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A Perspective of Modern Pentacostalism

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A Perspective of Modern Pentecostalism

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Beginning in 1969, with several controversies from certain leaders of Pentecostalism, I occupied an impressive place in the oldest continuing pentecostal seminary in the United States. It was founded by a Presbyterian minister who was also a lawyer. Also, I was a writer for a denominational Sunday School quarterly for adults, a member of a denominational board of education, and often a guest speaker for special occasions and Bible conferences in several pentecostal denominations. The controversies which I met in these areas led me to make a complete exodus from Pentecostalism in identity and fellowship, and I finally founded Foundations Bible College in 1974. I was a member of the World Congress of Fundamentalists as it was being formed and since that year have participated in every Congress since the first session in 1976. This article is a presentation of a perspective outlined in four main areas: the history of Pentecostalism; the music of early pentecostals; the contributions of Pentecostalism; and the modern apostasy of Pentecostalism.

The Early Birth of Pentecostalism

The history of the birth of early Pentecostalism covers just about one century, from 1830 to 1930. In a twofold estimate we identify all the movements that (1) believed in the distinctive of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" as a complement doctrine to the teaching of being born of the Holy Spirit as related to regeneration by grace; and (2) believed in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as being available or active in the Body of Christ down through Church History. This is not a definition of Pentecostalism that will suit all Christians, but we believe that history grants an association with Pentecostalism in this designated 100 years, and especially in the early years of its beginning. We could go back earlier to the days of George Whitefield and John Wesley to give examples of emotional excesses which appeared in the revivals of these two unusual men of God. George Whitefield had to return to America from England to especially admonish and correct emotionalism of some of his converts. Wesley identified men in his day whom he called "enthusiasts," such as Maxwell and Bell. It is historically incorrect to think that an excess of emotionalism is only a trademark of the pentecostals and the charismatics. Every genuine revival has brought zeal to the front, which, at times, has gone beyond wisdom.

Early Identifications

The following early movements in the nineteenth century association towards Pentecostalism are seen in their order of appearances in history: the Edward Irving movement which began in 1822 in London, England, and reached on into Scotland; indirectly, the J. N. Darby movement of the Plymouth Brethren which began in 1827 in London and Ireland and finally reached Scotland; also indirectly, the Dwight L. Moody ministry at Northfield, Massachusetts, from 1891 through 1898, a movement also led by the teaching and preaching of R. A. Torrey and his ministry on "the baptism of the Holy Spirit"; the Topeka, Kansas, ministry which began in 1891, a movement under Charles Parham; the Azusa Street Mission of Los Angeles, California, a movement under William J. Seymour, a convert of Charles Parham; the Evan Roberts ministry which began in 1904, a movement particularly in Wales; and the Smith Wigglesworth so-called "prophecy" and ministry which began in 1905, a movement commenced by that so-called "prophecy" as given to David Du Plessis in South Africa, and continuing on there through 1936.

Early Pentecostal Denominations

After these seven movements were theologically sifted, with some dying out in their own time, seven pentecostal denominations would be born into their distinctive existence as "pentecostals."

This indicated that those who had shared earlier affinities with the doctrinal distinction of the difference between being born of the Holy Spirit and Baptized (or Filled) with the Holy Spirit would not follow the direction and terminology of "Pentecostalism." A number of them either ceased from existence or did not follow the direction that demanded certain definitions of "the Gifts of the Holy Spirit" with an emphasis upon what is now known as the "glossolalia," or formerly identified only as "speaking with tongues" or "speaking in unknown tongues."

All earlier teachings of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" would now be tested by all of the former movements except those definitely desirous to pursue a pentecostal denomination. Their own unpretentious historians lay claim that the first pentecostal denomination was organized as early as 1896 and the last denomination as late as 1936. It became clear that the earlier influences of Darby and Moody-Torrey would be disconnected from the later growing pentecostal phenomena.

The seven historic pentecostal denominations are still known as: Church of God of Cleveland, Tennessee, 1896; Pentecostal Free Will Baptist, 1907; Pentecostal Holiness, 1911; Fire Baptized Holiness (Congregational Holiness or Pilgrim Holiness), 1911; Assemblies of God, 1914; International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, 1923; and Pentecostal Church of God of America, 1927. It should be acknowledged that the last two mentioned were the result of a split from earlier ones. Even in Canada there would be a denomination born near this later time.

