

## **Christian Unity and Pentecostal Mission: A Contradiction?**

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In his provocative book, *The Clash of Civilizations*, Samuel P. Huntington observed the apparent competition that best describes the relationship between Christianity and Islam over the past century. He pointed to the fact that Christianity and Islam are both “proselytizing religions”.<sup>1</sup> These faith traditions are the two largest global religions, and drawing upon the 1982 work of David Barrett, he predicted that Islam would take precedence and become the dominant world religion as early as 2010.

Whether or not one accepts Huntington’s theory of the inevitability of clashing cultures, in this case religious cultures, it is difficult to imagine a future in which large numbers of Muslims and Pentecostals will ever be close friends, that is, it is difficult to imagine a time when they would be either willing or able to set their theological differences aside in such a way as to allow the other to exist without interference. Their ideologies and their missionary agendas appear to be diametrically opposed to one another because both of them deal in what they believe to be ultimate claims of truth.<sup>2</sup>

One might wonder, too, whether something similar might not be said when comparing Pentecostal mission programs with the programs of those that advocate the cause of Christian unity. I mean by this that the ideological and pragmatic issues over which Pentecostal Christians and Ecumenical Christians think they disagree, issues that lead to

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations: Remaking of World Order* (New York, NY: TOUCHSTONE, 1996), 64-66. Huntington has drawn his statistics from David B. Barrett, ed., *World Christian Encyclopedia: A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the Modern World AD 1900-2000* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1982.

<sup>2</sup> Asonzeh F.-K. Ukah, “Nigerian Pentecostals and Their Relations with Islam and Muslims,” in David Westerlund, Ed. *Global Pentecostalism: Encounters with Other Religious Traditions* (New York, NY: I. B. Tauris, 2009), 94 writes, “Both religions share a commonality that may be worrying in its implications for the socio-political order: their self-representation as the only true faith – with an inevitable intolerance of any other faith.”

unhealthy competition for domination within the Christian community or more broadly within the world, seem to be equally intransigent. While it is widely stated that the modern Ecumenical Movement as embodied in the World Council of Churches came into being at least partially as a result of the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh,<sup>3</sup> thereby linking the concepts of mission and unity in a tangible initiative, the move toward Christian unity has also held some important implications for the subject of World Mission that have not always been viewed positively either by Evangelicals or by Pentecostals.

Three decades ago, the veteran evangelical missionary, Harvey Hoekstra, lamented what he called the demise of evangelism. It began, he argued, when the International Missionary Conference was swallowed up by the World Council of Churches in 1961. In his study, Hoekstra examined a range of independent and semi-independent mission agencies that had flourished within denominations that belonged to the World Council of Churches prior to the incorporation of the International Missionary Council into the World Council of Churches. Once this merger had been accomplished, Hoekstra asserted, these independent and semi-independent mission agencies were subjected to a steady domestication and regularization by the various “denominational boards of foreign and world missions” of the churches that held membership in the World Council of Churches. From Hoekstra’s perspective, the influence of the World Council of Churches on its member churches tamed the missionary enterprise in two ways. First, it substituted

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<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, Lesslie Newbigin, *Is Christ Divided? A Plea for Christian Unity in a Revolutionary Age* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1961), 22. For an important discussion on the matter that acknowledges that this position is a common one for good reason, but which points to many ecumenical initiatives that had taken place as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, see Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, 1910* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 7-12.

the concern for social justice in place of evangelization.<sup>4</sup> Second, it tended to reduce funding for evangelistic work on the mission field, in favor of padding budgets for the personal ambitions of denominational mission bureaucrats interested in their own upward mobility.<sup>5</sup>

While the work of Huntington has come under fire in some quarters as being far too pessimistic, the charges he has raised regarding Christian-Muslim relationships would seem to hold grave implications for the entrepreneurial nature of Pentecostal missions throughout the Middle East and other regions of the world where Islam is the majority religion.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, if the broader Pentecostal programs of mission and evangelization are placed alongside the much more tidy discussions related to mission and the unity of the Church conducted by the World Council of Churches, Hoekstra's concerns might also call for a level of scrutiny.<sup>7</sup> Even so, their concerns should be examined by Pentecostals to see whether, or in what ways, they might be considered valid

I do not see the need to break social concerns apart from verbal forms of proclamation when it comes to evangelization and mission. .For a century, Pentecostalism has

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<sup>4</sup> In 1965, the Executive Presbytery of the Assemblies of God drafted its position on the Ecumenical Movement. This position, only slightly modified, was subsequently passed by the General Council of the Assemblies of God in 1969. It stated, in part, that the Assemblies of God disapproved of "ministers or churches participating in any of the modern ecumenical organizations...in such a manner as to promote the Ecumenical Movement" because it believed "the emphases of the Ecumenical Movement to be at variance with what we hold to be biblical priorities, frequently displacing the urgency of individual salvation with social concerns." See the, "Bylaws of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Article IX.B, List of Doctrines and Practices Disapproved, Section 11 The Ecumenical Movement," *Minutes of the 50<sup>th</sup> Session of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, with revised Constitution and Bylaws 50<sup>th</sup> General Council, Washington, D.C. July 31-August 3, 2003*, (Springfield, MO: General Secretary's Office, 2003), 131-132.

<sup>5</sup> Harvey T. Hoekstra, *The World Council of Churches and the Demise of Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1979), 198-199.

<sup>6</sup> As just one example, the May 1992 issue of *Mountain Movers*, the foreign missions Magazine of the Assemblies of God at that time, gave its entire attention to the theme "Reaching the World of Islam".

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, *The Nature and Mission of the Church*, Faith and Order Paper 198 (Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches, 2005), ¶¶ 34-42. In all fairness, it is important to read alongside Hoekstra's book, the critical review written by Robbins Strong, "The World Council of Churches and the Demise of Evangelism," *International Review of Mission*, 70 (1981), 79-81.

understood itself as a missionary and evangelistic movement standing within the revivalist tradition.<sup>8</sup> While the movement has always been strongly committed to the proclamation of the Gospel in a verbal form, its role in social concern has not yet been adequately studied or recognized.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, while the World Council of

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<sup>8</sup> Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 5 writes that "...the present proliferation of Pentecostalism and indeed its inherent character result from the fact that this is fundamentally a missionary movement of the Spirit from the start."

