

WHY I AM NO LONGER A PENTECOSTAL

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I would like to begin by giving some background information concerning my roots in Pentecostalism. I believe it is important for anyone reading this to understand that I am not someone new to the Pentecostal or Charismatic movement. My roots go down deep into Pentecostalism. I was a third generation Pentecostal. My maternal grandparents were “old time” Pentecostals and my grandfather was a Pentecostal preacher of the old style. As a matter of fact, I was a Pentecostal before there was anyone known as a “charismatic.”

Actually, in the old days most people did not call themselves Pentecostals, they called themselves Holiness or Full Gospel. I never remember my Dad calling himself a Pentecostal. He always said he was Holiness. This is one reason Pentecostals in the old days were branded as “holy rollers.” The point I am trying to make is that I am no stranger to Pentecostalism, its doctrines, its worship and its experiences. Neither am I a stranger to charismatic doctrines, worship and experiences.

I was in Pentecostalism over 50 years of my life. As a boy I can remember the old camp-meeting days when we worshiped under a tin roof and sawdust on a dirt floor. My family’s roots were originally in the *Congregational Holiness* denomination — a group that splintered off from the Pentecostal Holiness. I grew up in Jacksonville, Florida, a fairly large city, where you could always find a variety of Pentecostal churches

to attend. While attending the *Arlington Church of God* at the age of twenty, I believed I was being “called” into the ministry and so I started preaching. The following year I was married. In time, my wife and I eventually ended up in the *Assemblies of God* where I was a licensed preacher for 27 years.

There are those who might speculate as to what caused me to change my mind about being a Pentecostal. Did someone talk me out of it? Did I read someone’s book? What happened? I would say it has been a journey. Even though I was exposed to and had learned many incorrect methods and views of Bible interpretation (hermeneutics), I did know, believe and understand that the Bible was/is the word of God and we needed to read it and follow it. For some time, I had recognized certain problems and inconsistencies within the Pentecostal church. These were difficult to overcome at first. But as time went by, I would discover bits and pieces of truth. The problem was, I still couldn’t put it all together. I couldn’t get the full picture.

During my 50 plus years as a Pentecostal, I had been involved in countless Pentecostal and charismatic influences. It would be safe to say that I have been in hundreds of various meetings or gatherings in one form or another. I attended several meetings involving the “Prophetic Movement.” In one conference we were taught how to prophesy to people. They call it being “activated.” My wife and I made two trips to Toronto for “Catch The Fire” conferences. This is where the famed “Toronto Blessing” took place.

We spent five months attending the “Brownsville Revival.” When I say five months, I mean we didn’t miss a service unless we were having a service at our church. We were there night after night, often times not leaving until midnight or later. During that period I also served on the Brownsville prayer team. A short time after this five month period at Brownsville, we too started holding similar services at our

church. These meetings lasted for a whole year. Various charismatic speakers came and held meetings, praying and prophesying over people night after night, week in and week out. We initially started these meetings with a woman who claimed to have a gift of healing as well as being a preacher, teacher and prophetess. I found out later that she actually believed herself to be an apostle. Our services with her lasted around three months. A variety of speakers came in, each claiming to have their own unique "gift" or "calling." When we did not have any special speakers, my wife and I conducted the meetings ourselves. During this time a lot of people were prayed for, prophesied over, claimed to see visions and angels, laid in the floor, spoke in "tongues", shook, vibrated, laughed, cried, wailed, made animal sounds and of course claimed to be healed. However, after a year of this our church was no better off than before. After all the claims of healings, salvations and miracles, no one was any different. After the scores of people who attended and our building being packed night after night, our attendance was less and our finances depleted. By this time, my wife and I felt depleted ourselves. We had put our hearts and souls into these efforts because we believed it to be God-approved; and who doesn't want to experience the same power and miracles we read about in the New Testament? I can't tell you how many hours we spent in prayer or the number of meals we fasted, all because we wanted nothing more than God. But after all of this, it wasn't God that we saw, it was man. From Toronto, to Brownsville, to Cottage Hill, and many more places I could name, there were no miracles, no power, no gifts, no healings, nothing but the theatrical antics and delusions of men. What was claimed for the great power of God was nothing more than musical hype and psychologically induced emotionalism.

