

**The Globalization of Pentecostalism:
A Religion Made to Travel**

Editors:

**Murray W. Dempster
Byron D. Klaus
Douglas Petersen**



During the period in which Pentecostalism has arisen as a recognized social/religious force in the world, other social movements have emerged which call for reconstructing the social order through education. Epistemologies have been developed which challenge the exclusiveness of the scientific method. Of these, the most prominent is Paulo Freire's epistemology of *praxis*. The purpose of this paper is to explore the compatibility of Pentecostalism with the leading *praxis* models of education and social reform and thereby to construct a model for Pentecostal *praxis*.

The model which will be developed suggests that Pentecostals are inclined toward an epistemology and corresponding approach to social reform which is generally compatible with Freire's model of *praxis*, but which is better understood as a contemporary expression of the epistemology found in the Scriptures. This model requires that Pentecostals take care to preserve their historic self-understanding as a prophetic movement – the humble who speak with and for God. The structure of this inquiry is to address three questions: What is a *praxis* model of education and social transformation? What is the Pentecostal paradigm for knowledge and truth? How should Pentecostalism relate to the *praxis* model?

WHAT IS A PRAXIS MODEL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION?

In recent years the term *praxis* has become a significant word within the jargons of several academic fields, including social ethics, education, and practical theology. In order for one to understand the term there must be a conscious move away from dichotomizing ideas and matter-in-motion and toward seeing them as dialectically united within the same activity.² The term expresses a form of knowledge in which reflection and action are joined as twin-moments. It is an epistemological concept in which theory and practice are dynamically linked as a singular movement.

Aristotle treated *praxis* as one of three principle ways of knowing, the other two being *theoria* and *poesis*. *Theoria* was a property of the intellect alone and was the highest form of knowledge. Only through *theoria* could an individual attain unto *sophia*, the highest level of wisdom. *Praxis* merged thought with doing, primarily in the sense of interaction with society. *Poesis* merged thought with making in the sense of shaping material objects, for example, the artisan's work.

Chapter Four

Yielding to the Spirit:

The Dynamics of a Pentecostal Model of Praxis¹

Jackie David Johns

Historically, Pentecostals have existed on the margins of their societies. Seldom have they been active participants in the acknowledged political systems of social transformation. In many parts of the world this social quietism is no longer the case. Pentecostals are growing in influence within Christianity and in the world. They are being sought out and enlisted to participate in the political processes of their communities. They are being placed in seats of power. With this trend it is imperative that they define the terms of their participation. Their commitment to the gospel demands that they be committed to full participation in all that God is redemptively doing in the world, including the liberation of oppressed persons. For many Pentecostals, however, their understandings of redemption and of the role of the church in the world has often restricted their involvement in social reform only to evangelism and its attending personal transformations. Others find their recent political influence fully compatible with their faith.

from the mere existence of a conscious attempt by persons to tie their actions to a theoretical base. In such usage *praxis* is little more than human activity that has been motivated by prior critical thought. In this popular usage *praxis* is simply purposive action.

Scholarly use of the term *praxis* should reflect the more technical distinctions set forth by Aristotle, Marx, and Freire. While the philosophical base of each differed somewhat, collectively they provide a common distinctive usage for *praxis*. *Praxis* refers to a way of knowing in which the subject unites thinking and doing. Theory and action are held in dialectic tension as twin moments experienced as a single event within human history. Critical reflection is both an essential ancillary movement and an ingredient of *praxis*. The individual must see the self as distinct from the surrounding world and must choose to engage purposively those external realities. The subject must understand his or her self as an individual having power to influence the world in which he or she lives. However, contrary to the theory-to-practice paradigm, in *praxis* action and theory are dynamically intertwined in a manner that fosters ongoing *praxis*.

The central focus of *praxis* is social transformation through what Groome has termed *shared-praxis*.⁵ In Freire's model of *praxis* humans must follow a moral imperative to honour all others as subjects in history. In this way the oppressed of society are empowered to become full partners in the ongoing transformation of their world. The supremacy given by Aristotle to theory is rejected as inherently oppressive. In true *praxis* the educated can not apply their realities to others without invoking the human objects in their *praxis* to enter their own *praxis* thereby becoming active and equal subjects in the processes of society. The professional educator must risk being an object of others in order to be engaged by the *praxis* of the very persons he or she is seeking to serve.

