

## **William Menzies' Theological Vision for the Founding of the AJPS** by Glen and Robert Menzies

At the outset of the second year of the *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies*' existence, its co-editors, William Menzies and Wonsuk Ma, wrote an editorial assessment of the journal's first year. In their short editorial they said, "It seems fitting that we review the intended character and goals of this young publication."<sup>1</sup> Now, twenty-five years later, my brother and I have been entrusted with a similar task, one that is equally fitting for this silver anniversary edition. We were asked to outline the theological motivations (the vision, if you will) that motivated our father, William Menzies, to initiate, along with Wonsuk Ma, the *AJPS*.

We believe the answer to the question—Why produce the *AJPS*?—reveals a lot about our father's understanding of the Pentecostal movement both in Asia and around the world. The answer also illuminates the value he had placed upon theological reflection and why he felt this noble undertaking was important for the life and vitality of the church.

With this brief explanation of the task before us, let us identify and discuss what we feel were the four main 'C's (purposes) that motivated our father to establish this journal—conservation, contextualization, captivation, and charity.

### **Conservation**

William Menzies was a church historian. He loved to speak of the value of studying church history and often described the rich truths and important perspectives that flowed from his study. When it came to the emergence of the modern Pentecostal movement, our father was quite clear. He emphasized that the unusual experiences that marked the Azusa Street Revival and later Pentecostal gatherings were not unique. Indeed, he pointed to over twenty charismatic movements that appeared throughout the church's history, most of which experienced similar

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<sup>1</sup>Editors, "Journal Reflections: An Editorial Assessment at the End of the First Year," *AJPS* 2, no. 1 (1999): 1.

phenomena.<sup>2</sup> Prophecy, healing, exorcism, speaking in tongues, etc., are not new or novel, nor did they first manifest just one hundred years ago. These kinds of charismatic experiences have punctuated the life of the church in diverse places and among different groups at various times over the past 2,000 years. No, the modern Pentecostal movement in this regard is not unique. This is true of the Pentecostal movement in Asia as well as its other expressions around the globe.<sup>3</sup>

“What is unique about the modern Pentecostal revival,” our father would say with a gleam in his eye, “is that it has survived.” Indeed, it has not only survived but has become an integral part of Evangelical Christianity. You see, in studying the twenty-plus charismatic movements of the past, we find that, sadly, none of them ended well, one classic example being the Montanists.<sup>4</sup> While most of these movements started well, they all remained on the periphery of the life of the church. In time, due to an over-emphasis on the charismatic gifts and a lack of grounding in Scripture, these groups went astray. A charismatic leader or self-proclaimed prophet would arise and lead the group into self-destructive fanaticism and heresy.

However, as our father would say, here is where the modern Pentecostal movement is different and where we find its *uniqueness*.<sup>5</sup> The modern Pentecostal movement has survived long enough to become a part of mainstream Christianity and did not remain on the periphery. Indeed, as Bob’s book, *Christ-Centered: The Evangelical Nature of Pentecostal Theology*,<sup>6</sup> chronicles, this particular Pentecostal movement began with a strong sense that it was a part of the larger Evangelical

<sup>2</sup>Bernard Bresson, *Studies in Ecstasy* (New York: Vantage Press, 1966), 20-112.

<sup>3</sup>Lora Timenia, *Third Wave Pentecostalism in the Philippines: Understanding Toronto Blessing Revivalism’s Signs and Wonders Theology in the Philippines* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2021).

<sup>4</sup>It also had a significant impact on the larger Church for a short time, but then a hard break against it quickly followed.