<sup>9</sup> David Bundy, "Social Ethics in the Church of the Poor: The Cases of T. B. Barratt and Lewi Pethrus," *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 22 (2002), 30-44; Rudiger V. Busto, "'In the Outer Boundaries': Pentecostalism, Politics, and Reies López Tijerina's Civic Activism," in Gastón Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda, Eds. *Latino Religions and Civic Activism in the United States* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2005), 65-75; Anthea Butler, "Facets of Pentecostal Spirituality and Justice," in Huibert van Beek, Ed. *Consultation with Pentecostals in the Americas: San Jose, Costa Rica 4-8 June 1996* (Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches, no date), 28-44; Bernardo L. Campos M., "In the Power of the Spirit: Pentecostalism, Theology and Social Ethics," in Benjamin F. Gutierrez and Dennis A. Smith, Eds. *In the Power of the Spirit: The Pentecostal Challenge to Historic Churches in Latin America* (Mexico City: AIPRAL/Guatemala City: CELEP / Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Worldwide Ministries Division, 1996), 41-50; Bernardo Campos Morante, "After Azusa Street: Identity and Function of Pentecostals in the Processes of Social Change," in Harold D. Hunter and Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., Eds. *The Azusa Street Revival and Its Legacy* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 2006), 317-334; Augustus Cerillo, Jr., "Pentecostals and the City," in Murray A. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen, Eds. *Called and Empowered: Global Mission in Pentecostal Perspective* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1991), 98-119; Murray W. Dempster, "Pentecostal Social Concern and the Biblical Mandate of Social Justice," *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 9 (1987), 129-153; Murray W. Dempster, "Evangelism, Social Concern, and the Kingdom of God," in Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus and Douglas Petersen, Eds. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 22-43; Murray W. Dempster, "Social Concern in the Context of Jesus' Kingdom Mission and Ministry," *Transformation: An International Dialogue on Mission and Ethics* 16 (April/June 1999), 43-53; Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, "Are Pentecostals Oblivious of Social Justice? Theological and Ecumenical Perspectives," in Christoph Dahling-Sander, Kai M. Fundschmidt, und Vera Mielke, Eds. *Pfingstkirchen und Ökumene In Bewegung*, a special issue of *Beiheft zur Ökumenischen Rundschau* No. 71 (Frankfurt am Main: Otto-Lembeck Verlag, 2001), 50-65; Donald E. Miller, "Pentecostalism and Social Transformation," in Harold D. Hunter and Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., Eds. *The Azusa Street Revival and Its Legacy* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 2006), 335-348; Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), 261 pp.; Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "The Social Concern of Early American Pentecostalism," Jan A.B. Jongeneel, Ed. *Pentecost, Mission, and Ecumenism: Essays on Intercultural Theology: Festschrift in Honour of Professor Walter J. Hollenweger*, (SIHC75) (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1992), 97-106, translated and published as "Das soziale Anliegen der frühen amerikanischen Pfingstbewegung," in Michael Bergunder, Ed. *Pfingstbewegung und Basisgemeinden In Lateinamerika. Die Rezeption befreiungstheologischer Konzept durch die pfingstliche Theologie, Weltmission heute* 39 (Hamburg, Germany: Evangelisches Missionswerk In Deutschland, 2000), 57-66, notes 145-149; Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "Rebuilding a Broken Society: An Interview with Frank Chikane," *Theology, News & Notes* 48:1 (Spring 2001), 20-27; translated and reprinted as "Reconstruir una sociedad despedazada: Entrevista con Frank Chikane," in *Surgir* 7 (2002), 49-62; Luis Scott, "Reies López Tijerina: Las visiones y la obediencia de un activista pentecostal," in Juan F. Martínez Guerra y Luis Scout, Eds. *Iglesias peregrinas en busca de identidad: Cuadros del protestantismo latino en los Estados Unidos* (Buenos Aires, Argentina: Karios Ediciones, 2004), 193-205; Eldin Villafañe, *The Liberating Spirit: Toward an Hispanic American Pentecostal Social Ethic* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America,

Churches has often been depicted by people such as Harvey Hoekstra as replacing personal evangelism with social justice programs,<sup>10</sup> many of the denominations related to the World Council of Churches continue to send missionaries with much more than a mere social message.<sup>11</sup> We may differ on the priorities that we give to various aspects of ministry, but I think that our caricatures of one another need to change. More important still, I think, is whether we are only to do evangelization by these means or whether there is a role for simply being something that we have so far refused to be, or at least refused to be well. And that is being one. With that, I want to focus for a short time on the prayer of Jesus in John 17.

### The Prayer of Jesus

**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 (*hina*) they may all be one (*pántes hèn 'ōsin*). As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, (*hina*) may they also be in us, so that (*hina*) the world may believe (*ho kósmos pisteúē*) that you have sent me (*hóti su me 'apésteilas*). **22** The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that (*hina*) they may be one as we are one, **23** I in them and you in me, and they may become completely one, so that (*hina*) the world may know (*ho kósmos ginōskē*) that you have sent me (*hóti su me 'apésteilas*) and have loved them even as you have loved me (*égápēsas autòus kathōs 'emè 'egápēsas*).

John 17:20-23 NRSV

The prayer of Jesus that is recorded in John 17 has often been cited as a prayer in which Jesus asks the Father to grant His followers unity. Most Pentecostals maintain that when Jesus prayed this prayer, He was not speaking of *visible unity*. They understand the

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1992), 257 pp.; Eldin Villafañe, “The Politics of the Spirit: Reflections on a Theology of Social Transformation for the Twenty-First Century,” *Pneuma: The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 18:2 (1996), 161-170; G. François Wessels, “Charismatic Christian Congregations and Social Justice - A South African Perspective,” *Missionalia* 25:3 (November 1997), 360-374; Robert D. Woodbury, “Pentecostalism and Economic Development,” Jonathan B. Imber, Ed. *Markets, Morals and Religion* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2008), 157-177.

<sup>10</sup> See, for instance, R. C. Cunningham, “A World Council of Churches,” *The Pentecostal Evangel* 1802 (November 20, 1948), 15; Charles Paul Conn, “Where the World Council of Churches Went Wrong,” *Church of God Evangel* 72:16 (October 25, 1982), 16-18.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Scott W. Sunquist and Caroline N. Becker, Eds, *A History of Presbyterian Missions: 1944-2007* Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2008 and the recent work of the Committee on World Mission and Evangelization of the WCC.

prayer of Jesus as pointing to a *spiritual* form of unity. When the Holy Spirit came to indwell His followers, Jesus' prayer was answered through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in every genuine believer.<sup>12</sup> A spiritual unity or *koinonia* was the result of this common indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is not our job to decide who is "within" and who is "outside" of this spiritual fellowship. Any call to work for some form of visible unity is then portrayed as the misguided effort of human beings to accomplish what God has already given. As a result, Pentecostals have generally given little credence to the modern Ecumenical Movement. But the question remains. Does this *spiritual* reading of Jesus' prayer do justice to His line of thought? Given the purpose of the unity for which Jesus prayed, so that the world would believe, wouldn't a *literal* reading of John 17:21 be more appropriate?

This second, more literal reading stands as the backdrop against which the modern Ecumenical Movement has found the source for many of its actions. While it may be true to say that we already experience a spiritual unity through the common indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that spiritual unity is not in itself sufficient to convince the world that God loves them. It is not visible or tangible. Something more is needed to convince a world that is so disposed.

