CHRISTIAN AMNESIA:
WHO IN THE WORLD ARE PENTECOSTALS?

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Amnesia is the total or partial loss of memory.[1] Questions such as, where you come from, where you belong, or, what your purpose is, no longer create an immediate reality and recognizable identity. Postmodernism[2] has created a somewhat universal amnesia. The postmodern worldview, with its narcissistic individualism, pluralism, deconstructionism, and loss of common consciousness, has gradually reduced the essential means by which we have identified ourselves in the past. The lack of common "identifiers" has often found an expression in the now global question, "Who in the world am I?"

In this context of global uncertainties one group has provided the world with elements of stability; stable growth, growing significance, significant change: the Pentecostal movement. But Pentecostalism is plagued by the same problems. As the 18th Pentecostal World Conference in Seoul (1998) already acknowledged, at the beginning of the twenty-first century the question, "Who in the world are Pentecostals?"[3] has become one of the

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[1] This article was presented at the 29th meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, Kirkland, Washington, March 18, 2000. I am particularly referring to the concept of "cultural memory," defined by Jan Assmann as a response to the question "What must we never and under no circumstances forget?" in *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1997), pp. 22-45, 77.

[2] I use the term "postmodern" as an expression of the sociological, philosophical, and aesthetical transformation beginning in the last part of the nineteenth century.

[3] William W. Menzies listed this question among the most significant issues in "Frontiers in Theology: Issues at the Close of the First Pentecostal Century" (a paper presented at the Theological Symposium for Asian Church Leaders: Asian Issues on Pentecostalism, September 21, 1998, Seoul, Korea), 16 pp. Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. focused on the problem in "Making Sense of Pentecostalism in a

most significant issues. That this realization comes from Asia should not surprise us. A concept has developed at the end of the twentieth century that too easily divided the religious world of Pentecostals among others into North American Pentecostalism, European Pentecostalism, and Asian Pentecostalism. Yet, particularly in Asia, the expression of Pentecostalism can differ greatly from one country to another as the result of a different cultural and historical development of Pentecostal churches and leadership and the subsequent formulation of a congruent Pentecostal theology. The situation in Asia is paradigmatic for the worldwide situation of Pentecostalism. It expresses the most urgent question Pentecostals are facing today: What is the global identity of the Pentecostal movement?

Attaining answers to these questions has become increasingly difficult. In addition to the question of global Pentecostal self-consciousness there is also a growing awareness of a lack of terminology in order to adequately express the distinctive impressions and experiences of Pentecostalism to those outside of the movement.[4] As a consequence, the distinctive elements of the movement are often misrepresented, its theological message misinterpreted, and its significance misjudged. A solution to the problems is not located in Asia, North America, or Europe alone. Pentecostals need to learn about themselves together in a global context. They may find that behind their different expressions lies a common foundation for a global Pentecostal identity. I want to suggest that the postmodern problem of Pentecostalism is one of memory. The "identifiers" of the past are no longer sufficient to adequately establish and preserve Pentecostal identity in the present. Pentecostals need an appropriate system that will allow them to determine and describe their global and ecumenical existence. I want to suggest that the notion of the "hierarchy of truths" is helpful in this endeavor. Thus I will first introduce the concept and evaluate it in regard to its usefulness as an ecumenical tool and for approaching Pentecostal identity. I will then apply the concept to distinctive themes of Pentecostalism and, in a final step, suggest how this is valuable for the preservation and communication of the Pentecostal tradition.

Global Context" (a paper presented at the Society for Pentecostal Studies meeting, March 1999, Springfield, MO), 34 pp.; Cf. also the presidential address of Cheryl Bridges Johns, "The Adolescence of Pentecostalism: In Search of a Legitimate Sectarian Identity," *Pneuma* 17:1 (Spring 1995), pp. 3-18.

[4] The lack of theological expression has been recognized by many Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal scholars. Some who voiced this critique are Jürgen Moltmann, Michael Welker, Miroslav Volf, and others mentioned in this study.

1. A Hermeneutic of the "Hierarchy of Truths"

In 1990 a study document of the Joint Working Group (JWG) of the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church took up the notion of the "hierarchy of truths" (*hierarchia veritatum*), as it had been introduced in the Second Vatican's Council's *Decree on Ecumenism* (1964).[5] The concept was received by many with high hopes for its implications in ecumenical dialogue. Several books and over forty articles and essays have appeared devoted to the issue; some even considered it "the most revolutionary to be found."[6] The concept is understood as an instrument of common discernment that assists the ecumenical endeavor by "more adequately assessing expressions of the truth of revelation, their interrelation, their necessity, and the possible diversity of formulations."[7] This suggests ecumenical dialogue "based upon a communion in the 'foundation' that already exists and will point the way to that ordering of priorities which makes possible gradual growth into full [visible] communion."[8] If understood this way, the *hierarchia veritatum* is indeed valuable not only for an ecumenical appreciation of Pentecostal identity but also for an evaluation of distinctive Pentecostal themes as part of that identity. A common understanding of the concept appears to be one of its primary presuppositions. The post-conciliar literature suggests, however, that the ecumenical use of the concept must begin with a proper hermeneutic of its terms.