<sup>5</sup>Perhaps a second uniqueness should also be mentioned, although in some ways it simply helps explain why the Pentecostal Movement has lasted and thrived. This was the theological innovation of understanding speaking in tongues to be the outward “Bible sign” of an empowering for witness, what Pentecostals usually call “baptism in the Holy Spirit.” Between the Apostolic Age and beginning of the twentieth century, it is not clear that any other charismatic group noted this connection. Moreover, as Vinson Synan has argued in several forums, since the beginning of the Pentecostal movement, groups embracing evidential tongues have grown much more rapidly than those denying or remaining noncommittal on this issue. See, for instance, Vinson Synan, “The Role of Tongues as Initial Evidence,” 67-82 in Mark Wilson, ed., *Spirit and Renewal: A Festschrift in Honor of J. Rodman Williams*, *Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series* 5 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).

<sup>6</sup>Robert Menzies, *Christ-Centered: The Evangelical Nature of Pentecostal Theology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2020). The brief essay presented here draws upon material from this book, 37-40, 85-86.

church, even though some segments of Evangelicalism (or Fundamentalism) did not initially welcome Pentecostals into the family. Over time, however, relationships with the broader church deepened and matured. The result was (in our father's view) a wonderful cross-pollination—we Pentecostals influencing our Evangelical neighbors and, in turn, being impacted by our Evangelical brothers and sisters. One especially positive aspect of this Evangelical influence was an affirmation of what had been present from the beginning—a strong commitment to the Bible as the standard and measuring rod for doctrine, practice, and spiritual experiences.

So, while the experiences (prophecy, healing, tongues, etc.) of the modern Pentecostal movement are not new, the fact that it is seen as a part of mainstream, orthodox Christianity—and indeed, as a vital part of the global Evangelical church—is unique. Herein lies the modern Pentecostal movement's significance and incredible promise. For the first time in the history of the church, a charismatic movement has become mainstream and significantly impacted the Church universal for much more than a few years. This is no doubt the case because the early leaders of the modern Pentecostal movement were committed to judging their theology, practice, and spiritual experiences according to the Word of God. The warm relationships that developed over time with their Evangelical brothers and sisters have clearly facilitated this healthy posture and highlighted a common commitment to Scripture as the ultimate authority. If these early leaders had departed from a firm commitment to judging their message and experience against the standard of the Bible, history tells us that the movement would have become marginalized from the larger body of Christ and spiraled downward into irrelevancy due to heresy and excess. Thankfully, this was not the course of the modern Pentecostal movement and, for the most part, has not been the course of the Pentecostal movement in Asia.

A central reason that our father loved serious study of the Bible, careful examination of church history, and the theological reflection that these endeavors stimulate was *conservation*. He felt that development of a balanced and articulate Pentecostal theology, firmly rooted in Scripture, was essential if the fruit of the Pentecostal revival was to be conserved. As a result of his study of church history and personal observations gleaned through his own ministry (both in Asia and in other parts of the world), he was convinced that any vision of the Pentecostal movement that pits experience against serious study of the Bible is destined to fail.

In his preaching and teaching, our father proclaimed that vital spiritual experience, being an essential emphasis of the Pentecostal movement, must be guided and directed by the biblical record.

Pentecostal experience flows from a desire to embrace the biblical record *mutatis mutandis*<sup>7</sup> as well as to encounter God in Christ through the Holy Spirit as the apostolic church did.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, a Pentecostal approach to the Bible may be summed up in the simple statement—“Their stories are our stories.”<sup>9</sup> This approach has enabled the Pentecostal movement in Asia to bring together an emphasis on experience with a commitment to the authority of the Bible. Rather than being in competition with one another, most Pentecostals in Asia see these twin themes as complimentary.

In the editorial at the outset of year two (1999) cited above, a central reason the *AJPS* was brought into being was stated as follows—“for the purpose of encouraging serious theological thinking and articulation by Pentecostals/Charismatics in Asia.”<sup>10</sup> Serious theological reflection in the mind of our father was inextricably linked to conservation of the rich harvest of Pentecostal revival in Asia. Thus, in order for Asia’s Pentecostal movement to flourish and accomplish its divinely appointed purpose, it must be rooted in and guided by a biblically-informed, balanced theology that addresses the contemporary needs of the church. The journal was established to encourage precisely that kind of theological reflection—one attuned to the needs of the church. This leads us to our father’s next motivation.