In summary, *praxis* may be understood as a pedagogical method, the essential method of a philosophy of education which espouses as its objective the full humanization of persons through the attainment of the skills necessary to 'read' the realities of their lives and thereby to become actors in their own histories. It may also be understood as the central method of those social reformers who seek a full democratization through the empowerment of the oppressed to confront and change the social realities of their world. *Praxis* is a type of knowledge in which the learner engages, labels, and alters the social realities of his or her existence. Through its processes it empowers the oppressed

72 Because it focused on interaction with society, *praxis* was beneficial for moral training, but could not bring an individual to *sophia*.

G.W.F. Hegel re-introduced the term *praxis* in modern times. He adapted the term to the Enlightenment's emphasis on critical reason. He saw *praxis* in relation to *Geist*, the all-powerful and encompassing Spirit which guided the universe toward the actualization of itself. For Hegel *praxis* was the *praxis* of *Geist*. This use of the term united the theory and practice in an even stronger dialectic than had Aristotle. Human knowing was not realized by speculative theorizing apart from the world, but rather was attained through reflection on, and participation in, the *praxis* of *Geist* within history.

Thomas Groome has pointed out that Hegel's understanding of *praxis* left little room for self-initiated active/reflective engagement in the world. Knowledge comes instead by phenomenological observation of *Geist's* activity in the world. Thus, Hegel remained functionally caught in a Greek theory-centered-manner of knowing.³

Karl Marx was influenced by Hegel's concept of *praxis*. He, however, put humankind in the place of *Geist*, calling for humans to influence and shape their own history. In this usage *praxis* is totally an endeavour within nature. It is void of any transcendent authority. Human critical reflection and action are considered sufficient for the ongoing reformation of social reality.

Paulo Freire⁴ was a Brazilian, Roman Catholic, humanist, educator whose works have most influenced contemporary usage of the term *praxis*. He based much of his understanding of *praxis* upon Marx. For Freire the world is divided into economic categories. He calls for human participation in transforming these structures. People are to be active subjects in the historical process, not passive objects caught in a world in which they have no control. Thus *praxis*, as active participation in one's own history, is necessary for a person to be fully human. While Freire considered himself a Christian, his works leave most of the responsibility for *praxis* up to humanity. At best God is a subjective presence in the historical process. It is largely through Freire's influence that *praxis* has been integrated into present-day movements of social change, including educational systems of social reconstruction, liberation theologies, and the agendas of various political parties especially within the two-thirds world.

Current popular usage of *praxis* often seems to treat the word as a synonym for practice. Caught in a Greek/Enlightenment dichotomy between theory and action (matter in motion), many seem to infer

to read their own realities and it gives them voice to speak to those realities. *Praxis* results in the denunciation of dehumanizing systems and relationships. It is therefore a political process of democratization that challenges oppressive social structures. *Praxis* is therefore a prophetic movement, according to Freire and his followers, one that is infused with Marxist ideologies. It has been widely adopted by and associated with liberationist movements. This identification with revolutionary groups has led to conflicting responses by Pentecostals, especially in Latin America.

A few years ago during a ministerial class session in Guatemala I was asked by one student, 'Can I be faithful to God and the church and align myself with a *praxis* epistemology? Is it not Marxist?' Before I could answer, a classmate answered with his own question, 'Can I be faithful to God and the church and not align myself with a *praxis* epistemology, even if it is used by the Marxists?' In the lively discussion that followed, I suggested that the answer to both questions must be found in an analysis of the compatibility of *praxis* with the Pentecostal paradigm for knowledge and truth, which must itself be rooted in the Scriptures.

WHAT IS THE PENTECOSTAL PARADIGM FOR KNOWLEDGE AND TRUTH?

In spite of the popularity of *praxis* in academic and revolutionary settings, in the modern world wisdom dictates that critical thought precedes action; look before you leap. Knowledge is best derived through the scientific method: make observations (gather data), formulate an hypothesis (develop a theory), test the hypothesis (experiment), and revise the hypothesis (discard or refine the theory). Pentecostal spirituality embraces a different type of knowledge, one that transcends theory to demand faithful response to that which is known. For Pentecostals all knowledge is grounded in God and God is known through encounter. This Pentecostal epistemology is congruous with the ancient Jewish approach to knowledge (described below), but is also compatible with a refined epistemology of *praxis*.