The study document of the JWG points to the history of the church as evidence for the existence of a certain hierarchical understanding of

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[5] "The Notion of Hierarchy of Truths—An Ecumenical Interpretation. A Study Document Commissioned and Received by the Joint Working Group, 1990," in *Deepening Communion: International Ecumenical Documents with Roman Catholic Participation*, eds. William G. Rusch and J. Gros (Washington, DC: US Catholic Conference, 1998), pp. 561-571 (561-62).

[6] Cf. O. Cullmann, "Comments on the Decree on Ecumenism Enacted in the Second Vatican Council and Promulgated on N 21 1964," *The Ecumenical Review* 17 (1965), pp. 93-112 (93-94); also Edmund Schlink, "Die Hierarchie der Wahrheiten und die Einigung der Kirchen," *Kerygma und Dogma* 21 (1975), pp. 36-48.

[7] "The Notion of Hierarchy of Truths," p. 569.

[8] "The Notion of Hierarchy of Truths," p. 568.

truths.[9] The foundation of this hierarchy is the "mystery of Jesus Christ"[10] as the fundamental truth to which all other elements of the hierarchy are related in different ways.[11] This indicates "an order of importance… according to the greater or lesser proximity"[12] that doctrines have to that foundation. It will be imperative to begin with a clarification of the terminology employed, particularly of the central terms "hierarchy" and "truth," in order to facilitate the use of the concept for Pentecostalism.

A systematic treatise of the concept of "truth" as it relates to the understanding of truth in general and the relation of revelation, faith, dogma, and doctrine[13] has yet to be produced. In a postmodern context it will be increasingly difficult to work out a common, universal apparatus with which the concept of "truth" is ecumenically approached. Nevertheless, there seems to exist a certain agreement among scholars that not all truth is of the same significance.[14] A. Pangrazio, who introduced the concept at Vatican II, distinguished between truths that belong to the order of the end and those that belong to the order of the

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[9] This has been confirmed in the work of Ulrich Valeske, *Hierarchia Veritatum. Theologiegeschichtliche Hintergründe und mögliche Konsequenzen eines Hinweises im Ökumenismusdekret des II. Vatikanischen Konzils zum zwischenkirchlichen Gespräch* (Munich: Claudius Verlag, 1968), pp. 69-187. Several studies have pointed out historical precedents in Scripture and the history of Christian theology, cf. the overview by W. Henn, "The Hierarchy of Truths Twenty Years Later," *Theological Studies* 48:3 (1987), pp. 439-71.

[10] Suggestions to express the mystery have been the *Kyrios Christos* or early creeds of the scripture (1 Cor 15:3-8; Phil 2:5-11), the Apostolic Creed, the Nicean-Constantinopolitan Creed and others.

[11] "The Notion of Hierarchy of Truths," p. 564.

[12] "The Notion of Hierarchy of Truths," pp. 564 -65.

[13] Mark Lowery approached the relation of doctrine and dogma as part of the concept in "The Hierarchy of Truths and Doctrinal Particularity" (Ph. D. diss., Marquette University, 1988).

[14] Carlos Cardona emphasizes that all truths are true regardless of their hierarchical position, that they are further interrelated to such an extent that a hierarchical order may become a "suicidal vivisection" (vivisección suicida); "La 'Jerarchia de las verdades' segun el Concilio Vaticano II, y el orden de lo real," *Los movimientos teológicos secularizantes. Cuestions actuales de metodologia teológica*, ed. J. A. de Aldama (Madrid: La Editorial Católica, 1973), pp. 150-59.

means of salvation.[15] O. Cullmann distinguished between pure and impure truths,[16] Y. Congar between truths of explicit faith and truths of implicit agreement,[17] K. Rahner between truths necessary for and others not necessary for salvation,[18] P. O'Connell between an ontological reality and an epistemological order of truths,[19] W. Dietzfelbinger between central and marginal truths,[20] and E. Schlink between eternal truth and the historical expressions of truth.[21]

Several things are noteworthy in this debate. First, not all truths are considered as of the same "weight."[22] Second, the hierarchy of truths is a hermeneutical tool for the qualitative assessment of that "weight"

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[15] "The Mystery of the History of the Church," in *Council Speeches of Vatican II*, eds. H. Küng et al. (Glen Rock, NJ: Paulist, 1964), pp. 188-92. Pangrazio was criticized later for placing the ecclesiology on a different level than Christology and the doctrine of the Trinity; cf. Anton Houtepen, "*Hierarchia Veritatum* and Orthodoxy," in *Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy*, Concilium 192, eds. Johan-Baptist Metz and E. Schillebeeckx (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1987), pp. 39-52.

[16] O. Cullmann, "Einheit in der Vielfalt im Lichte der 'Hierarchie der Wahrheiten'," *Glaube im Prozeß: Christsein nach dem II. Vatikanum*, eds. E. Klinger and K. Wittstadt (Freiburg: Herder, 1984), pp. 363-64.

[17] Y. Congar, "Articles foundamentaux," *Catholicisme*, vol. 1 (Paris: Cerf, 1948), pp. 868-82.