### Contextualization

William Menzies was certainly a passionate and committed Pentecostal. Nevertheless, he rejected any sort of Pentecostalism that minimized the importance of either Scripture or Christ. Or said another way, his Pentecostalism was both bibliocentric and Christocentric. While Pentecostals affirm the importance of spiritual experience, our father insisted that all spiritual experience be judged by the standards of Scripture. He was also skeptical of any emphasis on the Spirit that minimized the importance of Christ. He was not the sort of theologian who looked for parallels between Buddhist mysticism and Christian experiences of the Spirit. He believed the Holy Spirit was the Spirit of

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<sup>7</sup>The qualification *mutatis mutandis* (“necessary changes having been made”) is a recognition that there was no New Testament as a collection of books during the Apostolic Age. The Old Testament canon and the deposit of teaching mediated by the apostles functioned in the Apostolic Age as our Old and New Testaments function today.

<sup>8</sup>As Keith Warrington notes, Pentecostal theology is, at its heart, a theology of encounter. See Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (London, UK: T&T Clark, 2008), 21, 108.

<sup>9</sup>Robert Menzies, *Pentecost: This Story is Our Story* (Springfield, MO: GPH, 2013), especially chapter 1.

<sup>10</sup>Editors, “Journal Reflections,” 1.

Christ and would always point to Christ, who is the anchor that grounds any attempt to discern which Spirit/spirit is of God and which is not.

In 1989, William Menzies became president of Asia Pacific Theological Seminary. In the preceding twenty years, he had made summer trips to teach in various missionary settings, often in Manila or Seoul. So, in some ways his appointment at APTS was a natural extension of this part-time missionary activity. He had long proven that he had a missionary's heart.

Moving to the Philippines gave our father a new jolt of enthusiasm and energy. He relished the challenges of cross-cultural ministry and leadership. Also, the fact that some of his students faced the very real prospect of imprisonment or martyrdom constantly reminded him of how much was at stake.

As a result of his years of ministry (particularly those in Asia), our father was very sensitive to the fact that theological reflection must be tied to the needs of the Church. These needs, although often similar, also included questions and challenges that were unique to each cultural context and age. Or expressed another way, the Pentecostal churches' theology should be characterized by diversity in the midst of unity. In different locales, the theology of the church has distinctive emphases because each expression of the church faces unique questions and challenges. At the same time, because Pentecostal churches throughout Asia (and around the globe) base their theological reflection upon the Bible, there is a striking commonality that unites them. Furthermore, it is the basis of our common commitment to Scripture and the triune God revealed in it that enables churches in different settings to encourage and learn from one another.

Stimulating contextualization, when understood in this sense of affirming the unique aspects of a church's context and its need to address the related questions in a manner both relevant and faithful to Scripture, was another desired result of the *AJPS*. Again, the editorial cited above states the matter clearly—one of the journal's objectives was “to stimulate creative contextualization of the Christian faith.”<sup>11</sup>

Discussions about the nature of contextualization are very much related to a more fundamental question, that being, How shall we do theology? Thus, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen states, “All theology is contextual and ‘locational.’”<sup>12</sup> Of course, this statement is formally true. Every statement is made in a specific language and by a person located in a specific culture and time. Yet, it is also true that we would be wary of accepting this statement as definitive without qualification. Does this mean that we are unable to convey the essence of the gospel clearly

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<sup>11</sup>Editors, “Journal Reflections,” 1.

<sup>12</sup>Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “Pneumatology of Religions,” 177.

across cultures? Does this mean that we are hopelessly trapped in our own cultural “ghetto,” unable to communicate in a meaningful way with other Christians around the globe?

