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Theological Education between the West and the "Rest": A Reverse "Reverse Missionary" and Pentecost Perspective

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Introduction

Pentecostal theological education is gradually coming into its own, not the least since its seminaries in North America are now in their second generation and accredited at the highest levels. Also, a full range of other institutions of theological education (Bible institutes, colleges, universities, and theological schools) is emerging outside of the Euro-American West and across the Majority World,[1] Yet the nature of globalization in a post-Enlightenment, post-Christendom, and post-colonial world means that, inevitably, higher educational institutions of all sorts in the Global South (theological schools included) are patterned after those in the West; and this applies also to schools within the pentecostal orbit. In some respects, such is unavoidable not only because many of these schools depend on mission funding that originates in the West, but also because Pentecostals now more than ever realize that they are a part of a worldwide church and that those trained in its theological institutions will serve within the movement and within other churches in the universal body of Christ, including the western hemisphere. Yet the question is still: Will pentecostal theological education around the world remain Euro-American-centric now well into the second pentecostal century?

In this essay, I wish to propose a Pentecost approach to theological education that will both serve the needs of pentecostal churches around

[1]For overviews, see the three chapters by Wonsuk Ma (focus on Asia), Daniel Chiquete (Latin America), and Cephas Omenyo (Africa) in the 35th section of Dietrich Werner, et al., eds., *Handbook of Theological Education in World Christianity: Theological Perspectives, Ecumenical Trends, Regional Surveys* (Oxford: Regnum, 2010), 729-49.

the world and engage with the church ecumenical as well.[2] To appreciate this proposal, however, we begin by situating the reigning western paradigm for theological education that continues to norm fledgling efforts elsewhere, then sketch the overall contours of our Pentecost model, and lastly explicate some of the implications of this vision for pentecostal theological institutions, especially in the Majority World. Our goal in such a short piece cannot be exhaustive, but it can serve as a springboard for ongoing reflection and discussion.

One caveat, however, needs to be registered: that being my own theological education and institutional location in the West. Although I have visited pentecostal schools and seminaries in every continent, my experience and perspective is predominantly western. Yes, I was born in Malaysia to Assemblies of God pastors who migrated to the United States when I was age ten to minister among Chinese speaking immigrants to Northern California; thus, overnight, I became an Assemblies of God missionary kid.[3] Yet all of my theological schooling and formation has been in North America, and I have only taught (in three different theological institutions) in this context.[4] Hence, I can claim from this space no more than what I am calling 'a reverse-reverse missionary perspective'. That denotes I am applying what missiologists call my reverse missionary experience to thinking about what it means

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[2]Note how in this essay *pentecostal* (capitalized when used as part of a name or to refer to a group of persons, but not when used adjectivally) always qualifies the modern group of churches with roots, at least in part, in the Azusa Street revival in the early twentieth century, while what I call *Pentecost*, although informed by my background, experience, and ministerial affiliation with the modern ecclesial movement, more intentionally connects to the narrative of Acts chapter 2 that belongs to the church catholic in order to propose a theological logic that could be embraced by any follower of Jesus Christ; this latter notion will be elaborated upon later even as interested readers can explore further where I have developed this distinction in other articles including, "The *Missio Spiritus* in a Pluralistic World: A Pentecost Approach to Dialogue, Hospitality, and Sanctuary," *Pittsburgh Theological Journal* 9 (Autumn 2018): 11-48 [at https://www.pts.edu/UserFiles/File/resources/Journal%202018.pdf], and "The Spirit Poured Out: A (Pentecostal) Perspective after Pentecost," in Guido Vergauwen, o.p., and Andreas Steinbruber, eds., *Veni, Sancte Spiritus! Theologiesche Beiträge zue Sendung des Geistes/Contributions thélogiques à la mission de l'Esprit/Theological Contributions to the Mission of the Spirit – Festschrift für Barbara Hallensleben zum 60. Geburtstag*, Studia Oecumenica Friburgensia 85, Studienzentrum für Glaube und Gesellschaft 7 (Münster, Germany: Aschendorff-Verlag, 2018), 198-210.

[3]See how my own "missionary journey" has been generative for theological and missiological reflection: Yong, "From Every Tribe, Language, People, and Nation: Diaspora, Hybridity, and the Coming Reign of God," in Chandler H. Im and Amos Yong, eds., *Global Diasporas and Mission*, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series 23 (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books International, 2014), 253-61.