In time, as I reflected over the past two years and then over all of the years I had been in Pentecostalism, I slowly began to realize I was in error. I began to see how deceived I was. Then one night something happened that caused me to completely change course. I kept a Bible by my bedside and would usually read a few verses before going to sleep. As I was reading, I came to John 3:5 where it says, "*Jesus answered,*

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The phrase, "born of water" stood out to me. In the past I had always read over these words, mentally dismissing them on the basis of what I had heard or been taught. The teaching usually went something like, "the word 'water' here doesn't actually mean water." For some reason 'water' always meant something other than the obvious. That evening I finally decided to accept what I read in the Bible like it was written. I accepted the simple fact that Jesus said what He meant and meant what He said. I realized there was nothing in the context that suggested the word water was anything but water. There was no reason to believe Jesus meant anything other than what He said. It was also obvious that to be born of water referred to water baptism. I found this could be confirmed by other New Testament references such as Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, Galatians 3:27, Romans 6:3-6, 17-18 and 1 Peter 3:21. From that point on I knew I had to find a people who taught the Bible just like it is written without any manmade religious additions.

A person has to be a realist when it comes to the Bible. As long as people continue to make excuses for the flaws and inaccuracies of their respective denomination, they will never come to the knowledge of the truth. We have to be honest as students of Scripture. If not, the religious discrepancies we see will vanish in the haze of feeble excuses and unsound explanations by false teachers.

Sometime later, after coming to the Lord's church, I discovered a saying that had been coined generations ago: "The Bible only, makes Christians only." There's one thing for certain, if you follow exactly what the New Testament says without the input of any outside religious source, you will end up being simply a Christian — nothing more and nothing less. You cannot strictly follow the teaching of the New Testament and end up being in a denomination because they all are creations of men. You can only end up a Christian.

Please understand that what I have to say is not meant as an attack on people. There are many sincere, misguided souls in the Pentecostal and charismatic ranks. I

know because I was one of them. However, I will attack the lies and heresies of men. False doctrine(s) should always be exposed. We must be willing to earnestly contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

PENTECOSTALISM TEACHES FALSE DOCTRINE

Through the years I saw how Scripture was often misunderstood, taken out of context and misapplied. As a Pentecostal, I noticed how we would greatly emphasize some passages and completely ignore other passages. Some verses seemed to hold great authority while others were insignificant.

PENTECOSTALISM TEACHES FALSE DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE GIFT OF TONGUES

Pentecostals fail to accept that New Testament tongue speaking was an understandable language. Acts 2 describes what happened on the day of Pentecost. *“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance”* (Acts 2:4).

There is nothing in Acts 2 that would indicate they spoke an unintelligible language or gibberish. The word “tongues” in this passage is *glossa* ... the *tongue*; by implication a *language*. The word “utterance” means to *enunciate plainly*, that is, *declare*: say, speak forth.

The continuing context reveals that understandable languages were being spoken. Acts 2:6-11, “Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man *heard them speak in his own language*.⁷ And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? ⁸And how *hear we every man in our own tongue*, wherein we were born? ⁹Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretes and Arabians, we do *hear them speak in our tongues* the wonderful works of God.”

The word “language” in verse 6 and the word “tongue” in verse 8 is the Greek word *dialektos* which means a discourse, that is, a dialect; a language or tongue. We can see from the Greek as well as the context that these were known, human, languages.

I must say in all fairness that now-a-days due to education, many Pentecostals have accepted the fact that “tongues” in Acts chapter two means a known or understandable language. However, every other place in the New Testament where tongues is mentioned they still hold to the idea that it is a non-understandable language, something mysterious. How Pentecostals or charismatics arrive at this conclusion is based on a misunderstanding of 1 Corinthians 14. They misunderstand Paul’s meaning of *“unknown tongue.”* They believe the meaning of “unknown tongue” is something different from the tongues spoken in Acts chapter two. They believe it to be something mysterious and non-understandable. They fail to recognize that the word “unknown” is not in the Greek text and the word “tongue” is the same Greek word as in Acts chapter two.

It must be remembered that the miraculous gift of speaking in tongues was that a man could speak in a language he had never studied or learned. Nonetheless, it was still an intelligible language because those in the audience who spoke that language could readily understand what he said. What is amazing to me is the fact that Pentecostal and charismatic missionaries, without exception, all either attend language school or work through an interpreter when going to a foreign country while all the time claiming to have the New Testament gift of tongues!

When we sum it up, it is easily concluded that Pentecostalism makes three mistakes concerning speaking in tongues:

1) Pentecostalism ignores the law of “first mention.” This simply means that once something is initially established to be a certain thing or way, there is no reason to believe it changes and becomes something different unless the context reveals it to be different.