The argument then is that Jesus has prayed for the unity of the Church as part of God's plan, and we have been invited to participate actively in this work of God as we search for the right solution to demonstrate that unity in a visible or tangible form. Most

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<sup>12</sup> "A Declaration on Ecumenical Councils and Christian Unity by the National Association of Evangelicals," *Church of God Evangel* 52:39 (December 3, 1962), 12; Ray H. Hughes, "Pentecost and Ecumenism," *Church of God Evangel* 56:45 (January 16, 1967), 12-13, 15; Thomas F. Zimmerman, "The Holy Spirit: Unifying the Church," *Church of God Evangel* 57:35 (November 13, 1967), 12-14, 17; Opal L. Reddin, "Church Unity," *Enrichment* 1.2 (Spring 1996), 68; Francesco Toppi, *E Mi Sarete Testimoni: Il Movimento Pentecostale e le Assemblee di Dio in Italia*, 199.

contemporary ecumenical conversations conclude that in light of this passage, the quest for unity must be viewed not as an independent human quest, but as being in the will of Christ for the whole Church. Ecumenism must be understood as God's gift to the Church in direct response to Jesus' prayer for unity among His disciples. It is, therefore, the case that our calling as members of that Church is to pursue together or enter together into the fulfillment of that will or to participate together in that gift. This understanding suggests that primary responsibility for our unity rests with God, but that all Christians are called to participate together in that call in an active way.<sup>13</sup>

In John 17:21-23 we may also find a governing paradigm regarding the relationship between unity and mission. A literal reading of the text seems to suggest that unity between the followers of Jesus is essential to the overall effectiveness of their witness. The connective *hína* in verse 21 is typically translated "so that" or "in order that" when followed by the subjunctive as it is in this passage. Since the subjunctive mode conveys a tentative or contingent nature of the act, it is here the case that the world's belief that the Father has sent the Son (*ho kósmos pisteúē*) is in some way dependent upon the action in the previous clause. The action in the previous clause is simply that of being one (*pántes hèn 'ōsin*). Nothing is said in verse 21 regarding either the witness of word or the witness of deed. The compelling nature of the testimony to which John bears witness is that followers of Jesus *are* one. It is a witness of *being* rather than a witness of *doing*. This does not mean that engaging in acts of verbal evangelization or doing acts of social justice in the name of mission is either ineffective or wrong-headed, but the fact of our

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<sup>13</sup> This idea is clearly stated in Günther Gassmann, Ed. *Documentary History of Faith and Order: 1963-1993*, Faith and Order Paper 159 (Geneva Switzerland: WCC Publications, 1993), Documents I.1 and I.3, pages 3-5, and again in III.3, page 61. This seems to me to be at the very heart of the admonition found in Ephesians 4:3 to "maintain" the unity that we already enjoy.

*being one*, just as the Father and the Son are one, may be in some way a more compelling witness of God's love for the world and demonstrated in Jesus Christ, in its own right, than anything we could say or do.

The message conveyed through this act of *being* is twofold. First, according to verse 21, it is the message that the Father has sent the Son, literally "that you have sent me" (*sú me apésteilos*). In verse 23, this same phrase is repeated. Jesus prays that the disciples will be completely one so that (*hína*) the world will know (*ho kósmos ginōskē*) that you have sent me (*sú me apésteilos*). This initial request, however, is joined by a second one in verse 23, namely that as a result of the complete oneness of His followers, the world will come to know that the Father has loved the world. Literally, Jesus prays that the consequence of the oneness of His followers will convey the message that "you have loved them just as you have loved me" (*hoti 'ēgápēsas autous kathos hemè 'ēgápēsas*). If it can be said that the prayer of Jesus links the effectiveness of mission to the unity of His followers, that is, the effectiveness of the message intended for the world, then it should be possible to assess the effectiveness of this mission in light of the unity or division that is currently present among the followers of Jesus.

Currently many Christians, among them most Pentecostals, remain focused upon what they describe as the spiritual or invisible character of the Church while excluding more visible forms of ecumenism as in some ways compromising. At the same time, many others, notably many of the more ecumenical Christians have focused upon the visible nature of the Church, but often at the expense of any emphasis upon the need for a personal conversion or life transformation that can be viewed in a spiritual sense. As a

result, it is currently impossible to answer the question of effectiveness in any compelling way.

If it is spiritual or invisible unity for which Jesus prayed, how is the world able to discern it in such a way as to see the love of the Father demonstrated through His sending of Jesus, His Son?<sup>14</sup> In what way is it a complete witness to the truth that Jesus wants the world to see? If, on the other hand it is intended to be visible, what is the form that this visible unity to take? Is it a visibility rooted in a single institution? Is it intended to manifest itself in some type of conciliar fellowship? Is it a unity that is based upon theological uniformity? And what expectations regarding personal conversion should churches place on individuals as a requirement for becoming a Christian and joining the Church. Among Christians, the questions of “being,” that is, of how visible unity should best be conceived and manifested also remains unanswered. As a result, regardless of the position adopted in the current state of relations between Christian churches, the question of the effectiveness of the Church’s mission continues to remain unanswered.

### **The Unanswered Challenges of Lesslie Newbigin**

The question of the effectiveness of the Church’s mission in light of the current state of disunity was something that troubled Bishop Lesslie Newbigen over half a century ago. As early as 1953, he took the position that

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? The divisions of the Church are a public denial of the sufficiency of the atonement.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Thomas F. Zimmerman, “The Holy Spirit: Unifying the Church,” *Church of God Evangel* 57:35 (November 13, 1967), 12-14, 17; Opal L. Reddin, “Church Unity,” *Enrichment* 1.2 (Spring 1996), 68.

<sup>15</sup> Lesslie, Newbigin, *Is Christ Divided? A Plea for Christian Unity in a Revolutionary Age*, 9.

For much of his life, Lesslie Newbigin served as an English, missionary-bishop in the Church of South India. He did not enter India as a bishop, but was elected to that post in the Church of South India by the Indian people of that church. For over half a century, his was a strong Evangelical voice in that region of the world. He was both a leading churchman and a formidable ecumenical statesman. From beginning to end, Bishop Newbigin was an advocate of proclaiming the message of salvation through Jesus Christ, and from beginning to end he saw the success of that task being linked to the unity of the followers of Jesus Christ. His commitment to the Church of South India, one of the earliest “united” churches in the world, is a testimony to his commitment to this idea. In truth, he saw unity as a basic fact of life whose foundation lay in the very atonement that Christ had made possible through His death and resurrection. The unity of the Church is as much a soteriological issue as it is an ecclesiological issue. His experience on the mission field of India led him to that conclusion.

Bishop Newbigin often spoke of the challenge that many non-Christians posed to him when he presented the Gospel to them. They stumbled over the deep divisions that separated Christians from Christians as the Catholic Portuguese were replaced by the Reformed Dutch and the Reformed Dutch were displaced by the Anglican English and then the Baptists and the Methodists, divisions that seemed to deny the efficacy of the reconciling work of Jesus Christ. When Bishop Newbigin told the Indian populace of Christ’s power to reconcile humanity to God, and His ability to reconcile people one with another, their response was often tainted by skepticism.