[4]My prior autobiographical reflections include "The Spirit, Vocation, and the Life of the Mind: A Pentecostal Testimony," in Steven M. Fettke and Robby Waddell, eds., *Pentecostals in the Academy: Testimonies of Call* (Cleveland, Tenn.: CPT Press, 2012), 203-20.

for someone like myself to re-imagine theological education outside the West, both in relationship with and to the West on the one hand, but also after the West on the other. My wager is that a Pentecost perspective can facilitate such a reverse-reverse, both-and, and with-after vision for theological education in the present global context.

Contemporary Theological Education: Problems and Prospects

In order to appreciate the Pentecost proposal that I will develop later, it might be helpful to comprehend more specifically the main lines of theological education today, in particular its developments in the West.[5] We shall see that (like it or not) its western forms have been exported from one perspective or imported from other perspectives (whether consciously or unconsciously or for whatever reasons) by the emerging forms of theological education in the Global South. Further, precisely because theological education in the West is undergoing upheavals due to pressures on higher education and other factors, these can only be understood better given a deeper socio-historical context. Therefore, let us ask questions regarding the *who*, the *what* and *how*, and the *why* of this enterprise.

Theological Education: Who It's For

In North America a few decades ago, the response to this question was more or less clear. Theological education was for those who sought to prepare themselves for vocational ministry in churches. The Master of Divinity was the central degree that equipped and certified individuals for professional ministry; and it was required by clergy at least in the mainline Protestant denominations, which constituted the bulk of the Christian demographic in the United States. So, what happens when such groups of churches begin declining both in membership and in adherents[6] Further, what transpires when the prerequisite undergraduate degree either is perceived as less worthwhile of pursuit or if such programs of study are less accessible to those who aspire to a ministerial vocation? What unfolds when the nature of ministry itself shifts so that its responsibility rests increasingly on ordinary laypersons rather than on an

[5]The definitive history so far is the three-volume work by Glenn Thomas Miller: *Piety and Intellect: The Aims and Purposes of Ante-Bellum Theological Education* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1990); *Piety and Profession: American Protestant Theological Education, 1870-1970* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007); and *Piety and Plurality: Theological Education since 1960* (Eugene: Cascade, 2014).

[6]These and related questions have plagued theological education now for over two decades; see John H. Leith, *Crisis in the Church: The Plight of Theological Education* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997).

educated and elite group of ecclesial participants? Or what happens when forms of the church grow (e.g., pentecostal movements) that have historically not relied on credentialing ministers in post-graduate courses of study? The answers to these questions combine to announce the diminishing prestige or attractiveness of theological education, at least in its traditional instantiation.

Yet while certain Protestant groups are waning, other expressions of the church, including pentecostal ones, are thriving (at least numerically) both in North America and around the world. Outside of the West there is a shortage of ministers and, thus, a great need for ministerial training that cannot wait for potential candidates to first complete an undergraduate degree. On the flip side, even though tertiary educational endeavors are increasingly under strain, the desire for learning will continue as long as human beings are around. And precisely because the laity is being engaged in ministry and mission (albeit in increasingly unrecognizable manifestations), there may be more persons looking for theological education even if not in traditional seminaries. This combination of factors may mean that there's a future for theological education at varied levels, although perhaps such might be desirable and workable only for those who can re-vision its character for the church's witness to the world in a new era.

Theological Education: What It is and How It's Accomplished

In its classical iteration, especially in the North American context, the curriculum was organized quadratically: biblical studies, historical studies, theology proper, and practical ministry. The first three were more theoretical and the last was more applied.[7] Within the seminary framework, students came for three years of residential study, with the practicum in the final year forming a bridge designed to enable return to the parish community. Unfortunately, such a curricular division from the nineteenth century does not prepare students today to serve effectively in real-life contexts in changing times; and the seclusion of residential seminary life for one or more years to begin with has also severed rather than nurtured ecclesial connections and relationships. Especially in non-western cultures, the cleavage between theory and praxis is not

[7]The immediately preceding iteration was the triadic categorization of philosophical, historical, and practical studies, with the middle segment delineated biblically, historically, and dogmatically; see Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline on the Study of Theology*, trans. Terrence N. Tice (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966).

presumed, and such an organization of the curriculum will have its limitations.[8]