2) Pentecostalism fails to understand the meaning of “unknown tongue” in 1 Corinthians 14. It forces an interpretation on the text that is inconsistent with Acts

chapter two and the entire New Testament. The word “tongue” in 1 Corinthians 14 is the same Greek word (*glossa*) as in Acts 2:4.

3) Pentecostalism fails to understand the context of 1 Corinthians 14. Paul is not praising the Corinthians for their use of tongues, he is correcting their use of tongues. He is basically saying, “You’ve got it all wrong. Tongues are not for personal use or personal satisfaction.” When no one was present to interpret for others to understand, they were to remain silent (1 Cor. 14:27-28).

PENTECOSTALISM IGNORES THE PRINCIPLE OF “ORDER” IN A WORSHIP SERVICE

Growing up in the Pentecostal Church, I saw that chaos and confusion were eagerly encouraged in worship. This disorder was not only encouraged, but was the gauge by which a worship service was judged. Everyone was encouraged to speak in tongues — all at the same time! This was and is considered to be a spiritual apex in a worship service; a sign of spirituality.

However, 1 Corinthians 12 clarifies the fact that not everyone would have the gift of tongues. When Paul begins to enumerate the gifts, he starts by saying, “*to one is given...*” (v.8) in order to indicate that not everyone would have that respective gift. Nor would everyone in the church have a spiritual gift at all. Paul went on to make this clear in the closing verses of chapter 12 where he asked rhetorical questions. “Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret” (1 Cor. 12:30)? The obvious answer to these questions is in the negative.

Every Christian during New Testament times did not have the gift of tongues. However, when tongues/languages were spoken, there was to be a proper order to their functioning. “If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, let it be by *two*, or at the most by *three*, and that by *course*; and let one interpret. ²⁸But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God” (1 Cor. 14:27-28). They were to take turns when they spoke, with no more than two or three taking their turn. There must also be someone to interpret so everyone in the audience could understand what was spoken.

The idea in Pentecostal worship was

that the more people there were speaking in tongues at the same time, the more spiritual your church was — the greater the moving of the Spirit. But this concept is never taught in the New Testament. Notice what Paul says; “For God is *not the author of confusion*, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” (1 Cor. 14:33). And then in 1 Cor. 14:40, “*Let all things be done decently and in order.*”

The Holy Spirit did not come to give an emotional experience. He did not come to excite, stimulate or cause anyone to flail, thrash or whirl about uncontrollably.

PENTECOSTALISM PLACES A PRIMARY IMPORTANCE ON EXPERIENCE

The Bible has a secondary place with Pentecostals as compared to experience. This does not mean they do not claim to love and honor the Word of God. They do. However, they constantly show by their actions that experience is far more important than what Scripture says.

Pentecostalism is all about feeling good. Charismatics speak about celebrating where worship is concerned. They all want an emotional high when they come together for worship. They believe these positive emotions are an indicator of the presence of God and that presence takes priority over what is written.

Listen to one of the leaders in the Assemblies of God. George O. Wood writes: “As Pentecostals, we intuitively approach the biblical text in a manner different from most of our evangelical brothers and yes, sisters. We factor in the element of experience as a lens through which we look at Scripture.” (enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200102/008_exploring.cfm)

The problem with this is that it leads to subjectivism. When experience is your highest priority, truth becomes subjective, Scripture is ignored.

Steve Hill of the Brownsville Revival said: “In these latter days preaching and simply teaching the word is no longer sufficient, the Spirit has to get involved,

through signs and wonders due to much sin that abounds.” (Brownsville, 12/14/96)

John Wimber of the Vineyard movement stated: “There’s nothing in Scripture that supports these kinds of phenomena that I can see, and I can’t think of anything throughout the church age that would. ... So I feel no obligation to try to explain it. It’s just phenomena. It’s just people responding to God.” (Holy Laughter, Albert James Dager, 1996). It’s interesting that Wimber openly admits that the charismatic phenomena that was taking place (such as in Toronto) had no Biblical authority or historical precedent.

During the Toronto and Brownsville revivals, it was not uncommon to hear many of the leaders and teachers make the declaration, “God will offend your mind in order to reveal your heart.” Since they could not justify what was taking place in those meetings by the Scripture, they felt this statement gave the phenomena approval. So even though they deny it, Pentecostals openly disregard the scriptures and appeal to feelings or experience as their ultimate source of truth. It becomes evident that going by emotionalism leads people into fanaticism.