[18] He uses the term heilsnotwendig in "Dogma. Wesen und Einteilung," *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 3rd ed. (Freiburg: Herder, 1995), III, pp. 439-40.

[19] "Hierarchy of Truths," in *The Dublin Papers on Ecumenism*, ed. P. S. de Achutegui (Manila: Ateneo University Publications, 1972), pp. 83-115 (86).

[20] "Die Hierarchie der Wahrheiten," *Die Autorität der Freiheit*, ed. J. C. Hampe, vol. 2 (Munich: Kösel Verlag, 1967), pp. 619-24; also P. Schoonenberg, "Historiciteit en interpretatie van het dogma," *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 8 (1968), pp. 293-98.

[21] E. Schlink, "Die Hierarchie der Wahrheiten und die Einigung der Kirchen," *Kerygma und Dogma* 21 (1975), p. 39.

[22] M. Lowery distinguished four views of modern scholarship that: 1) doctrines are unrelated to revealed truth; 2) doctrines are equal to revealed truths; 3) there are essential and non-essential truths; and 4) there are foundational and non-foundational truths; cf. Lowery, "The Hierarchy of Truths," pp. 3-14.

including the re-evaluation of particular doctrines.[23] Third, there is a common search for a possible "objective" rationale for the ordering of truths[24] depending on their relation to a central and fundamental truth.[25] Fourth, an adequate ordering of truths must also consider the importance of the church's ongoing penetration into the revealed mystery.[26] Finally, no element of truth must be excluded from the whole of the hierarchy.[27]

"Hierarchy today is widely under attack," as Terrence L. Nichols noted recently.[28] However, the "crucial question is not: should there be hierarchy? Rather it is: what kind of hierarchy should there be, and how should it be structured?"[29] "Hierarchy" implies both relationship and order among truths. This relationship is governed by a certain "foundation" in relation to which all other doctrines are ordered. Even though *all* "those elements which make up the Church must be kept with equal fidelity not all of them are of equal importance."[30] The *Decree on*

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[23] Cf. Schoonberg, *Historiciteit*, pp. 296-98. Schützeichel even considered it a *Gestaltungsprinzip* for all of theology; "Das hierarchische Denken in der Theologie," *Catholica* 30:1 (1976), pp. 96-111 (97).

[24] H. Mühlen suggested a transcendental, objective rationale not based on the content of truths, "Die Lehre des Vaticanum II. Über die *Hierarchia veritatum* und ihre Bedeutung für den ökumenischen Dialog," *Theologie und Glaube* 56 (1966), pp. 303-35.

[25] Cf. D. Froitzheim, "Logische Vorüberlegungen zum Thema 'Hierarchie der Wahrheiten'," *Stimmen der Zeit* 188 (1971), pp. 424-32 (424). C. Cardona seems to doubt the existence of this objective rationale insofar as truth merely signifies the intellect's adequation to reality; cf. the summary of *Los movimentos teológicos secularizantes* (Madrid: La Editorial Católica, 1973) discussed in W. Henn, "Hierarchy of Truths," p. 456.

[26] Cf. F. Jelly, "Marian Dogmas within Vatican II's Hierarchy of Truths," *Marian Studies* 27 (1976), pp. 19-40.

[27] Cf. F. Jelly, "St. Thomas' Theological Interpretation of the 'Theotokos' and Vatican II's Hierarchy of Truths of Catholic Doctrine," *Tommaso d'Aquino nel suo settimo centenario: Atti del congresso internationale,* vol. 4, *Problemi di teologia*, ed. S. Lynnet (Naples: Edizioni Domenicane Italiane, 1976), pp. 221-30 (226).

[28] Terrence L. Nichols, *That All May Be One: Hierarchy and Participation in the Church* (Collegeville, MA: Liturgical, 1997), p. 5.

[29] Nichols, *That All May Be One*, p. 7.

[30] Pangrazio, *The Mystery*, p. 191.

Ecumenism employed two terms as aids for a conceptualization of this hierarchical relationship of truths: the term "foundation" and the term "link" (*nexus*).

Any description of the foundation on a conceptual level, so the recommendation of the JWG, "should refer to the person and mystery of Jesus Christ."[31] This endeavor, however, is limited because "no one formula can fully grasp or express its reality."[32] As a result, there is no ecumenical consensus as to what precisely should be identified as that foundation,[33] and it will be one of the foremost ecumenical tasks of the coming decade to move beyond a silent agreement to an adequately voiced description. For the purpose of this study, I suggest the following description: Jesus of Nazareth, born, crucified and raised for the church, in his inseparable and co-equal relation with the Father and the Holy Spirit.[34]

Another question which also has not been adequately explored is *how* other elements of Christian faith are then related to that foundation and to each another. This lack of definition suggests that various principles of evaluating and ordering truths are, in fact, permissible.[35]

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[31] "The Notion of Hierarchy of Truths," p. 566.

[32] "The Notion of Hierarchy of Truths," pp. 565-66.