Yes, that is what you say, but it is not what you believe. For if you believed it, you would yourselves have found it true. You would have found in Jesus a center of unity deep enough and strong enough to

overcome your natural divisions and to bring you together as one family. If you really believed that the Name of Jesus is the one name under which all [hu]mankind is to be enrolled, you would yourselves have found that Name sufficient. But in fact you add all sorts of other names. Evidently you yourselves do not find in Him the secret that you are offering to us.<sup>16</sup>

While this short response is most likely a composite one, made up of arguments that young Hindus with whom Bishop Newbigin came into contact may have brought, it is nonetheless effective in communicating the discrepancy between what we say and who we are. In short, the current state of division between Christians is sufficient to raise doubts among those for whom the message of reconciliation is intended to be Good News. From the perspective of missions, our divided state is a scandal of the highest magnitude that needs to be overcome.

The Qu'ran has put the indictment another way,

With those who said they were Christians, We [Allah] made a covenant also, but they too have forgotten much of what they were enjoined. Therefore, We stirred among them enmity and hatred, which shall endure till the Day of Resurrection when Allah will declare to them all that they have done.<sup>17</sup>

The Qu'ran forms and guides the worldview of countless millions of people around the world. Some interpretations of this passage suggest that the divisions between Christians have come as a result of Allah's judgment upon a backslidden Church. Divided Christians are portrayed as being divided because they have been unfaithful to God. Still, we claim to carry the message of reconciliation. In light of our divisions, the appropriate Muslim response, like that of the Hindu, is, "If your God is so good at providing reconciliation through Jesus Christ, why are you who carry His Name unable to be

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<sup>16</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *Is Christ Divided?* 21-22.

<sup>17</sup> Al-Ma'ida 5.14-15. The reference to enmity and hatred is typically interpreted as divisions and sectarianism within the Christian community. When I think of what has been enjoined upon us in the name of unity, my mind is drawn to Ephesians 4:1-6.

reconciled to one another? Don't talk to us about God's reconciling power until you can bear tangible evidence that your message is true."

The World Missionary Conference that was held in Edinburgh in 1910 can be described as a watershed both for mission and for unity or ecumenism. The purpose of the Conference was not first and foremost about Christian unity, it was about Christian mission. The conference came at a time when the situation around the world was changing. The institution known as Christendom that seemed to have served the Church in previous centuries was beginning to crumble. The handwriting was on the wall as the Colonial powers began to be eclipsed and indigenous people and their newly created nations began to rise up. Many nations began to find their own voices, emerging to take their place on the world stage. This process would continue for the better part of the next century. The missionaries and mission executives that gathered in Edinburgh in 1910 were concerned with the need to evaluate the effectiveness of their current work, and if possible, to strategize together regarding the future in which a post-colonial, post-Christendom global form of Christianity might take the place of the *status quo*.

One of the things that quickly became apparent as they met with one another was the need for greater unity between the churches engaged in missionary work. The call for the churches to work toward greater visible unity that was issued by the World Missionary Conference of 1910 is difficult to ignore. It was the entire theme of the study issued by Commission VIII,<sup>18</sup> and clearly it had a significant impact on the ultimate formation of

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<sup>18</sup> Report of Commission VIII: *Co-operation and the Promotion of Unity* with Supplement: Presentation and Discussion of the Report in the Conference on 21<sup>st</sup> June 1910 (Edinburgh, Scotland: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier / New York, NY: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1910), 243 pp.

the World Council of Churches.<sup>19</sup> The Commission had gathered information from a range of denominations, missionary sending agencies, regional missionary conferences and associations, missionary founded churches, and missionaries on the status of conversations and projects that fostered visible unity. It included an assessment of the contributions being made through comity agreements, the role and promise of conferences and associations developing in various regions of the world, the necessity to foster and the potential fruit to be gained by engaging in joint actions whenever possible, and the obligation of missionaries and their respective sending bodies to cooperate more fully with one another on issues related to visible unity.

The Commission also included a discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of two fundamental approaches to visible unity, (1) the role of federations of churches that might allow for maximum diversity between ecclesial partners, and (2) the possibility of moves toward greater organic unity that might contribute maximum depth to the resulting relationships.

What resulted from the 1910 Conference included the formation of the International Missionary Conference.<sup>20</sup> It should not be surprising, then, to learn that the Assemblies of God in the USA, which had formed explicitly in 1914 for purposes of greater visible unity and of greater missionary cooperation, should become part of such an organization.<sup>21</sup> The Assemblies of God joined the Foreign Missionary Conference of

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<sup>19</sup> Kenneth Scott Latourette, "Ecumenical Bearings of the Missionary Movement and the International Missionary Conference," in Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill, Eds. *A History of the Ecumenical Movement: 1517-1948* 2 Vols; Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches, 1953, 1967, 1986), I:353-362; C. Howard Hopkins, *John R. Mott: 1865-1955: A Biography* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 342-382, 684-696..

<sup>20</sup> W. H. T. Gairdner, "*Edinburgh 1910*": *An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Oliphant Anderson and Ferrier, 1910), 187-188.

<sup>21</sup> In 1913 and 1914, Pentecostals were at odds with one another over the doctrine of sanctification (whether it was to be viewed as a crisis or as a process) as well as the proper formula to be invoked at the time of

North America in 1920. When the Foreign Missionary Conference of North America joined the International Missionary Conference the following year, the Assemblies of God became a member of the International Missionary Conference.<sup>22</sup>

When in 1949 the Foreign Missionary Conference of North America became the missionary arm of the National Council of Churches in the USA, the Assemblies of God dropped its membership in that missionary organization, but it continued to maintain a cordial relationship as a “Consultant Agency” to both the National Council of Churches in the USA and the newly formed World Council of Churches, ultimately taking up residence in the same building at 475 Riverside Drive, in New York City.

In 1961, the International Missionary Conference became the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches. It was only in August 1961, after four decades of membership and cooperation with these national and international ecumenical agencies that the Assemblies of God broke off its relationship with them, a decision made under duress from the repeated attacks by the American Fundamentalist, Carl F. McIntyre, questions raised by the National Association of Evangelicals, and the

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baptism (whether it was to be done in the name of Jesus Christ as it was in Acts 2:38, or using classical Trinitarian language of Matthew 28:19). While these differences were not mentioned by name, the concern for doctrinal unity within the youthful Pentecostal Movement was genuine, and many thought that if they could work with a common name (Assemblies of God) with shared educational expectations and a shared standard for clergy, the issue of unity could be addressed visibly. At the same time, missionary activity was a second major concern. The movement wanted to conserve resources, to assess needs, and engage in practical stewardship, just as the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference had done. This may be seen in the following statements in the call to the first General Council of the Assemblies of God. “We come together that we know how to conserve the work; that we may all build up and not tear down both in home and foreign lands.” “We come together...that we may get a better understanding of the needs of each foreign field, and may know how to place our money in such a way that one mission or missionary shall not suffer, while another not any more worthy, lives in luxuries. Also that we may discourage wasting money on those who are running here and there accomplishing nothing, and may concentrate our support on those who mean business for our King.” “General Convention of Pentecostal Saints and Churches of God in Christ,” *Word and Witness* 9:12 (December 20, 1913), 1.5-6.