The Early Music of Early Pentecostals

Although I have made a complete exodus from Pentecostalism, I remember my own childhood background in an early, historic pentecostal home. My father was a minister in the early denominations. I had expressed as a child to my dear father, on a number of occasions, that pentecostal music was not to be understood as traditionally good church music. And those were the days of the early pentecostal as identified with Stamps-Baxter music. My father did not have any background in music and was only a congregational singer, but he definitely saw the flesh in the early music, and others recognized it as well. My father, in those early days, always took a stand against anything that might appear to lean towards the flesh or any small group of individuals who through their own subjective impressions made claim of any additional revelation from God. My father died in 1969, but I'm sure he never imagined what would happen, finally, in Pentecostalism and in the charismatic "Rock Gospel" music of our present day. Of course, since then we have seen a great "take-over" of contemporary Christian music in all of its forms and carnality.

But as a boy I grew up and saw the complete transition to the modern neo-pentecostal and charismatic apostasy. This apostasy now includes both false doctrinal belief and contemporary church music. In 1969 I found myself in the extreme crucible of doctrinal change by the general superintendents and bishops of the various pentecostal denominations. I was "requested" to appear before "bishop's councils" in those days for my strong Bible stand on the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God as well as the writing of my first textbook, *The Quest for Christian Purity* (1963).

The Early Pentecostal Campmeetings

The particular geography of Harnett, Sampson, and Johnston counties, in North Carolina, was the historical cradle for the birth of several national and/or state pentecostal denominations east of the Mississippi River at the beginning of the twentieth century and after the Azusa Street mission in Los Angeles, California.

In those early years the newer pentecostal denominations, in their Bible conferences, campmeetings, and union services, worshipped with only songs of testimony, revival, and praise, with an emphasis upon Wesley's "burning heart" worship or the early Nazarene Hymnal. There was not a general emphasis upon the older, more formal denominational church doctrine at the time of their birth. This was in a period when souls were first being saved by amazing grace, and young Christian lives were first

Word Study on Reprobate

A Word Study on *Reprobate*

DICTIONARIES:

American Tract Society Dictionary

Rejected as not enduring the test of worthiness, [Jer 6:30](#). Some men are spoken of as reprobate even in this life, being hardened in sin and unbelief, [Ro 1:28](#); [2Ti 3:8](#); [Tit 1:16](#).

Easton's Bible Dictionary

that which is rejected on account of its own worthlessness ([Jer 6:30](#); [Heb 6:8](#); Gr. *adokimos*, "rejected"). This word is also used with reference to persons cast away or rejected because they have failed to make use of opportunities offered them ([1Co 9:27](#); [2Co 13:5-7](#)).

THE ENGLISH WORD:

Four Times in Scripture

[Jer 6:30](#) *Reprobate* silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.

[Ro 1:28](#) And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a *reprobate* mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

[2Ti 3:8](#) Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, *reprobate* concerning the faith.

[Tit 1:16](#) They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work *reprobate*.

RELATED HEBREW & GREEK WORDS:

HB03988. maw-as' a primitive root; to spurn; also (intransitively) to disappear:--abhor, cast away (off), contemn, despise, disdain, (become) loathe(some), melt away, refuse, reject, reprobate, X utterly, vile person.

FOUND IN 69 verses

TRANSLATED (truncated listing):

1. Despise Lev. 26:15,43; Num. 11:20; Ju. 9:38...
2. Cast Away Lev. 26:44; Job 8:20; Isa. 5:24; 30:12...
3. Reject I Sam. 8:7; 10:19; 15:23; 16:1; 17:15,20 ...
4. Refused I Sam. 16:7; Job 34:33; Psalm 78:67 ...
5. Cast Off 2 Kings 23:27; Jer. 31:37; 33:24...
6. Loathsome/Loathe Job 7:5,16...
7. Abhor Job 42:6; Psalm 36:4; 78:59
8. Vile Person Psalm 15:4
9. Melt Away Psalm 58:7
10. Reprobate Jer. 6:30
11. Utterly Rejected Jer. 14:19; Lam. 5:22 (emph. by repetition)
12. Contemneth Eze. 21:10,13

GR96. ad-ok'-ee-mos from 1 (as a negative particle) and 1384; unapproved, i.e. rejected; by implication, worthless (literally or morally):--castaway, rejected, reprobate.

FOUND IN 8 verses

TRANSLATED (complete listing):

1. Reprobate Rom. 1:28; II Cor. 13:5,6,7; 2 Tim. 3:8; Tit. 1:16
2. Cast away I Cor. 9:27
3. Rejected Hebrews 6:8

CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING "REPROBATE" IN SCRIPTURE:

Ungodly and unrighteous who hold the truth in unrighteousness Rom. 1:18-32

Cannot Rightly Discern whether Christ is in them or not. 2 Cor. 13:5

No Believer exempt from its danger; Great diligence must be exercised. I Cor. 9:27

The life, which bears thorns instead of fruit, nigh to cursing and is to be burned. Heb. 6:8