[33] Some suggest to order doctrines on the basis of the degree of their explicitness in Scripture, others based on their necessity for salvation, and again others on the basis of their psychological or sociological functioning in a person's belief system; cf. G. Tavard, "Hierarchia Veritatum: A Preliminary Investigation," *Theological Studies* 32 (1971), pp. 278-89; Henn, "Hierarchy of Truths," pp. 439-71.

[34] This definition aims to include Trinitarian, ecclesiological and soteriological aspects; cf. these aspects in *Dei Verbum* 2,4,7,15; K. Rahner, "Geheimnis," *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 2nd ed., vol. IV (Freiburg: Herder, 1960), pp. 593-97 (596); H. Mühlen, "Die Bedeutung der Differenz zwischen Zentraldogmen und Randdogmen für den ökumenischen Dialog," in *Freiheit in der Begegnung: Zwischenbilanz des Ökumenischen Dialogs*, ed. J. L. Leuba (Frankfurt: Joseph Knecht, 1969), pp. 191-227 (200-205); Schützeichel, *Das hierarchische Denken*, pp. 101-103; Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II, q. 1, a, 6 ad 1 and a, 8, c, as well as the Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed.

[35] Among the various criteria suggested are the scripture, tradition, creeds, the Fathers, liturgy, the official teaching of the church, and the *sensus fidelium*; cf. G. Thils, "Un colloque sur le theme: la 'hierarchie des vérités' de la foi," *Revue théologique de Louvain* 10:2 (1979), pp. 245-49 (247-48).

Such an understanding seems consistent with the Roman Catholic view that "almost everyone, *though in different ways*, longs for the one visible church of God".[36] The question is, however, whether there is not one particular direction from which one can best approach the concept.

This question of *directionality* seems to be most important in the discussion of the relationship of truths. The literature on the hierarchy of truths shows this common agreement: that truths are ordered in their relation to the foundation and not vice versa. This does not deny a mutual relation between that foundation and other truths, however, this agreement underlines that it is in the nature of the mystery that it cannot be grasped in its entirety, its temporality, and relationality. Any communal[37] approach to a Pentecostal "hierarchy of truths" should therefore begin not with the foundation but the elements distinctive of the Pentecostal tradition.

2. Evaluation of the Concept *Hierarchia Veritatum*

Inadequate and inconsistent use of terminology is largely responsible for the ecumenical neglect of the otherwise valuable concept of a *hierarchia veritatum*. The term "hierarchy" involves several problematic issues that are, in fact, inimical to the ecumenical spirit of the overall concept. First, "hierarchy" designates a strict and fixed system or systems of order[38] in which the inferior are subject to the superior in their relation to the highest—not the lowest or the central—element; the terms "foundation" or "center" therefore seem inadequate. Second, a hierarchy allows for an open, indefinite continuum to the lowest but only for a

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[36] *Decree on Ecumenism,* 1 (Emphases are mine). Translation taken from *Vatican Council II. The Basic Sixteen Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery (Northport, NY: Costello, 1996), pp. 499-523.

[37] Hans Urs von Balthasar has warned that it must never be an individual who determines "what is central and what is peripheral," *Truth is Symphonic: Aspects of Christian Pluralism* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1987), p. 76.

[38] Henn suggested several spatial images of which only the linear (the highpoint in a continuum) but not a circular, organic, or structural correspond to the historical and etymological reality of the term. Cf. Henn, "Hierarchy of Truths," p. 440. Several other authors have employed the latter images and preferred a redefinition of hierarchy rather than a change of terminology. Nichols suggests a "participatory model" similar to my suggestion of a *corpus*; Nichols, *That All May Be One*, pp. 14-20.

limited, definite continuum to the highest element. This does not explicitly rule out the exclusion of some elements from the "fundamental" order or even the dispensability of others from the whole system. Further, the consistent use of the hierarchical concept may lead to the application of the principle of subordination also at the very top of the structure, that is, at the "fundamental" truth. The result of this can be a hardening of the hierarchical structure to the point of ecumenical incompatibility. Third, hierarchy explains the interrelatedness of elements only in terms of their subordination but not in regard to their overall function as part of the whole. Yet, scholars that referred to the fundamental truth as the ordering principle have repeatedly called for another, second principle of interrelatedness.[39] Finally, the concept suggests a relation of different hierarchies at the top but allows for a relation of the whole only in terms of either non-integrating tolerance[40] or the complete integration, and thus disintegration, of one hierarchy into another.[41] These shortcomings suggest that the term "hierarchy" is inadequate as an expression of the overall idea. In order to protect the general concept, I therefore suggest the use of the term "body" (*corpus*)[42] as it embraces the ecumenical understanding of the concept both in Scripture and throughout Christian history.

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[39] H. Witte sees a significant move away from a single principle in *Mysterium ecclesiae* (1973), *"Alnaargelang hun band met het fundament van het christelijk geloof verschillend is": Wording en verwerling van de uitspraak over de 'hierarchie' van waarheden van Vaticanum II* (Tilburg: Tilburg University Press, 1986), p. 222. Y. Congar established a perspective of subjective and objective truth, *Diversity and Communion* (London: SCM, 1984), pp. 126-33, 212-16. O. Cullmann places the hierarchy in a larger concept of the diversity and plurality of charisms; *Einheit in der Vielfalt*, pp. 356-64.