Changes in society at large, especially those changes prompted by the electronic and telecommunicative revolution of our lifetime, are further transforming the way we learn. Such convulsions, while drastic in some respects, are also expanding and disseminating knowledge. Even if some form of the residential experience might be retained (including through intensive modules that gather together students for face-to-face interactions and learning experiences), the pedagogy of adult education – *andragogy*, more precisely – is being revolutionized. It is true that in some regions of the Majority World the lack of access to education and underdeveloped technological infrastructures inhibit many from participating in such digitally mediated forms of education, theological and otherwise. Nevertheless, to the degree that communicative technologies enable learners to begin or continue studies without having to relocate to a residential campus, to that same degree theological learners around the world will take advantage of such media to further their studies from where they are at.[9]

On the flip side, if the message and the medium are thoroughly intertwined (even if not reducible to each other), then theological content is also being repackaged. It is not that the four traditional theological disciplines will disappear anytime soon, but they are less silo-ed now than before, and will be even more integrated going forward. Further, the interrelated character of these historic arenas of study will extend beyond the explicitly theological horizon to interact with and engage with other fields of inquiry in a universe of knowledge that is growing through cross-cultural contact and is more intensely interdisciplinary in ways unanticipated a generation ago. Thus, the *what* and the *how* of theological education that survives into the next decades will be both continuous and discontinuous with what we have inherited from our ancestors.

Theological Education: Why It's in Flux and What It's For

All of the preceding then also alerts us to the reality that theological education is in flux. So, why? Any answer to this query will surely dovetail with responses to the prior questions; but in this context, the

[8]Timothy Reagan, *Non-Western Educational Traditions: Local Approaches to Thought and Practice*, 4th ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 2018).

[9]An initial mapping of some of the issues is in my essay, "Incarnation, Pentecostal, and Virtual Spiritual Formation: Renewing Theological Education in Global Context," in Teresa Chai, ed., *A Theology of the Spirit in Doctrine and Demonstration: Essays in Honor of Wonsuk and Julie Ma* (Baguio City, Philippines: Asia Pacific Theological Seminary Press, 2014), 27-38.

'why' question concerns not just the practicality of the enterprise, but also its fiscal sustainability. If the goals and objectives of theological education in the previous time were dictated by the need to certify professional clergy, then its scope in the present moment are much wider and will be further expanded in ways constrained only by the human imagination. In actuality, insofar as human learning is motivated by the need to know and by curiosity (and these are often interrelated rather than disparate), then people will embrace the opportunities provided by theological education to the extent that such is accessible. Accessibility in a digital and globalizing world knows no geographic boundaries, so that the issue here involves affordability. If theological education were accessible and affordable, then there surely be more and more opportunities to learn with new learners, save the following caveat.

Here we connect back to what might be called the mission of theological education, which converges with but also extends from what up to now has been called missiology (the so-called science of Christian mission).[10] What I mean here is that, to the degree members of the church are engaged in and committed to discipleship and its missional implications and applications, to that same degree they will seek theological education that supports those endeavors. Hence theological education that is neither missiological (the older term) nor missional (the more contemporary nomenclature) will be of less relevance.

I need to be clear, though, that this does not mean returning to older notions of mission, particularly not those generated from out of the colonial past.[11] But if mission in understood in terms related to what sustains and enables the church in its life and work (however differentiated from its prior forms not only in the West but around the world), then theological education that is mission-related in that sense will retain a dynamic and ever-expanding audience. Further, if mission is also comprehended as empowering Global South Christians to bear effective witness not only to their neighbors, but also to their fellow human beings in the northern and western parts of the globe, then such a missional-theological education will be relevant transnationally and in every Majority World context. But then it also needs to be said that,

[10]Thirty years ago, the question of *mission* had already been raised in terms of the theological education endeavor: Max L. Stackhouse, *Apologia: Contextualization, Globalization, and Mission in Theological Education* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988); see also Robert Banks, *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), and Bernhard Ott, *Beyond Fragmentation: Integrating Mission and Theological Education* (Carlisle, UK: Regnum, 2001).

[11]See Michael W. Stroope, *Transcending Mission: Eclipse of a Modern Tradition* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017).

without this missional dimension, theological education will lack orientation and cease to inspire, in which case it will lapse into obscurity, if not eventually disappear.