Certainly, such was not the perspective of our father. In fact, he tended to highlight not the differences that link human beings together, but rather our similar aspirations, weaknesses, fears, and needs (chief among them, alienation from God) and the power of the biblical message to communicate to people of diverse cultural settings.<sup>13</sup> The biblical worldview, which affirms that the omnipotent Creator is immanent and active in our world, resonates with people around the world; and Pentecostals have been successful in their evangelistic and church-planting efforts precisely because we take this worldview and the related Good News seriously.

These commonalities are even greater among people of “like precious faith” (2 Pet. 1:1). Among the first generation of Pentecostals in the United States, a common slogan was “We may not yet have achieved unity of the faith, but we have achieved unity of the Spirit” (Eph. 4:3, 13). In other words, we recognize that God has touched our lives similarly, and we all accept the authority of Scripture; but we just have not yet worked through in every detail a common understanding of what Scripture teaches.

The real question is, then, How great is the cultural divide? The greater we see the divide, the more we feel the need to translate or reconstruct the message. Historically, this has led many mainline churches to depart from declaring the apostolic message and, in some cases, to abandon the very notion of sharing the gospel across cultural boundaries. Our father rejected this perspective. In one of his first forays into writing, a 22-year-old William Menzies described the Pentecostal revival as providing a striking contrast to churches that had departed from orthodoxy on the one hand as well as those who had succumbed to dead orthodoxy on the other. The former proclaimed a social gospel and represented a Christianity without Christ. The latter preached the gospel but without the power of the Spirit, making God “appear to be so far away that poor souls can barely reach him.”<sup>14</sup> Neither is up to the task that faces the church in these last days. A Pentecostal church that emphasizes the power of the Spirit to enable followers of Christ to

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<sup>13</sup>As Jonathan Leeman states, “The Holy Spirit is more powerful than culture... Yes, we all read Scripture and write doctrine through our cultural experiences, but Scripture remains the foundation of the church’s unity.” J. Leeman, “Soteriological Mission: Focusing in on the Mission of Redemption” (and his responses), in *Four Views on the Church’s Mission*, ed. Jason S. Sexton (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017), 139.

<sup>14</sup>Bill Menzies, “Why should I be Pentecostal?,” *C. A. Herald* (August 1953): 19.

overcome every conceivable barrier (whether political, cultural, or spiritual) with the gospel is the thing that's needed.

Our father maintained that a Pentecostal approach to the theological enterprise understands the challenge of crossing the cultural divide as a manageable undertaking. This is the case because we are mindful of the promise of the Spirit's enabling (Acts 1:8). Our job is not to reconstruct the message, but rather to translate and apply it so it can be clearly understood and appropriated. And the Spirit must always be our guide in this translation process, for he can mediate truth in ways that are simply beyond unaided human ability.

The issue of authority is central here, for the greater we see the divide, the more we are likely to focus on analysis of the contemporary culture rather than the biblical witness. In many World Council of Churches circles that have spoken of contextualization, the perceived needs or concerns of the contemporary culture quickly took precedence over the apostolic message. In contrast, the Pentecostal approach to contextualization advocated by our father is infused with a sense of optimism and mission rooted in a conviction that the dynamic of the book of Acts may be recreated today. This was expressed well by a Chinese house-church leader, who some years ago declared, "Acts is the pattern for the mission of the church. If our church does not follow the path of the early church, we will lose our way."<sup>15</sup>

William Menzies recognized the need for a realistic but optimistic approach to the challenges different cultural contexts present for the task of applying God's word to our lives in a manner that is both relevant and faithful. But he also recognized that this task must be taken up by Asian Pentecostals living and embedded within these contexts. Thus, he saw the *AJPS* as meeting a very significant need—namely, "to promote interaction among Asian Pentecostals/Charismatics."<sup>16</sup> There is an important note of humility here.