Pentecostals have an alternative epistemology because they have an alternative world-view.⁶ At the heart of the Pentecostal world-view is transforming experience with God. God is known through relational encounter which finds its penultimate expression in the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. This experience becomes the

normative epistemological framework and thus shifts the structures by which the individual interprets the world. Several characteristics of this framework are worth noting. However, it is not suggested that these are exclusively the characteristics of Pentecostals. It is their gestalt which identifies them as uniquely Pentecostal.

First, the Pentecostal world-view is experientially God-centred.⁷ All things relate to God and God relates to all things. The phenomenological experience is fused with God but without collapsing God into his creation. The Spirit-filled believer has a predisposition to see the transcendent God at work in, with, through, above, and beyond all events. Therefore, all space is sacred space and all time is sacred time. Worship is primarily an event characterized by appropriate response to perceived manifestations of the Divine presence. It has been my experience and observation that this event may take place in any setting and is normative wherever the 'saints' are gathered together.

Second, the Pentecostal world-view is holistic and systemic.⁸ For the Spirit-filled person God is not only present in all events, he holds all things together and causes all things to work together. Even evil, which is opposed to the sovereignty of God and wars against his children, is ultimately made to contribute to the good which God intends. Likewise, time is viewed as a whole. Historically, Pentecostals have subscribed to a dispensationalism that emphasizes a progressive unfolding of revelation and the interrelation of the ages.⁹ All events, past, present, and future are related to a single master plan of God that will be consummated at the second coming of Christ.

Third, the Pentecostal world-view is transrational.¹⁰ Knowledge is relational and is not limited to the realms of reason and sensory experience. The spectrum of knowledge includes the physical senses, cognitions, affections, emotions, behaviors, and spiritual discernment. Each of these is fused to the others with the affections serving as the integrating centre.¹¹

Fourth, in conjunction with their holiness heritage, Pentecostals are concerned with truth, but not just propositional truth. Pentecostals were historically anti-creedal. They eschewed the 'dead doctrines of men'. Their concern was for a truth that gives life. As Steve Land has suggested, in their paradigm truth is known and expressed through *orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy*.¹² Elsewhere, I have suggested that these form the purpose, function, and structure/essence of truth.¹³ For Pentecostals Orthodoxy, both in the sense of giving glory to God

and in the sense of correct belief,¹⁴ is the *purpose* of knowledge. It is toward that end that the church must always be moving. Glory will be given to God most purely when we are finally transformed in entirety so that our being, behaviour, and beliefs conform fully to the truth intended for us.

Orthodoxy is also *purposive*; it is a qualifying facilitator of the two other forms of truth. Doctrinal constructs such as the creeds cannot serve as a primal source of the knowledge of God. As abstract propositions, they may by their very nature serve as a barrier to a transforming encounter with God. However, sound doctrine must always be a dynamic element in all quests for truth. Pentecostals thus express love for sound doctrine, both as an expression of their living faith and as a normative standard which informs the church in its deliberations and actions.

Orthopraxy is 'right reflection/action' and constitutes the *function* of truth. To encounter God is to know oneself as a subject and object in history.¹⁵ It is to respond in faithful obedience and to join consciously in the ongoing mission of the Holy Spirit. Hence, in a world in which wisdom dictates that all action follow reason, Pentecostals are often perceived as emphasizing action over reflection. But reflection/action as a human activity cannot transcend the ontological barrier between subject and object; humans can not initiate knowledge of God. Without the integration of orthodoxy and orthopraxy all praxis will degenerate into sinful praxis.¹⁶ Wholeness is achieved through an ongoing communion with the Spirit, the Word, the community of the Spirit and Word, and the world.

Orthopraxy refers to right affections which provides the *structure/essence* for a Pentecostal paradigm of truth. It is through the grace of sanctification that the believer's character is transformed into the image and likeness of Christ. This transformation forms the integrating centre of the knowledge of God. It brings together the Spirit-led processes of orthopraxy and the Spirit-accomplished orthodoxy. This transformation is not a balancing of the three, but rather an integration, an affective understanding and behaviour which is essential to and flows out of the knowledge of God.

