

BOOK REVIEW

Pentecostalism in Context: Essays in Honor of William W. Menzies, eds. Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies. JPTSup. 11. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997. Pp. 373. \$19.95. Paper.

With the spiritual revival sweeping through Pentecostal circles throughout the world, another revival is occurring in these same circles--scholarly pursuit. For years Pentecostalism has been stigmatized by tired old cliches such as "an experience in search of a theology." Happily, over the past few decades we have caught, with increasing detail, glimpses of the beautiful union between Pentecostalism and scholarship.

In honor of his sixty-fifth birthday, the contributors to this Festschrift offered this collection of essays to William W. Menzies. The volume is an appropriate tribute to one who has personified both Pentecostalism and scholarship in all their splendor. Foremost as a Christian and as a scholar, Dr. Menzies' influence upon modern day Pentecostal thinkers cannot be underestimated.

As with any collection of essays, giving a detailed analysis of each within the context of a review such as this is impossible. Therefore, I will only note the subject matter of each essay with an occasional reference to my own particular interests, leaving the detailed analysis to the potential readers. After a retrospective bibliography of Dr. Menzies' works by his son Glen and a biographical reflection offered by Stanley M. Horton, the volume is broken into three sections, "The Biblical Context," "The Theological Context," and "The Missiological Context."

Part one consists of four essays. Gordon D. Fee offers a provocative look at Paul's theology of Glossolalia providing needed and insightful remarks on the public discourse of glossolalia and recasting the traditional "message in tongues" as words about God, not from God. This is essential reading for all Pentecostal pastors and teachers. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. discusses the important role that the Holy Spirit played in the regenerative experiences of all pre-Calvary believers. Arguing from the perspective of the strong unity between the Old and New Testaments, Kaiser emphasizes it is the same Spirit in the Old Testament that operates in the New Testament. Robert P. Menzies, another son of the honoree, explores the relationship between Spirit-baptism and spiritual gifts. Is Spirit baptism a prerequisite to the functioning of the gifts? After exploring various positions and the biblical evidence Menzies concludes that Spirit-baptism is the "gateway" to a special cluster of prophetic type gifts associated with special revelation and inspired speech. Roger Stronstad's essay uses Luke-Acts to build a case for the prophethood of all believers. Stronstad emphasizes the unifying aspects of Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal and bemoans the individualistic and sensationalistic elements of all too much contemporary "prophecy."

In Part Two Simon Chan wrestles with the topic of tongues as the initial evidence of Spirit-baptism. To this discussion Chan proposes for further exploration that: 1) we rethink the definition of Spirit-baptism beyond that of exclusively "power for service," and 2) we make clearer the distinction between tongues as evidence and tongues as prayer. Peter D. Hocken's essay reflects upon the relationship between Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism. He proposes that the resources and wisdom of the whole Christian tradition are necessary for a theology that fully appreciates the richness of the Holy Spirit. Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. provides a very intriguing historical overview of the relationship between the American Assemblies of God and ecumenism. Robeck leaves his reader to speculate with him, "what if" the Assemblies of God had not withdrawn from the ecumenical movement and, instead, exerted its Pentecostal influence and witness. Russell P. Spittler provides a fine contribution to this volume by way of a bibliographic essay linking spirituality with New Testament studies. The contents provide students, pastors and scholars alike with many essential entries to their reading lists. Benjamin Sun's essay argues that the Holy Spirit is the missing key to the implementation of the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer. Sun's thesis is that the laity is the essential component to the dynamic growth and development of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Del Tarr addresses the Pentecostal academy and admonishes Pentecostal academicians to practice their Pentecostal theology and allow the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to be blatantly evident in the classroom and in their own lives. Miroslav Volf's essay probes the relationship between the Gospel and culture. His premise is that the Christian must change the culture as one who is inside and not as an outsider looking in.

In Part Three Li Yue Hong investigates the correlation between the rapid acceptance of Christianity and the breakdown of Confucianism in China. Li contends that Confucianism's foundation has been eroded by the many waves of cultural and political movements, while Christianity has miraculously been spared public hostility. Julie Ma compares the worldviews of the animistic Kankana-ey tribe of the Philippines and that of twentieth century Pentecostals. Ma suggests that the shared consciousness of the spiritual world can give Pentecostals an inroad to the Kankana-ey. Yet, this common ground must be solidified with the truth claims which only Christianity can provide. Wonsuk Ma's essay considers the similarities between the Spirit of God upon the ancient Israelite leaders and the Igorot mountain tribes of the Philippines. In both cases the Spirit's function is authentication and empowerment. Gary B. McGee provides a historical look at Pentecostal missions strategy examining the role of signs and wonders as important components in the strategies of world missions. Cornelis van der Laan concludes the volume by recounting the important work in China of Elize Scharten and the Dutch Pentecostal Missionary Society.

Readers of this work may find themselves enriched on many different fronts. Most significant for this reviewer were the following points: 1) it is refreshing and exciting to see the fire level of Pentecostal scholarships by younger, international scholars along with essays by better known, established names in Pentecostal studies; 2) the global impact of the Pentecostal message, both historic and present serves as an important inspiration for all those in the ministry regardless what level, pastors, missionaries,

teachers; and 3) a close reading of the biblical and theological essays reveals that while much has been accomplished in the unification of scholarship and Pentecostalism, a number of unresolved issues still preclude the clear and precise articulation of a singular Pentecostal theology.

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