His two sons (the authors of this article) would like to take some credit for our father's humble approach at this point. You see, as teenagers, we always felt that we had a "sacred responsibility" to keep our father humble. Dad was anything but a social or professional climber. Although he always dressed nicely (our mother saw to that!), he was never overly concerned about his clothes. In that sense, he was a child of Azusa Street—i.e., not a self-promoter, not trying to stand out.

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<sup>15</sup>Robert Menzies, March 27, 2014, interview with Uncle Zheng of the *Zhong Hua Meng Fu Church*.

<sup>16</sup>Editors, "Journal Reflections," 1. It should be noted that William Menzies, as a historian, encouraged ground-breaking historical studies on various national Pentecostal movements in the Asia-Pacific region. Thus, *AJPS* published many pioneer historical studies of various Pentecostal groups.

Generally, his clothes were neat, conservative, and simple. So, whenever Mom would buy something new or maybe a bit trendy, we immediately noticed. When Dad came to the breakfast table wearing his new “fancy duds,” we’d break into a chorus: “Bill Menzies goes mod [as in ‘modern’].” This is one way we fulfilled our sacred obligation.

One practical implication of our father’s humility was his understanding that he was not the right person to do everything. In some things, he was the right one for the moment, but he always looked for others better equipped who would come along to succeed him. For example, he was very interested in promoting Asian leadership at APTS and in fostering the success of rising Asian scholars.<sup>17</sup> he saw himself, an American providing leadership in Asia, as being very much in a transitional role. In other words, he was ever trying to work himself out of a job! In any event, our father understood that the task of producing authentically Asian Pentecostal theology must be done by Asians. The journal was created, in part, to facilitate that task.

### Captivation

William Menzies’ vision for the *AJPS* included assisting Pentecostal churches in Asia develop a clear and convincing theology that would help the movement *conserve* the fruit of the ongoing revival sweeping through countries like the Philippines, Malaysia, South Korea, and China. His vision also included encouraging Asian Pentecostal church leaders and scholars to engage in the important task of producing a *contextualized* theology—a theology that speaks to the current needs of their churches and does so in a way that is faithful to the biblical witness.

Yet there is another purpose of the *AJPS* that must be noted. From the outset, the vision for the journal was to bless the broader body of Christ. Thus, one purpose articulated by the editors was to encourage Asian Pentecostal scholars to “dialogue with other Christian traditions.”<sup>18</sup> Indeed, in his inaugural editorial, our father identified ecumenical relationships—that is, how Pentecostals relate to other church traditions—as a key topic for future discussion in the pages of the journal.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>William Menzies first served as the president of APTS in an interim capacity from 1984-85, filling in for Everett McKinney during his furlough year. At that time, Dr. Menzies laid a solid foundation for academic excellence at the seminary by initiating the faculty development program and supporting the initial effort to launch a journal, which resulted in publication of the first and only issue of *Horizon: A Communication Paper of the Far East Advanced School of Theology* 1 (March 1985).

<sup>18</sup>Editors, “Journal Reflections,” 1.

<sup>19</sup>William Menzies, “Reflections of a Pentecostal at the End of the Millennium: An Editorial Essay,” *AJPS* 1, no. 1 (1998): 10-11.



This vision to *captivate the hearts and minds* of other Christians in Asia, including non-Pentecostals, flowed from his conviction that respectful, attentive dialogue within the body of Christ would produce rich fruit and serve to bless the entire Church. This was how he assessed the growing ties that linked Pentecostals with Evangelicals in the later part of the twentieth century, and it was also how he envisioned the relationships forged and strengthened through the dialogue facilitated by the *AJPS* could serve the broader church in Asia. The editorial that looked back on the journal's first year put it this way:

You will note that in the second issue of the journal, at least two articles appeared that were written by Evangelicals who are not strictly identifying themselves with Pentecostals. The reason for this inclusive policy is so that lively discussion and interaction, even debate, may be engaged in a friendly environment. Our belief is that competing views thus expressed...will sharpen insights...and clarify the message of believers in days to come.<sup>20</sup>

Our father's desire to facilitate open communication between born-again Christians committed to the authority of the Bible, regardless of denominational affiliation or perspective, was strengthened by the prospect of mutual enrichment. He was confident that, through honest, open discussion centered on God's word and enlivened by the Holy Spirit, Christians might understand the divine purposes for their lives more clearly.