The transformation of the affections is three-dimensional.¹⁷ First, it is grounded in repentance, literally a 'change of mind'. This is a transformation of attitudes and dispositions which takes place at the very core of an individual's world-view. The transformation originates in the grace of God as the Spirit calls the sinner to repentance. Often the

drawing of the Spirit first strikes the affective chords of the unconscious mind. Godly sorrow worketh repentance. The individual responds to the Spirit's wooing with a volitional/rational act of faith and confesses Christ as Lord. This initial ~~orthopraxy~~ ^{orthodoxy} is a twin moment in which God knows the person as justified in Christ and the individual knows God as redeemer. The individual is regenerated and a new vision¹⁸ is formed at the core of her or his world-view. A process of reconstruction begins, one in which the old core vision, which was a disposition toward the self, wars with the new core vision which is a disposition toward God and others. Sanctification has begun.

In sanctification Christ is known as the power of God unto salvation (orthodoxy) and the suffering servant (orthopraxy). The love of God springs forth as a fountain of love and inclines the believer toward a life of responsible action (orthopraxy). However, a crisis event may be needed to break the power of the old, sinful core vision and remove it from the defining center of the believer's mind. Once broken, the template of the old core vision remains within the memory of the believer. Powerless, the old is known for what it is, a law which is unto death.

A second dimension of the transformation of the affections is their nature as being objective.

To say that Christian affections are objective means that affections take an object. In this case the object is also the subject: God is the source and object of Christian affections. . . What God has said and done, is saying and doing, will say and do is the source and *telos* of the affections.¹⁹

The objectivity of the affections binds them to the dimension of reason and understanding. Thus the paradigm by which the believer lives must continually be shaped by godly affections.

The third dimension of the transformation of the affections is their relational character. Their transformation alters the manner in which the individual relates to God, the church and the world. The altered world-view shifts the focus of problems from selfish desire toward the needs of others. Thus, the model of godly affections is community, the koinonia of the saints, and orthopraxy is always shared-orthopraxy. The significant role of the affections within the Pentecostal paradigm suggests the need for a metaphor of shared narrative, perhaps 'story'.²⁰

Fifth, the Pentecostal epistemology of encounter with God is closely aligned with the biblical understanding of how one comes to know. There is in the Old and New Testaments a relatively consistent understanding of how one comes 'to know'.²¹ This understanding is

rooted in Hebrew thought and may be contrasted with Greek approaches to knowledge. The Hebrew word for 'to know' is *yada*. In general, *yada* is knowledge that comes by experience. O.A. Piper has stated that this knowledge implies an awareness of the specific relationship in which the knower stands with the object being experienced so that 'full comprehension of the object manifests itself in action which corresponds to the relationship apprehended'.²² Groome concluded *yada* is a knowing 'more by the heart than by the mind, and the knowing arises not by standing back from in order to look at, but by active and intentional engagement in lived experience'.²³

This dynamic, experiential, relational knowledge stands in stark contrast to the Hellenistic approach to knowledge (*ginoskein*), which involved a standing back from something in order to objectively 'know it'. In comparing *ginoskein* to *yada* Bultmann states, 'the OT usage is much broader than the Greek, and the element of objective verification is less prominent than that of detecting or feeling or learning by experience'.²⁴ With this understanding, one is ignorant or a fool when he or she fails to do the will of God, not when they merely do not know the facts about God. Ignorance, then, implies guilt as Bultmann explains,

Thus knowledge has an element of acknowledgment. But it also has an element of emotion, or better, of movement of will, so that ignorance means guilt as well as error... To know Him or His name is to confess or to acknowledge Him, to give Him honour and to obey His will.²⁵

Accordingly, if a person knew God, he or she was encountered by One who lived in the midst of history and who initiated covenant relationship which called for a response of the total person. Knowledge of God, therefore, was not measured by the information one possessed, but by how one was living in response to God. Bultmann has further noted that knowledge in the Hebraic sense was 'possessed only in its exercise or actualization'.²⁶ It is significant that *yada* is used as a euphemism for lovemaking and that the past participle of *yada* is used for a good friend or confidant.