[40] Often under use of the euphemism "unity in (reconciled) diversity."

[41] Cf. the ecumenical terminology "organic union" and "corporate union," in "Facing Unity: Models, Forms, and Phases of Catholic-Lutheran Church Fellowship," quoted in Rusch, *Deepening Communion*, pp. 20-24.

[42] Of course, we may consider the body as a form of hierarchy, cf. the following for a hierarchical view of organisms. Nichols, *That All May Be One*, pp. 14-20; Michel Polanyi, *Knowing and Being* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1969), pp. 225-39; Paul Weiss, "The Living Systems," in *Beyond Reductionism*, ed. A. Koestler and J. R. Smyth (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 3-55; R. Sheldrake, *The Presence of the Past. Morphic Resonance and the Habits of Nature* (New York: Times Books, 1988), p. 95.

The term *corpus veritatum* protects the general concept and offers several advantages. First, it implies an organic,[43] variable system over against a strict, hierarchical one. Second, the use of the terms "foundation," "core" and "center" are adequate here in that they point to the main truth as the central and foundational, that is, life-giving and sustaining element: the mystery of Christ. Third, *corpus* underlines the indispensability of all elements of the body. The use of the term in 1 Corinthians 12 further suggests that the ordering of truths may happen on a fluctuating scale that weighs expressions of truths according to their relative function at a given moment in order "that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another."[44] The term "body" allows for this kind of evaluation. Fourth, *corpus* implies a particular relationship of individual truths to both the life-giving center as well as to other elements. Finally, the scriptural ideals of marriage and *koinonia*, stressed often by Pentecostals, invite the idea of ecumenical union of different bodies of truths. With this re-formulation of the terminology involved, the basic understanding of the original concept has been preserved and purified, and it can now be applied to the question of Pentecostal identity.

3. Towards a Pentecostal *Corpus Veritatum*

Since the rise of modern classical Pentecostalism in the early twentieth century,[45] the majority of approaches to the identity of the movement in North America have focused on its most distinctive feature: the practice of speaking in tongues.[46] Efforts to assert a more characteristic identity and to contextualize the movement, however, are largely the late result of the growing charismatic movement in the 1960s,

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[43] Cf. Congar, *Diversity and Communion*, p. 151.

[44] 1 Cor 12:25.

[45] Following the entry on "Classical Pentecostalism" in *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), pp. 219-22, the term is used to distinguish early Pentecostal churches from later "Neo-" and "charismatic" Pentecostalism.

[46] This was observed already by Donald W. Dayton, "Theological Roots of Pentecostalism," *Pneuma* 2:1 (Spring 1980), pp. 3-49 (3).

which forced classical Pentecostalism to deal with its own identity.[47] The visible outcome is a large amount of literature dealing with the theological, historical, or sociological themes distinctive to the movement.[48] A unifying and ordering principle of identity, however, is still missing.

Pentecostal scholars recognized the need for an ordering principle only in the 1980s.[49] As one of the first, William Faupel approached the issue by using the theory of "complementary models."[50] He suggested that models "are symbolic representations of aspects of reality that are not directly observable to us."[51] He understood them as provisional yet helpful for providing a "more whole understanding of reality."[52] In other words, Faupel was looking for a principle that related Pentecostal doctrines to the central mystery.[53] He identified four motifs: The Full

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[47] The charismatic movement produced a large amount of literature, classical Pentecostalism began only subsequently to deal with the question of its own identity; cf. note 3.

[48] I.e., Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987); Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991); Albert G. Miller, "Pentecostalism as a Social Movement: Beyond the Theory of Deprivation," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 9 (October 1996), pp. 97-114, and Samuel Solivan *The Spirit, Pathos and Liberation: Toward an Hispanic Pentecostal Theology*, JPTSup 14 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998).

[49] Cf. notes 3 and 47. The 1980s brought a shift in understanding that perceived the early years of modern Pentecostalism no longer as the infancy but the heart of the movement. With this agrees Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*, p. 26; W. Hollenweger, "The Critical Tradition of Pentecostalism," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 1 (1992), pp. 7-17; W. Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Thought* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), p. 309; and M. W. Dempster, "The Search for Pentecostal Identity," *Pneuma* 15:1 (Spring 1993), pp. 1-8.

[50] William Faupel, "The Function of 'Models' in the Interpretation of Pentecostal Thought," *Pneuma* 2.1 (Spring 1980), pp. 51-71.

[51] Faupel, "The Function of 'Models'," p. 70.

[52] Faupel, The Function of 'Models'," p. 70.

[53] Others have followed; H. Cox suggested a re-formulation of the terms "experience" and "Spirit," cf. *Fire from Heaven* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1995), pp. 300-21. Solivan recently suggested the concept of *orthopathos* as the

Gospel, the Latter Rain, the Apostolic Faith, and Pentecostal[54]—with particular emphasis on such distinctive themes as divine healing, miracles, Spirit baptism, and the Second Coming of Christ. Faupel's search for "a symbolic representation" of the mystery contained, unintentionally as it may have been, sacramental undertones that remained unrecognized.