<sup>22</sup> Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., “The Assemblies of God and Ecumenical Cooperation: 1920-1965,” in Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies, Eds. *Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honor of William W. Menzies* Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 11 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 116

personal convictions of the newly elected General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God, Thomas F. Zimmerman.<sup>23</sup>

It is easy to see why Lesslie Newbigin would argue that

It was among missionaries that the denominational barriers were first overleaped, and it was the great world missionary conference of 1910 that created the modern movement for Christian unity. The unity of Christ's people, for which He prays, is a unity "that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou lovest me." It is a unity for the sake of the world, the world which God made and loves and for which He sent His Son.<sup>24</sup>

Newbigin went beyond this initial summary, however, when he envisioned the participation of Pentecostals in the field of mission as well as in the field of unity as one of critical importance to the whole Church.

In 1953, Newbigin wrote his important book, *The Household of God*, in which he outlined what he called the three streams of Christianity. The first stream he called the Catholic stream. The second stream was the Protestant stream. And the third stream was the Pentecostal stream.<sup>25</sup> He declared that all three streams were essential to a full understanding of the Church. Each had a contribution to make, but apart from the contributions of the other two streams, each was incomplete. According to Newbigin's argument, Catholics offered structure to the Church through their emphasis upon apostolic succession. Protestants offered the reformed "message" of the Church, that is, what he viewed as its doctrinal orthodoxy. Together, Catholics and Protestants had historically sought to "honour and safeguard the uniqueness, sufficiency and finality of

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<sup>23</sup> Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "The Assemblies of God and Ecumenical Cooperation: 1920-1965," 121-145.

<sup>24</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *Is Christ Divided?* 22.

<sup>25</sup> One could wish that he had also included Orthodoxy as a fourth stream or that he had made clear its relationship to one of the other streams.

God's saving acts in Christ." Yet without the third stream, he contended, they reflected a "Church which is a mere shell, having the form of a Church but not the life."<sup>26</sup>

What Pentecostalism brought to the Church, he offered, was "the conviction that the Christian life is a matter of the experienced power and presence of the Holy Spirit today."<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately, he pointed out, for a variety of reasons, Pentecostals were largely outside the ecumenical arena. As a result, Pentecostalism had not yet risen to the critically necessary challenge of the theological encounter that the Ecumenical Movement made possible, and as a result, the other two streams were bereft of vitality and power.

Newbigin maintained that the Church needs all three streams, cooperating in such a way as to *be* one, for in the end, "the Church is, in the most exact sense, a *koinonia*, a sharing in the Holy Spirit."<sup>28</sup> The presence of Pentecostalism as an equal partner in the Church removes all three aspects of the Church – Catholic, Protestant, and Pentecostal – from the clutches of their individual sin, whereby each claims to be the whole Church, without giving due consideration to the other parts. Furthermore, he pointed out, "When the risen Lord bestowed the apostolic commission upon the Church and empowered it to continue His mission, the very heart of His act lay in the bestowal of the Holy Spirit...It is as anointed with His Holy Spirit that they are bearers of His commission, and in no other way."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God* (London, England: SCM Press Ltd., 1953), 87. There is clearly a less than subtle reference to 2 Timothy 3:5 here.

<sup>27</sup> Lesslie, Newbigin, *The Household of God*, 87.

<sup>28</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God*, 90. This position is similar to that expressed by Emil Brunner, *The Misunderstanding of the Church*, trans. Harold Knight (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1953), 10-11.

<sup>29</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God*, 95.

Repeatedly throughout his ministry, Newbigin came back to this same theme. Five years later, in 1958 for instance, he wrote a small pamphlet, in which he called for something more than mere cooperation between the various strands of Christianity,

Our divisions are a public contradiction of that atonement. Co-operation in common programmes of study and action is not a substitute for this unity. Co-operation in mission must eventually face the question “Mission for what?” Into what are we inviting the men of all nations – into a new complex of divisions in place of their own, or into the one family where at last they may know themselves one in the Father’s house?<sup>30</sup>

Following the lead of Lesslie Newbigin, the Disciples of Christ ecumenical theologian and now General Secretary of the National Council of Churches in the USA, Michael Kinnamon, who has written much in the field of ecumenism, has also made this point, one on which I believe Pentecostals need to reflect further.<sup>31</sup> It is one thing to join a local, national, or international Evangelical or Full Gospel alliance in order to cooperate on shared concerns; it is quite another thing to join in a quest for full visible unity.

If Newbigin was strongly committed to the idea that full and genuine Christian unity was critical to the success of Christian mission, he was just as strongly convinced that Christian unity was not to be viewed as an end in itself. It was unity *for the sake of* mission that was at stake. In one of his last addresses, Bishop Newbigin, now retired, was invited to speak to the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches that was held in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil in 1997. While he was relatively weak, his words were powerful, and they led to major acclaim. He was pleased that various speakers had talked about building relationships with groups like the World Evangelical Fellowship but he also had some critical remarks for the World Council of

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<sup>30</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *One Gospel, One Body, One World: The Christian Mission Today* (New York, NY: Friendship Press, 1958, 1966), 54.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Kinnamon, *The Vision of the Ecumenical Movement and How It Has Been Impoverished by Its Friends* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2003), 23-35, especially 30-31.

Churches. “I do not think that the desire here expressed will be fulfilled unless the WCC gives much more evidence of being filled with a longing to bring the Gospel to all peoples,” he began. He went on to note that

The WCC has given courageous leadership in the struggle for peace and justice in the fight against racism and in concern for the integrity of creation. It has been the prime mover in the search for closer Christian unity. But in so powerfully challenging the churches on these issues it does seem to have lost the missionary passion that was the vital force that created the ecumenical movement in the closing years of the nineteenth and the opening years of the twentieth centuries. The demand for unity among the churches and the demand for justice and peace among the nations, if they are not rooted in what God has done for all the world in Jesus Christ, can themselves become new forms of domination. There cannot be any greater task, or any deeper joy than to tell the world what God has done for us in Jesus Christ and to enable others to know, love, and serve him as Lord and Savior.<sup>32</sup>

### **Unity and Mission: The Message of Edinburgh 1910**

The 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference was largely and intentionally a Protestant and Anglican event, though there were a couple of Catholic observers. When delegates representing the many historic Protestant and Anglican churches of the day met in Edinburgh in 1910, they concentrated almost entirely upon the challenges faced by their own missionaries in Africa, the Middle East, and especially in the giants of Asia – India and China. A significant portion of the Commission’s agenda revolved not only around the interface between Christianity and other religions that were already present in those regions of the world, but also around the notion of unity among the Christians who were working in those areas.