Renewing Theological Education: After Pentecost

It is not that theological education has remained only western or that there have not been developments in thinking about and constructing theological education outside of the western orbit.[12] But as our topic is pentecostal theological education, I want to suggest that our response is and ought to be explicitly both pentecostal and theological rather than either generically ecumenical or only practical. More particularly, I urge that we seek to construct our pentecostal and theological proposal from and at its foundations. In fact, to raise the teleological and missional/missiological, question is also to get to the heart of theological education. It is for this reason that the major thesis presented here concerns cultivating a fresh experience of Pentecost, one that empowers the mission of the church. So, *what does this mean, what does this not mean, and what does this look like?*

Fresh Experience of Pentecost: What It Means

Some might say that to talk about Pentecost in relationship to theological education is to mix apples (a biblical theme or motif) and oranges (the task of theological formation and learning). My response is that, if education is to be theological, the latter involves not just the content of what is taught but also the engine (so to speak) that drives the efforts. The first part of my response is that, whatever else the Pentecost account provides, at the least it charts the major missional pathways for Christian mission. The Day-of-Pentecost narrative initiates an expansive and cosmic vision: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).[13] In other words, the work of the Spirit not just inspires, but also enables and emboldens the messianic witness of the church.[14]

My point is that a theological education that serves the church ought to facilitate participation in this divine mission. The Day-of-Pentecost

[12]For the state of the question on global theological education, see the previously referred to Werner, et al., eds., *Handbook of Theological Education in World Christianity*, and the related regional handbooks focused on Asia and Africa in its wake.

[13]Unless otherwise noted, all scriptural quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

[14]See my book, *The Missiological Spirit: Christian Mission Theology for the Third Millennium Global Context* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014).

read, according to this register, therefore launches not just an ecclesial body, but also (this essay wagers) the means and mechanisms of its formation, sustenance, perpetuation, and development. The earliest messianic believers (we are told) engaged in theological formation and education under the aegis of the Spirit. As Luke recorded, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship . . ." (Acts 2:42a). By implication and extension, Pentecost empowers and enables teaching but also learning, which, in turn, supports and enhances the Christian mission. "And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved" (Acts 2:42b).

Thus, the missiological and the pentecostal go together, and they remain tethered in our proposal for thinking about theological education. It may be recalled that three decades ago a book was published titled *The Search for God at Harvard* and was followed up soon after by the pronouncement that God was indeed found there.[15] Well, it now appears that God is present in the academy and within Christian higher education, a Christ-centered approach and commitment that's well pronounced, especially in institutions affiliated with the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. From a pentecostal perspective, then, the question is begged: Where is the Holy Spirit in academia generally and in the realm of theological education particularly? Thus, our suggestion is a more robust theological and pneumatological consideration, for which task we resort to the Pentecost account.

Fresh Experience of Pentecost: What It Doesn't Mean

Perhaps the most important thing to note at this point is that, while such a missional vision is all-embracing, according to its scriptural delineations it is neither parochial nor hegemonic or totalizing. So, what does it mean to secure theological education on a foundation featuring centrally the Day-of-Pentecost narrative while also not advocating any kind of parochial pentecostal version? I grant that my own ecclesial commitments are pentecostal in the sense that they have been shaped by my growing up within and ongoing service of the Assemblies of God (a classical pentecostal denomination or church). In that sense, there is no denying that the theological platform I am attempting to construct has been influenced by the modern pentecostal movement. Ironically, though, modern pentecostal churches have a deep streak of anti-

[15]See Ari L. Goldman, *The Search for God at Harvard* (New York: Times, 1991), and Kelly Monroe, ed., *Finding God at Harvard: Spiritual Journeys of Thinking Christians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997).

intellectualism embedded within the tradition; and this has hindered not just theological education but also higher education in general.[16]

While things are changing slowly precisely for this reason, I am advocating not a pentecostal theology of higher education but a Pentecost-perspective. Some Pentecostals believe that, according to the movement's sensibilities, the only way to do theological education is to have church, to experience the move of the Spirit in all of the quintessentially pentecostal ways, and to lay hands on then send out those so filled with the Spirit (with speaking in unknown tongues as its initial physical sign) for ministerial work and mission witness. I would not discount that such practices can and do produce some who are able to effectively lead the church in its missionary work. But what I am lifting up is not at all the modern expressions of Pentecostalism, whether from Azusa Street or anywhere else, even if these expressions are not being denied or rejected, but rather the central account of the outpouring of the Spirit "upon all flesh" (Acts 2:17b), which is how Luke records Peter explaining that event while drawing from the prophet Joel (2:28).

The point is that Pentecost does not belong only to Pentecostals but to the entirety of the body of Christ.[17] Theological education rooted in the reality of Pentecost belongs to the church catholic, just like the Book of Acts, and is not copyrighted by any one church or movement. In this sense, then, a Pentecost vision for theological education ought also to serve the cosmic Christian witness in its many tongues and languages. It is for this reason that I urge such a Pentecost approach to theological education to be non-hegemonic and non-totalizing in that its essence both derives from and is for the church catholic (universal and ecumenical).