Pentecostals wrongly believe that their precedent for emotionalism was established on the day of Pentecost. They believe the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was more about an emotional experience than anything else. They stumble over the simplistic truth that the apostles spoke foreign languages by the operation of the Holy Spirit in order to communicate the wonderful truth of God (Acts 2:11). The context of Acts chapter two never reveals that the Holy Spirit came as an emotional experience as we see Pentecostals encouraging today. Emotionalism was not the purpose of the Spirit’s coming. There is nothing bizarre taking place in Acts two or any other place in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit did not come to excite anyone. He did not come to stimulate anyone. He did not come to cause anyone to flail, thrash or whirl about uncontrollably. The Spirit came sovereignly, filled the apostles and they spoke in languages they had not learned.

You may ask, then where do Pentecostals get this idea from? They go by what was said by some who observed the apostles

speaking in languages they obviously had never learned. Acts 2:13 says, “*others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.*” From this simple statement an entire theological philosophy has been constructed. They use this statement in order to encourage all types of strange and bizarre behavior during worship, even to the point of people making animal sounds while they go into a trance-like state. Statements are often made like, “we’re drunk in the Spirit.” Or, “this is the new wine.” Rodney Howard-Browne often encourages flippant, foolish and silly behavior by saying “*this is Joel’s Bar...belly up to the bar!*”

Notice what the apostle Peter says as he sets the record straight. “For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but *the third hour of the day*” (Acts 2:15). Peter emphatically denies their mockery. But Pentecostals have been led to believe the opposite. They believe the apostles were drunk, inebriated, intoxicated — falling down drunk. Sadly, they teach this is what the Holy Spirit does to people. Had the apostles been drunk, Peter would have admitted it. He would have pointed out that the apostles were made drunk by the Spirit and not by wine.

We can no more take what outsiders (enemies of the church) said on the Day Pentecost as fact than we can take what the enemies of Christ said about Him (cf. Luke 7:33-34). If we did so, we would have to believe that Jesus was a glutton and a drunk. Proper hermeneutics is key to understanding the Bible.

PENTECOSTALISM TEACHES FALSE DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Pentecostal and charismatic churches believe in women pastors and teachers over whole congregations. They believe Joel’s prophecy quoted by Peter in Acts two gives them the license they need. Acts 2:16-18, “But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; ¹⁷And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your *daughters shall prophesy*, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: ¹⁸And on my servants and on my *handmaidens* I will pour out in those

days of my Spirit; and they *shall prophesy.*” They believe that when the text says “daughters” and “handmaidens” would prophesy, that it justifies women as pastors, as elders, etc. This, of course, is a gross misunderstanding of the text.

The significance of the pouring forth of God’s Spirit upon all flesh is that the Gospel was to go to all mankind just as Jesus said in the great commission (Mark 16:15-16). Prophecy (inspired teaching) was one of the spiritual gifts during the first century (cf. 1 Cor. 12:8-10); but, once its purpose was served (the inspired, complete, perfect, written word delivered), it was/is no longer in operation — it ceased (cf. 1 Cor. 13:8-10). However, even during New Testament times when spiritual gifts were exercised, women never assumed the position of preacher or teacher over a congregation. There is nothing in Joel’s prophecy that indicates a woman can serve as an elder or be put in charge over a congregation. There is nothing any place in the New Testament that suggests women can serve in the eldership or leadership of the church. Actually, the opposite is true. Paul writing to Timothy said, *“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence”* (1 Tim. 2:11-12).

When we were in Panama City, a preacher friend of mine called one day and asked me about this verse in Timothy. He wanted to know what I thought it meant. I paused for a moment and said, “It probably means what it says.” He wasn’t too pleased with that answer because his wife taught the adult Bible class at his church. As a matter of fact, he completely rejected that meaning of the passage because it wasn’t what he wanted it to mean. But the Scripture is clear on this subject. Notice what Paul said in 1 Cor. 14:34, *“Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.”*

Some Pentecostals contend that Paul was dealing with a cultural issue that has no bearing on today’s society when he gave this prohibition. Of course, to make such an assumption is to play fast and loose with the integrity of the text. Actually, postmodernists use this ploy on any biblical text they desire to change.

PENTECOSTALISM TEACHES FALSE DOCTRINE CONCERNING SALVATION

They teach an incomplete plan of Salvation. It is some combination of “just believe” or “repent and believe” or “pray the sinner’s prayer and ask Jesus to come into your heart.”