In 1987, Donald W. Dayton pointed to a similar pattern to illuminate the theological roots of Pentecostalism: salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit, divine healing; and the return of Christ.[55] Anti-Pentecostal literature[56] seems to confirm the weight of these four themes. More recently, similar Pentecostal themes were even classified as an ecumenical challenge.[57] Dayton suggests that these "themes are well-nigh universal within the movement, appearing…in all branches and varieties of Pentecostalism" and "could also be traced outside classical Pentecostalism in the Charismatic movement or 'neo-Pentecostalism' and perhaps in third-world manifestations."[58] What is the place of these themes in a Pentecostal *corpus veritatum*? The attempt to evaluate these themes merely with the category of religious experience will at this time allow only for a limited understanding of their significance. However, if we also examine the position they occupy in Pentecostal teaching and worship, we will be able to more fully appreciate the role of these themes within a Pentecostal body of truths.

The four themes must be understood as only representative of a much wider and more complex system of Pentecostal doctrines. Dayton's

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ordering principle to relate orthodoxy and orthopraxy, cf. Solivan, *The Spirit*, pp. 70-92.

[54] These are the titles applied to the movement by early Pentecostals; Faupel, "The Function of 'Models'," p. 52.

[55] Dayton, *Theological Roots*, pp. 21-22; cf. also his article in *Pneuma* 4.

[56] Cf. Horace S. Ward, Jr., "The Anti-Pentecostal Argument," in *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins*, ed. V. Synan (Plainfield, NJ: Logos, 1975), pp. 99-122; and A. Bittlinger, *Papst und Pfingstler: Der römischpfingstliche Dialog und seine ökumenische Relevanz* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1978), pp. 10-16.

[57] J. Moltmann and K.-J. Kuschel, eds., *Pentecostal Movements as an Ecumenical Challenge*, Concilium 1996/3 (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996) treats Spirit baptism, healing, tongues, prophecy, and praying in the Spirit, and a new congregationalism.

[58] Dayton, *Theological Roots* (1987), pp. 21-22, 31 n. 22.

emphasis was on the theological roots of the movement. Pentecostalism was subsequently forced to reassess its identity and other themes were emphasized in their own right.[59] Recently, Harvey Cox pointed out several interrelated positive and negative characteristics of the movement;[60] Lamar Vest has suggested eight distinctives;[61] Cheryl Bridges Johns has outlined five elements of a mature Pentecostalism;[62] Cecil Robeck suggested three features.[63] The answer to the question, "Who in the world are Pentecostals?" seems to lie in a definition of these distinctive elements. However, Pentecostals must also consider the question whether that which is *distinctive* to Pentecostalism is also *central* to the movement.[64]

The four-fold pattern allows us to approach Pentecostal identity on a substantial level. An early, clear expression of the Pentecostal themes is found in the writings of Aimee S. McPherson, who summarized them as follows: "Jesus saves us according to John 3:16. He baptizes us with the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4. He heals our bodies according to James 5:14-15. And Jesus is coming again to receive us unto Himself according to 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17."[65] This account places the four themes in a threefold order. First, the center is the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth. Second, the themes are placed distinct from this center at a certain distance. They are "not a goal to be reached…but a door

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[59] Cf. Faupel, *Everlasting Gospel*, pp. 228-309; Additional themes were suggested by Stanley H. Frodsham, *With Signs Following* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1946); also Cox, *Fire from Heaven*, pp. 81-160.

[60] "Personal Reflections on Pentecostalism," *Pneuma* 15:1 (Spring 1993), pp. 29-34.

[61] *Spiritual Balance: Reclaiming the Promise* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway, 1994), pp. 35-36

[62] "The Adolescence of Pentecostalism," pp. 10-17.

[63] "Taking Stock of Pentecostalism: The Personal Reflections of a Retiring Editor," *Pneuma* 15:1 (Spring 1993), pp. 35-60.

[64] D. Lyle Dabney, for example, suggests that not the fourfold theme but pneumatology as such is central to Pentecostalism; "Saul's Armor: The Problem and the Promise of Pentecostal Theology Today" (forthcoming).

[65] Raymond L. Cox, ed., *The Four-Square Gospel* (Los Angeles: Foursquare Publications, 1969), p. 9.

[to]…a greater fullness of life in the Spirit."[66] Third, the themes are related to the center through a specific link: the gospel. Scripture occupies an intermediate position between the center and the four distinctive elements of Pentecostalism. The question is in what way the scriptures relate the four themes to the central mystery.

McPherson's summary suggests that the scriptures relate the four elements of Pentecostal experience to the central mystery through the activity of the center; in other words, through the *subjectivity* of the mystery of Christ and the *objectivity* of the distinctive Pentecostal experiences. This means, for example, that divine healing receives its position in a Pentecostal *corpus veritatum* through the subjectivity of the mystery of Christ rather than its own, inherent and relative degree of power, effectiveness, or frequency. In other words, the *directionality* is from Christ to the Pentecostal themes and not vice versa. However, Pentecostals determine the significance of the four themes still generally by their manifestations, or modes of temporality, that is, their directionality to Christ.