This confidence extended to the truth of the Pentecostal message. Our father was convinced that the Pentecostal movement has an important theological contribution to make to the broader, global Church. In his view, this contribution was rooted in the recognition that Luke has a unique and significant contribution to make to a holistic biblical theology of the Spirit.

Luke's pneumatology is different from, although complementary to, that of Paul. Whereas Paul highlights the interior work of the Spirit, Luke emphasizes the Spirit's expressive ministry. In other words, Luke's pneumatology is missiological rather than soteriological in nature. The Spirit of Pentecost is, in reality, the Spirit for others—the One who empowers the Church to bring the Good News to a lost and dying world. This Lukan missiological perspective gives rich texture to the Pentecostal understanding of the Holy Spirit and his work. Pentecostals certainly recognize that the Spirit is active in conversion, regeneration,

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<sup>20</sup>Editors, "Journal Reflections," 1.

and sanctification. Yet our father felt justified in speaking of a baptism in the Spirit, distinct from conversion, as being an anointing for service, for he saw this as an accurate reflection of Luke's theology.

Protestant churches have tended to read Luke in the light of Paul.<sup>21</sup> This helps explain why Protestant discussions of the Spirit have centered more on his work by the Word and Sacrament as well as his inner witness and less on his mission to the world. God is often presented only or at least primarily as working in the background, behind the scene, so to speak. And while he certainly does work in ways that are invisible to humanity, Pentecostals also affirm the visible manifestations of his power and grace.

Protestant theologians tend to associate the Pentecostal gift with conversion and regeneration, which effectively blunts the clarity and focus of Luke's message. When the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit is understood in salvific terms, Luke's missiological focus is lost. Yet Luke calls us to remember that the Church, by virtue of its reception of the Pentecostal gift, is a prophetic community empowered for a missionary task.

Our father was convinced that this Pentecostal message needed to be heard. And in order to be heard, its biblical basis must be clearly articulated, with the objections of others addressed in a respectful and thorough way. In our father's mind, the *AJPS*, as a scholarly journal, offered the perfect forum for this kind of open, ecumenical engagement.

### Charity

For dialogue to be fruitful, it must be undertaken in an open, honest, and respectful manner. In short, it must be pursued in a spirit of love or, better, with an attitude shaped by the Holy Spirit and thus filled with love. Once again, William Menzies was confident that God, through his Spirit, could help produce this kind of dialogue—one marked by *charity*. Furthermore, in his own relationships with other scholars (even those

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<sup>21</sup>NT scholars often share presuppositions that give Paul pride of place. This fact is illustrated by Anthony Thiselton's *The Holy Spirit—In Biblical Teaching, through the Centuries, and Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013). Thiselton repeatedly questions the wisdom of those who "wish to drive a wedge between Luke and Paul" (490) and flatly states, "Luke and Paul do not stand on equal footing" (496). Nevertheless, the Pentecostal reading of the NT described above has gained considerable traction among NT scholars. This judgment finds support in the *Festschrift* published in 2004 to honor James Dunn. See R. Menzies, "A Fitting Tribute: A Review Essay of *The Holy Spirit and Christian Origins: Essays in Honor of James D.G. Dunn*," *Pneuma* 28 (2006): 131-40.

with whom he disagreed) and particularly in his writings, he exemplified that kind of honest and charitable approach.