Fresh Experience of Pentecost: What It Looks Like

Most importantly, the witness that the Spirit brings about resonates not in one voice but through many. The Acts narrator describes the glossolalia catalyzed on that Day in these ways: "Each one heard them speaking in the native language of each" . . . and "We hear, each of us, in our own native language" (2:6b, 8). Therefore, theological education in such missional and missiological terms cannot but be pluralistic, attending to the many voices that come from the many directions. Or put another way, Spirit-ed theological formation follows according to the pneumato-logic manifest in the many tongues articulated on the Day of

[16]See Rick M. Nañez, *Full Gospel, Fractured Minds? A Call to Use God's Gift of the Intellect* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005).

[17]See Yong, *The Hermeneutical Spirit: Theological Interpretation and the Scriptural Imagination for the 21st Century* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017).

Pentecost.[18] Such a pneumatic or pneumatological education is relevant for and appropriate to our present twenty-first century pluralistic, glocal-, multi-, inter-, and trans-cultural context.[19]

What then are the contours of theological education inspired by the Pentecostal reality? In this case, Pentecost is as much an adverb as it is a noun, as relevant for the how (pedagogy) of theological education as for its what (content). One might ask, Where is the Holy Spirit or what difference might the Holy Spirit make in the seminary or divinity school of the 21st century constituted by students of different ecclesial traditions/movements and multiple cultures, traversing diverse global routes, and inhabiting dynamic contexts? What might it mean to reconsider the theological curriculum from such a pentecostally and pneumatologically shaped, informed, and oriented point of view? How might educational pedagogy be reformed, revitalized, even charismatized, from this perspective? What does theological inquiry, scholarly pursuit, intellectual life, and life of the mind historically prominent in academia look like when reconsidered as integral to, rather than disparate from, life in the Spirit? What happens if the enterprise of theological education in this time between the times were to be reordered according to the work of the Spirit "in the last days" (Acts 2:17a), which extends to and derives from the "ends of the earth"?[20]

The *telos* aimed toward ought to be borne by conduits consistent with and supportive of such objectives. Hence, if the goal of theological education is to empower the church's multicultural and multifaceted mission in a complex world, then a Pentecost model for such ought to be charted pneumatically. Pentecost thereby provides not just theological (pneumatological) content, but also charismatic modality: i.e., a way of doing or enacting theological education that features the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit.

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[18]See my essay, "The Pneumatological Imagination; The Logic of Pentecostal Theology," in Wolfgang Vondey, ed., *Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology* (New York and London: Routledge, 2020), 152-60.

[19]Yong, *The Dialogical Spirit: Christian Reason and Theological Method for the Third Millennium* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014).

[20]See further Yong, "The Holy Spirit and the Christian University: The Renewal of Evangelical Higher Education," in Thomas M. Crisp, Steve L. Porter, and Gregg A. Ten Elshof, eds., *Christian Scholarship in the Twenty-First Century: Prospects and Perils* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014), 163-80, and "Finding the Holy Spirit at the Christian University: Renewal and the Future of Higher Education in the Pentecostal-Charismatic Tradition," in Vinson Synan, ed., *Spirit-Empowered Christianity in the 21st Century: Insights, Analyses, and Future Trends* (Lake Mary, Fla.: Charisma House, 2011), 455-76 and 577-87.

Toward a Pentecost(al) Theological Education

In this final section, I would like to tease out three programmatic trajectories of what I am calling a Pentecost paradigm for theological education: a triadic orientation, a decolonizing and dialogical arc, and a liberative horizon. Again, there is no claim here either that these exhaustively define the proposed Pentecost model, or that they are central to theological education as found in institutions affiliated with especially classical pentecostal churches and movements around the world today.[21] Actually, in some respects, the approach I am suggesting may challenge the directions currently charted in our current classical pentecostal churches and movements around the world today.

Triadic Orientation Paradigm

First, a Pentecost approach anticipates and opens up to the holistic model involving (in terms popularized by Swiss pedagogue Johann Pestalozzi [1746-1827] and then developed within the Pietist tradition) *heads-hearts-hands*.[22] Such a model encompasses minds (the cognitive) but also bodies (the affective) and activities (the behavioral). It is amenable to historic theological explication in terms connecting orthodoxy (beliefs) to orthopathy (desires) and orthopraxy (practices) as well as consistent with the ethos and sensibilities of the relational, affective, and pragmatic spirituality of pentecostal and charismatic-type churches and movements. With modern Pentecostalism having been fed by Holiness movements and embedded within the broader Pietist tradition, such a triadic conceptualization is inherent within pentecostal sensibilities and commitments, rather than an intrusion from the outside.