In 1994 Ralph Del Colle explored this directionality. As one example of the four-fold pattern, he suggested that "Spirit-Baptism incorporates the various modes of temporality in the divine experience."[67] He further suggests a certain incongruity: "The eternality of God as timelessness… creates and incorporates in the divine life the variable possibilities of temporality in the created order" which, however, "*we* can…only partially realize."[68] In other words, the human experience is limited in its temporal perception of the divine; the directionality, I want to say, is opposite to that of a *corpus veritatum.* One result of this reversal is a certain disorder in the human perception and association (*Zuordnung*) of the divine mystery—a lack of "confirmation" of the divine order of truth in the temporality of human life, resulting in an ever-widening gap

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[66] "A Proposed Description of the Nature and Purpose of a Dialogue between a Group of Pentecostals and Roman Catholics under the Sponsorship of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity" (two unpublished paper, Rome, September 3), quoted in Paul D. Lee, "Pneumatological Ecclesiology in the Roman Catholic – Pentecostal Dialogue: A Catholic Reading of the Third Quinquennium (1985-1989)" (Ph.D. diss., Pontificiam Universitatem S. Thomae, Rome, 1994), p. 38.

[67] "Trinity and Temporality: A Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspective," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 8 (1996), pp. 99-113.

[68] Del Colle, *Trinity and Temporality*, p. 112 (emphases not mine).

between the human experience of the divine temporality and the eternality of the divine mystery. The gap is particularly apparent to non-Pentecostals, that is, those who have not had a "Pentecostal experience." How then can Pentecostalism communicate its central themes? How can their meaningfulness be preserved for future generations, in other words, how can we prevent a Pentecostal amnesia?

In 1993, Frank Macchia sought to establish the relation between human experience and the divine through a sacramental interpretation of *glossolalia*.[69] Like others before him,[70] Macchia tried to solve the problem by re-interpreting the temporal aspects of the Pentecostal experience and, so to speak, reversing the directionality in the *corpus veritatum.* Paul Tillich had emphasized that the relation between the human and the divine is realized from the divine initiative not from the human.[71] In agreement with Karl Rahner, this meant that through sacramental signification, the divine presence is realized in the human temporality.[72] Thus Macchia concludes that the "sacraments are understood now as contexts for a dynamic and personal divine/human encounter."[73] However, if sacramental expression is instrumental for this encounter, in which expression and how is encounter possible?[74] In other words, can we understand the sacraments as the ordering principle of a Pentecostal *corpus veritatum*?

Throughout the modern Pentecostal-Roman Catholic dialogue we find agreement on the importance of the sacraments. Pentecostals

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[69] "Tongues as a Sign: Towards a Sacramental Understanding of Pentecostal Experience," *Pneuma* 15:1 (Spring 1993), pp. 61-76.

[70] E.g., Simon Tugwell, "The Speech-Giving Spirit, A Dialogue with 'Tongues'," in *New Heaven? New Earth?* eds. Tugwell et al. (Springfield, IL: Templegate, 1976), pp. 119-59 (151); William Samarin, *Tongues of Men and Angels* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), p. 232.

[71] *The Protestant Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), pp. 94-112.

[72] *Theological Investigations*, vol. 5, *The Later Writings*, trans. K. H. Kruger (New York: Seabury, 1982), pp. 221-52.

[73] Macchia, "Tongues as a Sign," p. 71.

[74] Some suggestions were made by C. and J. Johns, "Yielding to the Spirit," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 1 (October 1992), pp. 109-32.

emphasize the role of the Eucharist[75] and of baptism[76] in the life of the Church. Steve Land even speaks of the Eucharist as an occasion in worship to be converted, healed, sanctified and filled with the Spirit,[77] that is, a manifestation of all four Pentecostal themes. Others have noted the importance of the footwashing,[78] and the role of the laying on of hands in divine healing.[79] Sacraments are, in fact, a temporal manifestation of the very mystery[80] of Christ. For some Pentecostals they are a real sign "for a real journey with a real destination"[81]—a directionality from the human experience to the divine mystery. Many Pentecostals, however, are uncomfortable with controlled liturgical forms[82] and most do not derive their ecclesial identity from the

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[75] "Final Report of the Dialogue between the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity of the Roman Catholic Church and Some Classical Pentecostals 1977-1982," quoted in Rusch, *Deepening Communion*, pp. 379-97.

[76] "Perspectives on Koinonia 1989," pp. 39-69, quoted in Rusch, *Deepening Communion,* pp. 406-11; "Final Report of the Dialogue between the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity of the Roman Catholic Church and Leaders of Some Pentecostal Churches and Participants in the Charismatic Movement within Protestants and Anglican Churches 1972-1976," quoted in Rusch, *Deepening Communion*, pp. 367-78.

[77] *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), pp. 115-16.

[78] Cf. John Christopher Thomas, *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), pp. 172-89.

[79] Steven J. Land, "A Living Faith: Divine Healing," *Ministry Now Profiles* 2:4 (December 1997), pp. 14-15.