The New Testament, while employing Greek terms, continues the Hebraic understanding of *yada*. Knowing the Lord is still viewed as being in relationship with God and in submission to his will. Thus, the Christian view of knowledge is...largely determined by the Old Testament. An obedient and grateful acknowledgment of the deeds and demands of God is linked with knowledge of God and what He has done and demands...this Christian knowledge is not a fixed possession

but develops in the life of the Christian as lasting obedience and reflection.²⁷

John's first epistle provides a rich illustration of the epistemological grounding of the New Testament. He seems intentionally to play against the Greek understanding of knowledge and attacks its implications for the Christian life, that is, that it is possible to know Jesus Christ without conforming to him. For John, knowledge of God is grounded in a loving relationship (I John 4:8, 16, 20) and this knowledge is manifest through obedience to the known will of God (2:3 ff.). God is known through his having entering into human history as flesh, and knowledge of him is inseparable from the manifestation of his lordship over life (5:6-12). Thus, we know that we know him if we obey his commands (2:3).

Finally, the Scriptures hold a special place and function within the Pentecostal world-view. Pentecostals differ from Evangelicals and Fundamentalists in approach to the Bible. For Pentecostals the Bible is a living book in which the Holy Spirit is always active. It is the Word of God, and therefore to encounter the Scriptures is to encounter God.²⁸ In my view the Scriptures serve at least three functions for Pentecostals.²⁹ First, they function as a primary reference point for communion with God. Pentecostals encounter God in the Scriptures. Second, the Scriptures function as a link to God's people and God's presence in the world throughout the ages. In this they facilitate the primitivistic and futuristic purposes of the people of God and thereby maintain their apocalyptic emphasis. Third, the Scriptures serve as the template for reading the world. It is in the light of Scripture that the patterns of life are recognized and woven into the divine-human narrative. Through the Scriptures human critical reflection is judged, negated, transformed and/or enhanced producing a new perception of reality.

In summary, a Pentecostal paradigm for knowledge and truth springs from an experiential knowledge of God which alters the believer's approach to reading and interpreting reality. For Pentecostals truth must be expressed as orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy. Truth is known through conformity to the character, affections, and will of God. And to know God is to participate in his redemptive presence in the world.

HOW SHOULD PENTECOSTALISM RELATE TO THE PRAXIS MODEL?

From the above discussions certain similarities and dissimilarities between Pentecostalism and *praxis* emerge. From a Pentecostal perspective there are problems and limitations with a *praxis* epistemology. Some of these arise from the roots of *praxis* in Hellenistic thought. In spite of all efforts to join theory and practice into a singular moment, there remains in *praxis* a fundamental dualism between matter and reason. Because of this dualism, *praxis* assumes an unbridgeable distance between the knower and the known. In spite of efforts to the contrary, the system elevates theory, in the form of the reasoning skills needed for critical reflection, above all other forms of knowledge. The objectification of others is an unavoidable aspect of this knowledge and the power of transformation is of necessity grounded in the spirit of the individual. Without an authority beyond the self that transcends and even negates reflection-action, we are left, in spite of worthy intentions for the transformation of society, with sinful, oppressive *praxis*. Consider the history of Marxist revolutions.

Realization of the inherent limitations of *praxis* has caused some liberationist theologians to speak of an 'epistemological break' which 'consists in the existential and historical following that yields a *praxis* knowing which is distinct from 'natural understanding' as well as contrary to it'.³⁰ Daniel Schipani has reformulated liberationist *praxis* in favour of an 'epistemology of obedience', which is characterized by discipleship as 'the dynamic, dialogical, and discerning following of Jesus'.³¹ He asserts that the liberationist's view of *praxis* must be evaluated in light of the criteria derived from revelation and from biblical revelation especially 'lest doing the truth becomes equivalent to making the truth through historical *praxis*, rather than practicing the truth which is ultimately being revealed to us'.³² A Pentecostal view of Scripture requires this same realignment.