Those who led Commission VIII were very much aware that tensions existed between some churches. Some of these tensions were obviously theological, but others were more

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<sup>32</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, “The Dialogue of Gospel and Culture: Reflections on the Conference on World Mission and Evangelism, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 21:2 (April 1997), 52.

practical. In any case, the Commission sought to avoid any possible conflicts between delegates. At the same time, it was very clear that no one should have to sacrifice his or her personal convictions. As a result, Commission VIII looked specifically at the more pressing and pragmatic, Church-dividing issues that were present in these regions rather than the longer term and underlying issues. Given that neither the Orthodox, nor the Catholic, nor the newly emerging Pentecostal churches were present, it is easy to understand why the work of Commission VIII had in one sense only a limited value.

Among the pragmatic issues undertaken by Commission VIII were the use and misuse of comity agreements by which countries were divided up in such a way that entire regions, were given over to one specific denomination or another, but rarely to more than one. The limitations of such agreements became readily recognizable as soon as one or another group refused to recognize the validity of such an agreement, especially when it had not been a party to the establishment of the agreement in the first place. It also evaluated the role and promise of various conferences and associations then in the process of developing in various parts of the world. The Commission called attention to the need to foster these relatively recent developments and it pointed to the potential fruit that might be gained by engaging in joint actions whenever that was possible. Several of them held real promise for the future. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it noted the obligation that the missionaries and their respective sending agencies had, to cooperate more fully with one another on issues related to visible unity. In keeping with this point, the Commission ultimately passed a single resolution that put into place a Continuation Committee of the World Missionary Conference that would be multi-national and multi-

denominational empowered to follow up on unresolved issues.<sup>33</sup> This Continuation Committee would become extremely important in the development of various networks that ultimately evolved into different streams within the World Council of Churches.

### **Christian Unity and Pentecostal Mission: A Contradiction?**

The title of my paper includes a question. It asks whether Christian unity and Pentecostal mission stand in contradiction to one another. I believe that Pentecostals might respond rightly by saying “No” to this question if it were asked in a neutral or abstract setting. Christian unity and Pentecostal mission need not run competition with one another. They are not mutually exclusive. They belong together. Pentecostals would point to John 17 and say that it is obvious that Jesus saw it this way. They might read the writings of Lesslie Newbigin and recognize the validity of his appeal for unity for the sake of mission. They might even point to the 1910 Missionary Conference (if they knew about it) and note that the delegates were convinced that these two things were related as well.

But in the real world, one where differences seem clear and sides are taken, Pentecostals have long said, “Yes.” Efforts toward visible Christian unity and mission are a contradiction in terms. They have not typically said this in so many words, but their response is shouted through their actions. Their actions clearly indicate that this is their response. For far too long, they have chosen to build walls between them and those with whom they have disagreed, rather than to engage in conversation or to seek understanding. One might even speak of a 70 year Babylonian captivity of Pentecostalism. They have allowed themselves to become captive to an Evangelical

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<sup>33</sup> For a useful summary of the week and the debate surrounding this resolution see, Gairdner, “*Edinburgh 1910*”: *An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference*, 178-214.

agenda that has not really been their own. And while some of the blame for this captivity lies squarely at the feet of the Evangelical community, some of it rightly belongs at the feet of those Pentecostal leaders who, for the sake of acceptance within the Evangelical community, have chosen to move against the historic visions of Christian unity that Pentecostals had long held.<sup>34</sup>

### **Name and Glory / Ephraim and Judah**

Those of you who know me know also that I began my ecumenical journey officially in 1983 when the Lord awakened me in the middle of the night and instructed me to write a specific paper on the topic of Ecumenism. It was a radical request, one that I did not feel I was at all prepared to heed. I wrote it, and today I look back on that divine visitation as the night when I was called to work for greater unity in the global Church.

Shortly before I wrote that first paper on “The Ecumenical Challenge,” my Presidential Address to the Society for Pentecostal Studies, I had read Professor Samuel Terrien’s book, *The Elusive Presence*. He intended it to be a contribution toward “an ecumenical theology of the Bible.”<sup>35</sup> What intrigued me about Professor Terrien’s work on the Divine Presence, were his conclusions about the People of God in ancient Israel. He saw, as many of us might, two sets of people. There were those who identified with Israel or Ephraim. And there were those who identified with Judah. What was most interesting to me was what he took great pain to explain. Both Israel and Judah experienced the Divine Presence at times quite visible through His work among them,

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<sup>34</sup> Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., “The Assemblies of God and Ecumenical Cooperation, 1920-1965,” 132-150;

<sup>35</sup> Samuel Terrien, *The Elusive Presence; Toward a New Biblical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978), 7. This volume has recently been reprinted and is available from Wipf and Stock Publishers.

and on other occasions as *Deus absconditus* – apparently absent, and yet in the experience of Israel, at the same time very much present.

What Terrien argued, was that these two groups, Israel and Judah, seemed to experience God in very different ways. Those who identified with Israel experienced God through their spiritual ear. These were the people to whom God revealed His Name (Deuteronomy 5:6), a revelation that prefaced the Decalogue, the commandments that spoke of how they were to live their lives. They were the people who heard the call of the Shema – “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One” and the command to love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, and strength (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). Hearing God as they did, they also went to their sacred places and listened as God spoke through the prophets, “Thus, says the Lord.” They heard themselves called to live their lives within the ethical boundaries of their relationship with God. God would be as much in their actions, in the ways they would relate one to another, as God would be in the words that they heard, calling them to follow Him. These people, argued Terrien were best viewed as people of the Name. Their knowledge of God came through the auditory canal, the ear. They valued sacred time and they lived according to an ethical revelation.

On the other hand, there were the people of Judah. Their advantage was that they lived close to Jerusalem, the city of God. There on the hill sat the temple of God. The people who identified with Judah, Terrien contended, saw the Glory of the Lord. As they gathered at the temple, they experienced God through their spiritual eye. As David brought the Ark back to Jerusalem, he danced before the Lord with all his might. Isaiah saw the Lord, sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, filling the temple with His glory, while seraphim fluttered about proclaiming “Holy, Holy, Holy” (Isaiah 6:1-13) and he

was overcome with awe. And when the worship of Judah was conducted in the majestic sacred space called the temple, it included a celebrative atmosphere full of burning incense, chanting priests, and antiphonal choirs. It included orchestras, trumpets, tambourines, and cymbals. They sang and clapped and shouted and danced! It is in the exuberant praise of the Psalms where we catch a vision of the Lord, a vision of His Glory that filled their minds and hearts. As a result, they had a message to proclaim!

What I want to point out is this. In spite of the differences in the ways each group came before God, there is no question that they both encountered or experienced God, one group hearing God, the other group seeing God. One group may have stood silently as God spoke, while the other burst into what some might describe as ecstatic worship in response to God's presence among them. But these two groups of related people, these two groups who appeared to have quite different identities and histories and even traditions, these two groups both genuinely encountered God. And each responded to God's presence in very different ways. In fact, their ways may have seemed irreconcilable, even mutually exclusive of one another. But in the Lord's hand, they are becoming one.