[80] The word sacrament is the Latin rendering of the Greek *mustêrion*; cf. Eph 1:9; 3:2-3; Col 1:26; 1 Tim 3:16. Cf. also "The Word of Life: Methodist-Roman Catholic Dialogue, Sixth Series (1991-1996)," quoted in Rusch, *Deepening Communion*, pp. 283-320, which states, "the sacraments of the church may be considered as particular instances of the divine mystery."

[81] Steven J. Land, "A Living Faith: The Lord's Supper and Washing Feet," *Ministry Now Profiles* 2:5 (January 1998), pp. 10-11.

[82] W. Hollenweger, *Enthusiastisches Christentum: Die Pfingstbewegung in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Zurich: Zwingli Verlag, 1969), p. 434.

celebration of the sacraments.[83] What then is their significance for Pentecostal identity?

The New Testament portrays sacramental rituals as an act of remembrance.[84] Christ instructs us, "Do this in remembrance of me." In the Old Testament we are reminded of the deeds of God in the earlier covenant.[85] The Jewish liturgy of the Passover even suggests that "in every generation each is obliged to see herself or himself as one who has come out of Egypt."[86] However,

> [m]emory, as in biblical usage, is more than a recalling to mind of the past. It is the work of the Holy Spirit linking the past with the present and maintaining the memory of that on which everything depends…. Through the Spirit, therefore, the power of what is remembered is made present afresh, and succeeding generations appropriate the event commemorated.[87]

The past experience of the divine mystery becomes a present reality in the celebration of God's people. The past is not only remembered, it is kept alive and infused with new meaning.[88] The sacraments offer Pentecostals what they have called for: to regard the historical roots of the movement no longer as the infancy but as the heart of the movement. In celebrating the sacraments, Pentecostals can remember and relive the work of God as it is recorded in God's word and the history of the

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[83] Lee, "Pneumatological Ecclesiology," p. 247. "For Pentecostals, the central element of worship is the preaching of the word…of secondary importance are participation in baptism and the Lord's Supper." See also "Perspectives on Koinonia," quoted in Rusch, *Deepening Communion*, p. 416.

[84] Cf. Luke 22:19; 1 Cor 11:24-25.

[85] Cf. Exod 13:8-10, 14-16; Deut 6:20-25; 29:9-14.

[86] m. Pesah, X, 5.

[87] "The Church as Communion in Christ: Second Report from the International Commission for Dialogue between the Disciples of Christ and the Roman Catholic Church," quoted in Rusch, *Deepening Communion*, pp. 323-39.

[88] For the sacraments as instituting mediation of identity, cf. Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, trans. Patrick Madigan and M. Beaumont (Collegedale, MN: Liturgical, 1995), pp. 409-46.

Pentecostal people.[89] The sacraments can provide structure, clarity, and expression[90] to the central themes of Pentecostalism. This leads to my conclusion.

The concept of a *corpus veritatum* makes several important contributions to Pentecostal identity. First, it calls on Pentecostals to work out more precisely the distinctive features of the movement in order to more clearly express and present Pentecostalism. Second, the distinctive themes of Pentecostalism are essential for the life of the movement, yet Pentecostal identity reaches beyond the mere Pentecostal experience; the themes must be expressed and preserved in their right relationship to the foundation of Christian faith. Third, Pentecostal identity does not have to be created; it already exists. Pentecostals need no reinterpretation of the past but a re-evaluation of the present in light of the past. This re-evaluation is an act of remembrance (*anamnêsis*)[91] that necessitates a *corpus sacramentorum* corresponding to the *corpus veritatum*. Pentecostals will have to re-evaluate the instrumental role of sacraments for a theological expression of Pentecostal identity. Sacraments, by the power of the Holy Spirit, "bring into our lives the life-giving action"[92] of the mystery of Christ, and provide Pentecostals with the means to establish and preserve the Pentecostal essence and thus to theologically formulate and strengthen a global Pentecostal identity. The

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[89] This concerns less the locutionary dimension—their objectivity—than the illocutionary dimension—it makes possible "Pentecostal" acts that are carried on by sons and daughters. Cf. for this aspect Wolfgang Vondey, "Pentecostal Identity and Christian Discipleship," *Cyberjournal of Pentecostal-Charismatic Research* [http://www.pctii.org/cyberj/cyber6.html] 6 (1999). The same language is also employed with regard to sacramental theology by Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbole et Sacrament: Un relecture sacramentelle de l'existence chrétienne* (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1987), pp. 132-35.

[90] The role of sacraments for Christian identity in a postmodern context was also the theme of the recent 2nd International Leuven Encounters in Systematic Theology Conference, November 3-6, 1999, Leuven, Belgium.

[91] This understanding can be found in the 1982 document of the Joint International Commission between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, "The Mystery of the Church and the Eucharist in the Light of the Mystery of the Holy Trinity," *One in Christ* 19:2 (1983), pp. 188-97.

[92] For this phrase, see "Towards a Statement of the Church: Methodist-Roman Catholic Dialogue, Fourth Series (1982-1986)," quoted in Rusch, *Deepening Communion*, pp. 235-539.

Spirit makes God visible and audible in the memorial of the past of the community were this memory is kept alive. The present, then, will be no longer only a reliving of the past—it will be the beginning of everything.