Praxis in the Pentecostal context must further be qualified by the immanence of God. God is always present and active. He is always working for the believer's good even if he acts in a manner perceived to be against the believer in discipline or judgment. The Spirit-filled person never engages his or her environment alone. Because God is known as working in, with, and through all things, critical reflection/action is always with God. The Spirit who gives freedom both invites and compels the individual to join in God's *praxis*. With God

we co-create and co-tend his creation. Critical reflection by the believer is a helpful but non-essential ingredient in this process. Love is essential so that the person must bring his or her full being to all situations. The critical element is the desire and willingness to be known by God and to know God. This *praxis* of the Spirit 'unveils reality in a manner which incorporates but supersedes human *praxis*'.³³

Pentecostalism goes beyond *praxis* in the very area the proponents of *praxis* uplift as its strength, shared human fulfilment. With the Holy Spirit functioning as Paraclete the individual is empowered to know others for who they truly are, subjects in history. Through the Spirit individual dignity and integrity are actualized because the human is restored to wholeness which by design exists only through union with the God who created and sustains all that is. In the Spirit it is known that the individual's integrity, which is attained and maintained only through union with God, is being actualized in the context of corporate union with others in the body of Christ. Others are honoured as equal participants in making history not because of an external mandate, but rather from two internalized fountains. First, as the believer knows God he or she becomes a participant in God's affections. Second, in unity with the body of Christ persons are known for who they are, children of God created and empowered by him to make history. Thus, Pentecostal affections incline the individual and the church toward human liberation, which is understood to be ultimately attainable only through personal knowledge of God. It is only in the church as an expression of the kingdom of God that human fulfilment can be actualized and shared. Yet, the mission of the church dictates that it engage the world; remaining in but not of the world.

Finally, Pentecostal *praxis* differs from Freire's *praxis* in approach to social transformation. When *praxis* limits humanization to the natural dimensions of thinking and acting it becomes oppressive and dehumanizing.³⁴ Pentecostals must invite the person as a whole being to journey into the realm of all truth: orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy. Affective conscientization through encounter with God brings true freedom to confront injustice, but it begins with the supernatural encounter with the injustice of the individual's own heart. This demands that Pentecostals offer to the world a truly prophetic and holistic *praxis*; one which first of all integrates godly affections into reflection/action; secondly, it is modelled in the life of the church; and thirdly, it is integrated into the missional presence of the church in the world. Under the leading of the Spirit the church may indeed enter into

a shared *praxis* with persons and groups of the world. Such engagement with the oppressed will put to the test the church's existence as salt and light. If the proponents of *praxis* are saying, 'Let us know you as subjects and objects in our world', can the church respond in any other way than to say, 'Let us know you and you know us so that you might know the One who lives in us.'

In summary, secular models of *praxis* fail to recognize the affective dimensions of truth and thereby may be guilty of dehumanizing persons by restricting their world to reason and matter-in-motion. The Pentecostal paradigm for truth and knowledge integrates orthopraxis with orthodoxy and orthopathy. This integration provides a purpose (orthodoxy) and structure (orthopathy) for *praxis*. In the person of God, an objective/subjective reality which transcends the privatized self and its society engages the individual with a transforming knowledge of the self and others. Pentecostals need not shrink back from engaging in the *praxis* of the world, but they must take great care not to be co-opted into non-critical support of a *praxis* that denies the glory of God. Their *praxis* must truly be prophetic. They must read the realities of their world through a lens shaped by God.

Notes

- 1 This chapter draws heavily upon two earlier articles by the author: Jackie D. Johns, and Cheryl B. Johns, 'Yielding to the Spirit: A Pentecostal Approach to Group Bible Study', *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 1 (1992), pp. 109-134; and Jackie D. Johns, 'Pentecostalism and the Postmodern World-view', *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 7 (1995), pp. 73-96. Much of the material gleaned from and dialogues with two works by other scholars: Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series* 1, 1993), p. 13; and Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation: A Pedagogy Among the Oppressed* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series* 2, 1993). The latter work is the most extensive treatment of the relationship between *praxis* and Pentecostalism.
- 2 The following history of the usages of the term *praxis* is primarily drawn from Thomas Groome, *Christian Religious Education* (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1981), Chapter 7, 'In Search of a Way of Knowing'.
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 166.
- 4 Freire was a prolific writer, his best known work being *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York, NY: Herder & Herder, 1970). For a Pentecostal critique of Freire see Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation*. This work is a revision of her doctoral dissertation, 'Affective Conscientization: A Pentecostal Response to Paulo Freire'.
- 5 Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, pp. 196-197.