Those who find an identity in Ephraim or Israel know that they have been in God's presence and they know that God has been working with them about this thing called unity. Their obedience in forming the World Council of Churches, in forming various regional, national, and local ecumenical bodies, in participating in a vast array of ecumenical opportunities in Faith, Order, Work, and Life, know that God has been in all of it. But I want to state categorically that God has also been working with those who identify with "Judah", the ones I would describe as Pentecostals.

In a sense, there is nothing new in this paper. And yet, the factors that have for so long led to a standoff between Pentecostals and many churches in the Ecumenical Movement may finally be relinquishing their grip. Some of you may know that Pentecostals have been participating in the work of Faith and Order with the National Council of Churches in the USA since the early 1980s. They continue to do so.

Several Pentecostal groups have also recently become part of a creative, ecumenical initiative called Christian Churches Together in the USA.<sup>36</sup> Bishop James Leggett, General Superintendent of the International Pentecostal Holiness Church is playing a significant role, encouraging other Pentecostal leaders to open up to the ecumenical process through this initiative. His denomination has been joined by other Pentecostal groups including the Church of God of Prophecy, the Elim Fellowship (Lima, NY), and the Open Bible Churches. Sadly, the two largest Pentecostal denominations in the US, the Churches of God in Christ and the Assemblies of God have held the CCT at arms length.<sup>37</sup> But nearly a decade ago, the Church of God in Christ established an Office of Ecumenical and Urban Affairs. In 2005, the Assemblies of God transformed its statement disapproving of participation in ecumenical organizations from an exclusive statement to a much more inclusive one.<sup>38</sup>

If we turn our eyes outside the United States, however, we find a very different and much more rapidly changing story. Since 1961, there have been several Pentecostal denominations which have come to hold membership in the World Council of Churches.

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<sup>36</sup> See the list of CCT participant organizations at: [www.christianchurchestogether.org/members/](http://www.christianchurchestogether.org/members/) .

<sup>37</sup> I am aware that the Church of God (Cleveland, TN), the Church of God in Christ, Inc, and the Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church have sent observers to some CCT meetings and that they continue to watch the situation. But to date, they stand on the outside, looking in.

<sup>38</sup> “Bylaws of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Article IX.B, List of Doctrines and Practices Disapproved, Section 11 The Ecumenical Movement,” *Minutes of the 51<sup>st</sup> Session of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, with revised Constitution and Bylaws 51<sup>st</sup> General Council, Denver, Colorado, August 2-5, 2005*, (Springfield, MO: General Secretary’s Office, 2005), 125.

Most of them are small Pentecostal denominations numbering at most a few hundred thousand members. All of them come from the Global South - Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and Angola. Before they joined the WCC, many of them were considered to be the poster children of the Pentecostal Movement – early, indigenous, independent, and thriving. Since they joined the WCC, the Pentecostal denominations affiliated with the Pentecostal World Fellowship have marginalized and ignored them. Yet they are fully Pentecostal and today they have nearly a half century of experience, living as ecumenical Christians. They may not reflect the same political, social, or economic agenda of North America and Europe, but they are fully Pentecostal. The time has come for the rest of Pentecostalism to hear their testimony and to re-evaluate their witness.

Still, the story gets better. Within the past two decades, Pentecostal denominations have become full members of the National Councils of Churches in at least 37 countries and they have taken either associate or observer status in 6 more. That means that there are at least 43 countries in which Pentecostals are now part of the National Council of Churches.<sup>39</sup> What may be even more profound is the fact that roughly 70% of them come from the Global South, among the so-called “Developing Countries” of the “two-thirds world” where the growth of Pentecostalism is most significant.<sup>40</sup>

And then, there are the international dialogues. The International Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue came into existence, in part, because of the lack of unity between Pentecostals and Catholics in Latin America. The question of mission has been addressed several

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<sup>39</sup> These figures may be found in the Appendix, and are largely derived from Huibert van Beek, Compiler, *A Handbook of Churches and Councils: Profiles of Ecumenical Relationships* Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2002), 7-8; Jehu J. Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration, and the Transformation of the West* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 121.

times in this dialogue between Pentecostals and the Catholic Church, as well as with the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, with the Lutheran World Federation, and through the Joint Consultative Group, with the World Council of Churches. Many Pentecostal leaders from around the world have participated in the Global Christian Forum, a relatively new and promising initiative on the ecumenical horizon.<sup>41</sup>

Unity is critical to the work of mission. The Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue came about because of disunity between these two enormous traditions. For the sake of mission, they worked on the subject of proselytism. The Lutheran – Pentecostal Dialogue came into existence because of the desire of the Lutheran World Federation to understand better the dynamics of a missionary church in Ethiopia that holds membership in the Federation, the lively and charismatic Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. The Dialogue between the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and Pentecostals resulted from conversations broached by the late Milan Opocensky, who wanted to change the dynamics between Pentecostals and Presbyterians in Korea. The result has been that the Assemblies of God in Korea has now joined the Korean National Council of Churches.

Huibert van Beek, who for years led the Office of Church and Ecumenical Relations in the World Council of Churches worked tirelessly to gain approval for the formation of the Joint Consultative Group, an ongoing dialogue between WCC member churches and Pentecostals that is now in its second round of discussions. Thus far, both teams are still learning about the other, but high on their agenda are issues that have emerged on various mission fields, including the problem of proselytism. And then there are the Orthodox.

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<sup>41</sup> On the Forum see Richard Howell, Ed. *Global Christian Forum: Transforming Ecumenism* New Delhi, India: Evangelical fellowship of India, 2007, and Hubert van Beek, ed. *Revisioning Christian Unity: The Global Christian Forum Studies in Global Christianity*, Oxford, UK: Regnum Books International, 2009.

Just weeks ago, Dr. Harold Hunter visited the Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul, where he suggested the possibility of an Orthodox – Pentecostal Dialogue. Such a Dialogue will necessarily become deeply involved in missionary questions right from the start.

What seems clearly evident from this brief survey is the fact that unity and mission somehow go together. The Ecumenical Movement prides itself on the fact that it has been hard at work on the Unity question. Pentecostals pride themselves on the fact that they have been hard at work on the Mission question. It is time to bring the two together into some form of dialogue in which unity and mission can bring the life of the Spirit to one another.