More importantly, this triadic frame can also be discerned from the Pentecost narrative. Recall that the outpouring of the Spirit touches down on human flesh (Acts 2:17).[23] More concretely and precisely, there are tactile and kinesthetic aspects of the Spirit's arrival. Those upon whom the Spirit descended perceived being palpably surrounded (even overwhelmed) by the "violent wind, [which] filled the entire house where they were sitting," and testified to seeing and feeling the "divided

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[21]For further elaboration, of which the following provides a very partial glimpse, see Yong, *Renewing the Church by the Spirit: Theological Education after Pentecost*, Theological Education Between the Times series (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2020).

[22]See Arthur Brühlmeier, *Head, Heart and Hand: Education in the Spirit of Pestalozzi* (Cambridge, UK: Sophia, 2010).

[23]See my books, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), and *Spirit of Love: A Trinitarian Theology of Grace* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2012).

tongues, as of fire . . . [that] rested on each of them" (2:2-3). Classical pentecostal exegesis focuses on the speaking in other tongues, which here I want to observe as emerging from deep within their lives, bodies, and experiences of being filled by the Spirit.

Further, the Spirit-inspired speech is not the glossolalic tongues of angels that St. Paul mentions in his Corinthian letter (1 Cor. 13:2), but rather clear witness to and "about God's deeds of power" (Acts 2:11b). Hence, the affective dimension of feeling the divine is interconnected with the intellectual and cognitive domain of testifying to and about the divine.

And last but not least, the entirety of this Pentecost event not only fulfills the promise regarding the sending and coming of the divine wind but also initiates those so imbued into the missional path of bearing witness to the risen and ascended Jesus "in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (1:8b). In short, behavioral participation in the mission of God (orthopraxy) involves both affective and embodied experience in (orthopathy) and verbal and kerygmatic proclamation of (orthodoxy) the Pentecost reality.[24]

My claim, then, is that a Pentecost approach to theological education cannot subordinate any of these dimensions to the others. Instead, life in the Spirit involves nurturing the life of the mind and the life of mission altogether.[25] Therefore, our commitments have to be on both finding pedagogical models that facilitate the integration of these domains and providing exemplars that initiate learners onto such integrated pathways of lifelong Christian discipleship, which refuse to marginalize or prioritize any of them. In other words, we are not faced with either-or choices, but rather invited to imagine theological education holistically, going beyond western academia's cognitivism on the one side and populist pentecostal emotionalism on the other side toward a Spirit-filled

[24]See also Yong, "The Science, Sighs, and Signs of Interpretation: An Asian American Post-Pentecostal-al Hermeneutics in a Multi-, Inter-, and Trans-cultural World," in L. William Oliverio, Jr., and Kenneth J. Archer, eds., *Constructive Pneumatological Hermeneutics in Pentecostal Christianity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 177-95, esp. 186-88.

[25]See also Yong, "The Spirit, the Public Sphere, and the Life of the Mind: Renewing the Theologian as Public Intellectual?" in Todd Ream, Jerry Pattengale, and Chris Devers, eds. *Public Intellectuals and the Common Good* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2021), forthcoming.

via media that attends to affectivity and praxis without negating critical thinking.[26]

Decolonizing and Dialogical Paradigm

Secondly, as already noted, there are substantive efforts to de-westernize theological education, both in order that such an enterprise may be more global in its discourses and that theological education can be better contextualized across the Majority World rather than be beholden to Euro-American norms and practices. Postcolonial perspectives have thus been emerging across the theological academy as scholars from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and indigenous traditions have been finding their own voices. Although some of the more radical approaches are calling for a relativization of historic creeds and confessions to western Christianities due to their contextual situatedness, most scholars are simply urging that there be a more substantive dialogue between western and Majority World churches regarding how to understand Christian faith (including theologies and dogmatic confessions) afresh in the newly emerging world Christianity.[27]

The Pentecost narrative is also suggestive for the contemporary task, even anticipating its challenges 2,000 years ago. Notice that the tables were turned not once but twice in Luke's account. First, the imperial Roman world was decentered from the messianic perspective grounded in Jerusalem. Hence, what was the ends of the earth from the Roman point of view became the center. And it was from this inverted standpoint that the Christian mission sought to ring out to the Roman 'ends', indeed arriving there inexorably and against all odds by the end of the Acts story in chapter 28.