However, in the old days, Pentecostals did not believe in the sinner’s prayer. The old Pentecostals came out of the early holiness movement, so they believed in the mourners’ bench. They believed you were to come down to the altar and “pray through” to salvation. Basically, you “prayed through” for everything; salvation, sanctification, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, etc. A person “prayed through” until they felt like God had saved them. But due to the influx of various denominations through the Charismatic movement, Pentecostals have now adopted the more common or popular style.

The *Assemblies of God* Web site states concerning salvation: “WE BELIEVE...Every Person Can Have Restored Fellowship with God Through ‘Salvation’ (trusting Christ, through faith and repentance, to be our personal Savior).” [1 of 4 cardinal doctrines of the Assemblies of God]

The *International Pentecostal Holiness Church* in their doctrinal statement says: “We believe, teach and firmly maintain the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith alone (Romans 5:1).”

How is it that both of these denominations claim the personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit and His guidance and yet they don’t agree with each other? And, how is it that the Holy Spirit inspired James to say “Ye see then how that *by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*” (James 2:24)? Yet, the Pentecostal Holiness claim a person is justified by faith alone? Obviously, both cannot be inspired by the Holy Spirit. They can’t both be right. The Holy Spirit didn’t inspire James to say one thing and the Assemblies of God and the Pentecostal Holiness something else! They treat the Holy Spirit as though He has Alzheimer’s!

Denominational churches make a mockery of God in their doctrinal statements.

If divine healing is such a privilege and readily available to Pentecostals, then why isn't it happening among them? Why do they run to the doctor at the first sign of a sickness? Why are so many on prescription drugs? Why do they have surgery and other costly medical treatments just like everyone else?

**PENTECOSTALISM TEACHES
FALSE DOCTRINE CONCERNING
DIVINE, MIRACLE HEALING**

They are confused over the purpose of miracles. The purpose of miracles was not to make our lives better or free from care. In this world, a Christian lives a normal life just like anyone else. When people are taught they can have a miracle and it doesn't happen, they often become angry and bitter against God. Flamboyant preachers constantly promise the people health and wealth. Without fail, all of these preachers become wealthy by the donations of their followers and consequently receive quality medical care from the best doctors! These teachers make outlandish claims and promises which is neither backed by Scripture nor substantiated by facts.

In a foolish attempt to try to promote modern day miracles, one famous individual wrote a book called, *"A Miracle a Day Keeps the Devil Away."* However, what many people call a miracle is nothing more than something good happening or things going their way. It's this kind of nonsense that causes an unsaved world to mock the Bible and scoff at the existence of God.

The serious student of Scripture will find that miracles did not happen all the time throughout the ages. They have always had a limited operation. They were not being doled out like candy at a child's birthday party every time someone had a cough or a migraine. Jesus illustrates this fact in Luke 4:25-27 when He said, *"But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the*

days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian." Jim Sheerer states of these passages; "Jesus uses two stories to show that God has always been selective with his miracles. The miracles were not to amuse people, but were to confirm God's prophets and further God's plan of salvation." (Sheerer Commentary on the New Testament)

A careful study of the Scriptures reveal that miraculous gifts were given to serve the purpose of confirming God's Word. Even in the days of Moses, the miracles that were performed confirmed what the prophet said as well as God's purpose for the Israelite nation. In the days of Christ, miracles confirmed His ministry and Messiahship. Jesus challenged the unbelieving Jews to examine His miracles when He said, *"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me"* (John 5:36). Jesus does not beat around the bush. He draws their attention to the works He had performed without hesitation. He clearly states their purpose by saying "the...works ...bear witness of me."

In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells the Jews that if they did not believe his words that he was the Son of God, they should believe in Him because of His miracles. *"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him"* (John 10:37-38). His miracles were the evidence that He was speaking the truth.

Jesus pointed the disciples to His works as proof of His divinity when He said, *"Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake"* (John 14:11). The works of Christ were the confirmation that He was the Messiah (John 20:30-31).

Miracles also served the purpose of confirming the Gospel after Christ ascended. The apostles were to continue in the

ministry of Christ for the purpose of establishing the church. As Jesus said to them, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father”* (John 14:12). These works were for the purpose of confirming their apostleship and that the words they spoke were from God. Notice what the Scripture says: *“And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following”* (Mark 16:20). *“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will”* (Heb. 2:3-4)?

Paul makes reference to the apostle’s special ability in miracles by saying, *“Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds”* (2 Cor. 12:12).

