁷ Keener, *Acts*, 521.

Nevertheless, teachings on the corporate transformation of the society and the need of collective action plans have yet to receive its due in Pentecostal spirituality.

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