Yet there is also the second twist, one that we didn't have to wait until the end of the Lukan sequel to arrive at the world's ends. Instead, we have at the beginning, in the center of the world (which according to St. Luke would be the streets of Jerusalem) "visitors from Rome, both

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[26]I like how pentecostal theological educator, Cheryl Bridges Johns, puts it: "The fund of knowledge is not for a few who can achieve the critical distance, *but those who can achieve the critical embrace of love*"; this is not a mere subjectivism, then, but a "deeper, more frightening form of criticism . . . so critical that it would allow for both students and teachers to be so claimed as to be disclaimed, to be seized and taken captive and dispossessed of everything they previously claim," with a "resulting implosion of criticism and confession"; see Johns, "From Babel to Pentecostal: The Renewal of Theological Education," in John S. Pobee, ed., *Towards Viable Theological Education: Ecumenical Imperative, Catalyst of Renewal* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997), 132-46, at 140, 143, and 144 (italics Johns').

[27]See my own retrieval of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship's Statement of Fundamental Truths in Yong, *Renewing Christian Theology: Systematics for a Global Christianity*, images and commentary by Jonathan A. Anderson (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2014).

Jews and proselytes" (2:10b). Not only that, but the wonders of God declared through the power of the Spirit on that day were also spoken in Roman tongues, we being told twice and specifically: "Each one heard them speaking in the native language of each" (2:6) and "We hear, each of us, in our own native language" (2:8). However, the point is less on the Roman presence than on the fact that in the Pentecost economy, center and periphery are already overturned. The world's conventions of power are reorganized so much so that the outpouring of the Spirit had produced "people who have been turning the world upside down" (17:6). There are no marginal cultures or languages in God's salvation history.[28]

What then does this entail for pentecostal theological education? No doubt many of its institutions in the Majority World have come about as a result of western pentecostal churches and missionary efforts (largely funded by America), which have catalyzed and sustained such enterprises. However, part of the problem here is that, as well intentioned as pentecostal missionary efforts have been to reach toward the ends of the earth (from their America-centric perspective), these efforts have promoted a deeply ethnocentric worldview, despite longstanding recognition that missionary work and vision needed to be turned over to local churches as soon as possible.[29]

Thus, Pentecostal theological education in the Majority World needs to grapple more seriously and in a sustained way with what it means to be self-funding, self-governing, and self-theologizing,[30] not only so that they can care for themselves or be self-concerned, but so they can mature into churches that, in their own languages, activities, and initiatives, declare the glory of God for the sake of the gospel and the global church (including pentecostal and other churches in the West). This means, first of all, learning from their western (missionary) colleagues yet recognizing the socio-historical contexts within which such beliefs and practices have developed then, secondly, not merely adopting (or even

[28]See Samuel Solivan, *Spirit, Pathos and Liberation: Toward an Hispanic Pentecostal Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), esp. ch. 4.

[29]On western pentecostal ethnocentrism, see Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (London: SCM Press, 2007), esp. ch. 9.

[30]These are longstanding theological and missiological commitments of even western Pentecostals – e.g., Melvin L. Hodges, *The Indigenous Church* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 2012) – although putting them into practice among pentecostal communities in postcolonial environments has not been as easy.

translating) such into non-western milieu but considering if and how new approaches ought to be forged.[31]

Liberative Horizon

Last but not least, note that the promise of Pentecost, which is for our "children, and for all who are far away" (2:39), is universally indiscriminate in its horizons. It is for all flesh—male and female, sons and daughters, young and old, slave and free—as Peter recounts, drawing from Joel, and recorded by Luke (2:17-18; cf. Joel 2:28-29). This represents the Spirit's inauguration of the day of the Lord (2:20b), along with its enactment of justice for all (cf. Luke 4:18-20). Patriachalism is undermined, gerontocracy is leveled out, and class divisions are overcome. The concrete manifestation is the emergence of a fellowship of the Spirit (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35) in which landowners like Barnabas (4:36-37) are mutual members with those needy who joined the apostolic community "from the towns around Jerusalem" (5:16). No one is excluded from participation in the Pentecost outpouring, and it is precisely those marginalized by imperial Rome who are now brought into the center of God's redemptive plan.[32]