## **Appendix**

### **Regional and National Councils of Churches with Pentecostal Memberships**

#### **Africa**

##### **All Africa Council of Churches**

Pentecostal Assemblies of the World (Liberia)

##### **Council of Churches in Angola**

Apostolic Faith Church in Angola  
 Christian Apostolic Mission in Angola  
 Evangelical Pentecostal Mission in Angola  
 Full Gospel Church in Angola  
 Church of God in Angola\*

##### **Botswana Council of Churches**

Church of God in Christ

##### **Council of Protestant Churches of Cameroon**

Full Gospel Mission in Cameroon\*

##### **National Council of Churches of Kenya**

Kenya Assemblies of God  
 Maranatha Faith Assemblies  
 Overcoming Faith Centre Church of Kenya  
 Pentecostal Evangelistic Fellowship of Africa

**Liberian Council of Churches**

Don Stewart Christ Pentecostal Church  
 Pentecostal Assemblies of the World  
 New Apostolic Church\*  
 United Church of God in Christ\*  
 United Pentecostal Churches of Christ\*

**Christian Council of Mozambique**

Full Gospel Evangelical Church

**Council of Churches in Namibia**

Apostolic Faith Mission\*\*  
 Pentecostal Protestant Church\*\*

**Council of Churches in Sierra Leone**

Christ Apostolic Church  
 Church of God of Prophecy  
 National Pentecostal Church  
 Calvary Pentecostal Church\*

**South African Council of Churches**

Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa

**Sudan Council of Churches**

Sudan Pentecostal Church

**New Sudan Council of Churches**

Sudan Pentecostal Church

**Council of Swaziland Churches**

African Apostolic Faith Mission  
 Apostolic Faith Mission

**Council of Churches in Zambia**

Apostolic Faith Mission

**Zimbabwe Council of Churches**

Zimbabwe Assemblies of God in Africa

**Asia****Communion of Churches in Indonesia**

Church of God of Prophecy in Indonesia  
 Full Gospel Bethel Church  
 Pentecostal Movement Church

Surabaya Centre Pentecostal Church  
Utusan Pentecostal Church in Indonesia

**National Council of Churches in Korea**  
Korean Assemblies of God

## **Caribbean**

**Caribbean Conference of Churches**  
Christian Pentecostal Church – Cuba  
Church of God (Ebenezer) – Haiti

**Bahamas Christian Council**  
Pentecostal Church

**Cuban Council of Churches**  
Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ  
Christian Pentecostal Church  
Congregational Pentecostal Church  
Light of God Pentecostal Church  
Pentecostal Holiness Church  
Open Bible Church\*\*  
Pentecostal Church of Sovereign Grace in Cuba\*\*\*

**Protestant Federation of Haiti**  
Apostolic Faith Mission  
Assemblies of God  
Church of God in Christ  
Church of God Mission

**Jamaica Council of Churches**  
Jamaica Association of Full Gospel Churches\*\*  
Jamaica Pentecostal Union\*\*

## **Europe**

**Conference of European Churches**  
Pentecostal Assemblies of Bulgaria  
Church of God in Croatia  
Evangelical (Pentecostal) Church in Croatia  
Shiloh United Church of Christ Apostolic Worldwide (UK)

**Council of Christian Churches of an African Approach in Europe**  
Assembly of God, Berlin – Germany  
Christian Pentecostal Church – Germany

Church of Pentecost – Germany  
 Pentecostal Church International, “Shalom Chapel” – Germany  
 Pentecostal Revival Ministry – Germany  
 Full Gospel Christian Community – Switzerland  
 Full Gospel International Church – Switzerland  
 Calvary Church of God in Christ – UK  
 Full Gospel Revival Church Centre – UK  
 Full Gospel Revival Church of God – UK

**Ecumenical Coordinating Committee of Churches in Croatia**

Evangelical Pentecostal Church

**Ecumenical Council of Churches in the Czech Republic**

Apostolic Church

**National Council of Churches in Denmark**

Apostolic Church

**Estonian Council of Churches**

Estonian Christian Pentecostal Church

**Finnish Ecumenical Council**

Swedish Pentecostal Mission in Finland\*\*

**French Protestant Federation**

Apostolic Church  
 Church of God in France

**SKIN – Together Church in the Netherlands [Immigrant]**

ACTS Revival Church – The Hague  
 Assembly of God, Utrecht and Rotterdam  
 Pentecost Revival Church – Amsterdam

**Christian Council of Norway**

Pentecostal Churches of Norway

**Ecumenical Council of Churches in the Slovak Republic**

Apostolic Church in Slovakia\*\*

**Council of Christian Churches in Slovenia**

Pentecostal Church in Slovenia

**Christian Council of Sweden**

Pentecostal Churches in Sweden

**Churches Together in Britain and Ireland**

Church of God of Prophecy  
**Free Churches Group** [See Below]

**Churches Together in England**  
 Church of God of Prophecy

**Free Churches Group**  
 Assemblies of God  
 New Testament Church of God

## **Latin America**

### **Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI)**

Association "The Church of God" – Argentina  
 Christian Biblical Church of Argentina  
 Evangelical Pentecostal Church – Argentina  
 Pentecostal Methodist Church of Bolivia  
 Free Pentecostal Missions Church – Chile  
 Missionary Pentecostal Church – Chile  
 Pentecost Church Eben-Ezer – Chile  
 Pentecostal Church of Chile  
 Pentecostal Mission Church – Chile  
 Pentecostal Church Faith and Holiness – Costa Rica  
 Christian Pentecostal Church – Cuba  
 Evangelical Pentecostal Union of Venezuela  
 Evangelical Pentecostal Church of Naciente – Uruguay  
 Universal Apostolic Mission Church\*\*\* - Chile

### **Christian Fellowship of Churches in Chile (CCI)**

Free Pentecostal Missions Church  
 Pentecostal Church Eben Ezer  
 Pentecostal Mission Church  
 Universal Apostolic Mission Church

### **Ecumenical Fellowship of Chile**

Pentecostal Mission Church  
 Universal Apostolic Mission Church

### **National Evangelical Council of Peru**

Assemblies of God of Peru  
 Church of God in Peru  
 Church of God of Peru  
 Evangelical Pentecostal Church of Peru  
 International Movement Pentecostal Church of Peru  
 Missionary Evangelical Pentecostal Church

Missionary Fellowship of the Assemblies of God

**Federation of Evangelical Churches of Uruguay (FIEU)**

Pentecostal Church Naciente

**Council of Christian Churches of Uruguay (CICU)**

Pentecostal Church Naciente

**North America**

**Christian Churches Together in the USA**

Church of God of Prophecy

Elim Pentecostal Church

International Pentecostal Holiness Church

Open Bible Churches

Church of God (Cleveland, TN)\*\*

Church of God in Christ, Inc.\*\*

Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church\*\*

**Middle East**

**There is no formal cooperation between the Middle East Council of Churches and any Pentecostal body in this region of the world.**

**Pacific**

**Cook Islands Religious Advisory Council**

Apostolic Church

Assemblies of God

**Kiribati National Council of Churches**

Assemblies of God\*\*

**Niue National Council of Churches**

Apostolic Church

**Samoa Council of Churches**

Pentecostal Church

**Vanuatu Christian Council**

Apostolic Church

Assemblies of God\*\*

**Associate Members \***  
**Observers\*\***  
**Fraternal Affiliates\*\*\***