Our father was famous for the triangles he often drew on chalkboards or whiteboards. The many ideas and relationships those triangles illustrated are beyond counting. However, one illustration we vividly remember was the way he charted out the role of theology or doctrine. He would draw a triangle on the board and at the three points would write in succession—Theology, Experience, and Behavior. He would then proceed to explain how our beliefs, our experience, and our actions are all interrelated. What we believe will inevitably impact our actions, and what we experience (or at least, our interpretation of it) will impact what we believe (and *vice versa*). This was his way of emphasizing that theology is important and connected to every aspect of our lives. If we ignore doctrine or theology, we do so at our own peril.

This understanding of the importance of theology—of its influence on our lives and on the lives of others—was an important motivation for establishing the *AJPS*. Yet this conviction also had significant implications for the Christian life and how the journal would function. In William Menzies' view, we could not simply talk about theology; rather, our theology must be expressed in how we live, worship, and interact with one another. It is vitally important that charity is expressed in both the content and manner of our theological discussions. One might argue that this is especially the case for Pentecostals; for, at its heart, Pentecostal theology is always doxological (directed in worship toward God) and missiological (directed in witness to others). Recognition of the vertical and horizontal dimensions of Pentecostal theology reminds us of the importance of our discussions in the *AJPS*. What is said is important, for there is much at stake. But how the message is presented is also vitally important. The apostle Paul put it well—"Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1 Cor. 8:1).

In 1970, our father, along with Vincent Synan and Horace Ward, established an academic society designed to promote research among Pentecostals. Many will regard the founding of the Society for Pentecostal Studies (SPS), which today draws hundreds of scholars from around the world to its annual meetings, as one of our father's signal achievements.<sup>22</sup> He served as the society's first president and first editor of its scholarly journal, *Pneuma*.<sup>23</sup>

At the time the SPS was founded, little Pentecostal scholarship had been produced, and there was only one Pentecostal graduate program of theology in the United States. Furthermore, that program had been in

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<sup>22</sup>Although it officially aspires to be international in scope, the annual meetings of the SPS have always taken place in North America or Mexico.

<sup>23</sup>The inaugural issue of *Pneuma* was published in the spring of 1979.

existence less than a year. Thus, one of the primary purposes for creating the SPS was to stimulate Pentecostal scholarship.<sup>24</sup> Exposure to differing perspectives and cross-fertilization of ideas are very important when greater biblical precision and more theological clarity are the goals. Therefore, formation of a scholarly society was considered key.

Although the structures were slightly different, formation of the SPS and *Pneuma* in some ways can be viewed as forerunners of both APTS and the *AJPS*. The same basic goals and convictions lay behind the founding of both organizations and both journals. Given the rapid growth of the church in Asia and the trajectory of the Pentecostal movement, we wonder if future generations might look back on establishment of APTS and the *AJPS* as being more significant achievements than their North American counterparts.<sup>25</sup>

In 1970, when the SPS was founded, there was a lot of distrust of scholarship and academic pursuits in the American Assemblies of God. Nevertheless, somehow our father was able to disarm those suspicions, doing so largely because of his godly character, humble spirit, and encouraging manner. After meeting William Menzies, people would often think, “Well, I guess these scholars aren’t all bad.” He won people over, in this way helping change attitudes within the Pentecostal movement towards higher education and scholarship. In short, he paved the way so that others could follow. We would like to think that his godliness and humility had a similar effect in Asia.

This silver anniversary of the founding of the *AJPS* is a cause for celebration! By his contribution to its founding (along with his very capable co-founder Wonsuk Ma), we believe William Menzies has given us all (but particularly those living in Asia) an enduring invitation to follow in his footsteps. As we are inspired by our experience of God through the Spirit, let us seek to think rightly and act charitably.

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<sup>24</sup>For a detailed account of the founding of the SPS (and the history of its golden anniversary), see Glen W. Menzies, “The First Fifty Years of the Society for Pentecostal Studies: A Brief History,” *Pneuma* 42 (2020) 335-369.

<sup>25</sup>Dr. Menzies, along with Vinson Synan, also participated in and encouraged the founding meeting of the Asian Pentecostal Society (1998, Seoul, Korea).

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