Of course, theological education in the western world is principally egalitarian, meaning that not only that many (except for those with complementarian convictions regarding male and female having distinct gender roles) accept and train women for ministry but also many attempt to scholarship students of color, who are often underrepresented in the graduate-level educational enterprise. In my view, all of this ought to be applauded even while we reconsider also the curricular and pedagogical dimensions of such a Pentecost perspective. Should not these multicultural, multiethnic, teleological, and ethical themes be part and parcel of the missiological heart of any theological program of inquiry? And should we not also teach, by way of embodying solidarity with the poor or empowering students from communities from beyond the western hemisphere, how to be missionally engaged as part of (not as

[31]As one example: thinking about other faiths in a Christendom (western) context is different than when considering religious pluralism in Asia; thus South Asian Pentecostal theologian Ivan Satyavrata, *God Has Not Left Himself without Witness* (Oxford: Regnum, 2011), proposes a more inclusive approach than most other western Pentecostals (except perhaps Tony Richie, *Toward a Pentecostal Theology of Religions: Encountering Cornelius Today* [Cleveland: CPT, 2013]).

[32]For more on this reading of the Book of Acts, see my *Who is the Holy Spirit? A Walk with the Apostles* (Brewster, Mass.: Paraclete Press, 2011), esp. parts I-II.

extracurricular to) their course of study?[33] In short, missiology or mission studies ought to become more prominent in the theological curriculum even as liberative praxis ought to be more pronounced.[34]

Despite modern Pentecostalism's many exemplary female pastors, evangelists, and missionaries, there remains a glass ceiling for women in pentecostal churches and communities.[35] Further, although Pentecostals focus much on divine healing of human bodies, they are otherwise more spiritually concerned about salvation vis-à-vis the afterlife than about addressing and engaging social and economic injustices in this world.[36] Much of this derives from North American Pentecostalism's taking the side of fundamentalists against liberals in the early twentieth century debates and then exporting such perspectives to their pentecostal compatriots in the Majority World over the last 100 years. Might Global South pentecostal theological institutions revisit the scriptural witness to the Pentecost outpouring of the Spirit not for the purpose of dismissing their North American colleagues' perspectives but rather to enrich and enlarge their missional vision?[37] Mission ought to be at the heart of the theological education task, and this is why our heart for mission ought to be as wide as that of the missionary God.[38]

May pentecostal theological education in this second century of the movement mature in helping its churches and the church ecumenical and

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[33]See Love L. Sechrest, Johnny Ramírez-Johnson, and Amos Yong, eds., *Can "White" People Be Saved? Triangulating Race, Theology, and Mission*, Missiological Engagements (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2018); note the scare quotes around "white," which means that the question therefore refers not to individuals but to those racialized according to Eurocentric cultural norms instead of according to the gospel, so that our book charts trajectories for what it means to engage in Christian witness that decenters Euro-Americanism so that the many tongues of world Christianity can be heard.

[34]David Bosch's magisterial *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 2nd ed. (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2011), already urged that liberation be included in mission; see my Pentecost perspective on Bosch's vision: "Pentecost as Facet of the Church-in-Mission or Culmination of the *Missio Dei*? A Pentecostal Renewing of Bosch's (Reformed) Mission Theology," *Missionalia: Southern African Journal of Theology* 47:2 (2020): 151-64.

[35]See, e.g., Estrelda Alexander and Amos Yong, eds., *Philip's Daughters: Women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Leadership*, Princeton Theological Monographs Series 104 (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2009).

[36]Except see changes, gradual as they might be, on this front: Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[37]E.g., Dario Rodriguez López, *The Liberating Mission of Jesus: The Message of the Gospel of Luke*, trans. Stefanie E. Israel and Samuel Escobar (Eugene: Pickwick, 2012); Miguel Alvarez, *Integral Mission: A New Paradigm for Latin American Pentecostals* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2016); and Ivan Satyavrata, *Pentecostals and the Poor: Reflections from the Indian Context* (Baguio City, Philippines: APTS, 2017).

[38]See my *Mission after Pentecost: The Witness of the Spirit from Genesis to Revelation*, Mission in Global Community (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019).

catholic at large, including North American pentecostal churches that sent missionaries to the ends of their earth a generation and before, to more vigorously embrace and participate in the *missio Dei* in anticipation of the coming rule and reign of God.[39]

[39]Thanks to my graduate assistant Jeremy Bone for proofreading this essay; all errors of fact or interpretation remain my own responsibility.