- 6 I am using world-view as an epistemological term representing 'a disposition toward a perception of reality'. As such, 'it is that system of a priori assumptions with which an individual interacts with and interprets his or her universe'. Johns, 'Pentecostalism and the Postmodern World-view', p. 75. This usage is to be distinguished from an ideological usage in which world-view, or better, 'world view', represents a belief system.
- 7 J. Johns, 'Pentecostalism', p. 88.
- 8 *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.
- 9 French Arrington, 'Dispensationalism', *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), pp. 247-248. Also, Land, pp. 79, 198.
- 10 J. Johns, 'Pentecostalism', p. 89.
- 11 Land, pp. 32-47.
- 12 *Ibid.*
- 13 J. Johns, 'Pentecostalism', pp. 92-95.
- 14 Orthodoxy takes its meaning from a time in church history when faith was equated with creed and confession of the creed was the purest form of worship. Hence, the literal meaning of 'right glory' is changed into 'right belief' as appropriate worship.
- 15 Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Pentecostal Formation*, p. 115.
- 16 Johns and Johns, 'Yielding to the Spirit', pp. 121-122.
- 17 Land, pp. 134-136.
- 18 I am here using vision as a near synonym for world-view. In both cases I am using the concept of sight metaphorically to represent all perceptions of reality. The windows of our world-view should be thought of as port-holes of engagement. A vision then is what we sense or feel before we have constructed any systemic reasoning that could be called a theory, much less deduced any specific consequences as hypotheses to be tested against evidence. A vision is our sense of how the world works. For example, a primitive person's sense of why leaves move may have been that some spirit moves them, and his or her sense of why tides rise or volcanoes erupt may run along similar lines. Newton had a different vision of how the world works and Einstein still another. For social phenomena, Rousseau had a different vision of human causation from that of Edmund Burke.
- 19 Land, p. 134.
- 20 I am using the term 'story' in the sense of 'myth' but only in the technical sense of a story, or any symbol, that embodies the a priori beliefs, affections, and values of a society. The observation that an object is a myth is not a statement about its historicity or verifiability.
- 21 Johns & Johns, 'Yielding', pp. 109-134.
- 22 O.A. Piper, 'Knowledge', *International Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 3, pp. 42-48.
- 23 Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, p. 141.
- 24 Rudolf Bultmann, *ginosko*, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 1, p. 687.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 698.
- 26 *Ibid.*
- 27 *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 707.
- 28 R. Hollis Gause, 'Our Heritage of Faith in the Verbal Inspiration of the Bible'

- in Centennial Heritage Papers 1986: Presented at the 61st General Assembly of the Church of God (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 1986), pp. 33-37.
- 29 J. Johns, 'Pentecostalism', p. 90.
- 30 J. Sobrino, *The True Church and the Poor*, trans. M.J. O'Connell (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), p. 25. See also his *Jesus in Latin America*, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987), especially chapter five, 'Following Jesus as Discernment'. For the most comprehensive treatment to date on the epistemological grounding of liberation theology, see Clodovis Boff, *Theology and Praxis: Epistemological Foundations*, trans. Robert R. Barr (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987).
- 31 Daniel Schipani, *Religious Education Encounters Liberation Theology*, (Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press, 1988), p. 125.
- 32 *Ibid.*, p. 136.
- 33 Cheryl Johns, *Pentecostal Formation*, p. 62.
- 34 *Ibid.*, pp. 38-41.

Chapter Five

They Crossed the Red Sea, Didn't They? Critical History and Pentecostal Beginnings

Everett A. Wilson

A boy was responding to his father's probing about that morning's Sunday School lesson.

'Well, it was about when Moses and the Children of Israel were trying to get away from Pharaoh and came to the Red Sea, So Moses called in some air cover and landing craft and built some pontoon bridges to get the people across.'

'Was that really the way your teacher told the story?' questioned the father.

'No, Dad', confessed the boy, 'but if I told it the way she did, you'd never believe me!'

ABOUT PENTECOSTAL ORIGINS

Although the writing of critical Pentecostal history has been undertaken only in recent decades, interpreters have already begun to research the Pentecostal phenomenon with the same rigour that one