Once the Scriptures were complete (i.e., there was no more divine revelation to be given), miracles ceased (1 Cor. 13:8-10; Jude 3). Pentecostals don’t understand the purpose of miracles and this lack of understanding leads to confusion and frustration.

But notice the official doctrinal statement of the *Assemblies of God*: “Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers.” http://ag.org/top/Beliefs/Statement_of_Fundamental_Truths/sft_full.cfm#12

According to the dictionary, the word *integral* means, necessary: being an essential part of something or any of the parts that make up a whole. Synonyms are: essential, vital, basic, fundamental, central. (Encarta: World English Dictionary & (P) 1998-2004 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved)

According to their doctrinal statement, receiving divine healing should be no harder than becoming a Christian. But, if divine healing is such a privilege and readily available, then why isn’t it happening among their members? Why do Pentecostals run to the doctor at the first sign of a sickness just like everyone else? Why are so many

Pentecostals on prescription drugs just like everyone else? Why do Pentecostals have surgery and other costly medical treatments just like everyone else, if divine, miracle healing is their privilege like they teach?

Logic demands that if you teach divine healing is for today, then it must of necessity take place. Notice what the Bible shows when Peter and John stood before the council: *“If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. ... And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it”* (Acts 4:9-10,14). The Apostles had proof of the miracle working power of God. They were not just claiming something that never happened or could not be proven. The man was genuinely healed and standing there for all to see. This was a fulfillment of Mark 16:20.

Pentecostals teach that divine healing is just as much a part of the atonement as forgiveness of sins. But none of it can be backed up. No one anywhere sees it taking place. There are many claims of miraculous, divine healing taking place, but they cannot be either seen or substantiated. There are a lot of people who claim to be healed of something internal, something unseen. Even then, most of these (if not all of them) receive some type of medical assistance or treatment.

At the churches where I have been, there were people who went to doctors all the time, but when they got better, everyone claimed divine healing. That’s not divine miracle healing. Three surgeries and eight prescriptions later is not divine healing! That’s nothing out of the ordinary. Friend, I spent over 50 years in Pentecostalism and never saw one genuine miracle! Just before I left the Pentecostal church I went to visit and pray for an elderly woman who was in her 80s. She said to me, “You know Bro. Davis, after all these years I’ve never seen a miracle!” She had probably been in Pentecostalism longer than I had, but in a moment of honesty, as she struggled with her physical weakness and sickness, she had to admit the absence of ‘miracle healings’ in the

Pentecostal church.

Miraculous gifts have been “done away” because the canon of Scripture has reached “perfection” — completion (1 Cor. 13:8-10). They are no longer needed.

PENTECOSTALISM IS A CREATION OF MAN

Pentecostals themselves admit its beginnings were in America around the turn of the 20th century. Oral Roberts University makes this claim: “The Pentecostal movement is by far the largest and most important religious movement to originate in the United States. Beginning in 1901 with only a handful of students in a Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, the number of Pentecostals increased steadily throughout the world during the Twentieth Century until by 1993 they had become the largest family of Protestants in the world.” (http://webapps.oru.edu/new_php/library/holyspirit/pentorg1.html)

The *Assemblies of God* official statement says that “the beginning of the modern Pentecostal revival is generally traced to a prayer meeting at Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas, on January 1, 1901.” <http://www.cai.org/bible-studies/history-pentecostal-movement>

It is only fair to mention the fact that the *Church of God* claims tongues speaking around 1896 even though the group did not call themselves Church of God until 1907. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_God_\(Cleveland,_Tennessee\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_God_(Cleveland,_Tennessee)))

The point is this: these groups were clearly started by men in America during the early part of the twentieth century. That makes them nearly nineteen hundred years too late to be the Lord’s church (Matt. 16:18). And, even though they may try to claim relationship with the Christians in Acts chapter two, it doesn’t work. No Christian in the book of Acts or during the first century ever called themselves Pentecostal(s). As a matter of fact, no one throughout church history ever called themselves a Pentecostal. The actual term Pentecostal is derived from

Pentecost, the Greek name for the Jewish Feast of Weeks. It commemorates the anniversary of the day God gave the Torah to the entire nation of Israel assembled at Mount Sinai. True Christians do not attempt to identify with Jewish feast days, they identify with Christ. The book of Acts tells us the disciples were called “Christians” (Acts 11:26).

While I was still a Pentecostal I remember listening to a preacher friend get all emotional about being a Pentecostal and how we should act like Pentecostals. As I sat there, my mind began to reflect on the book of Acts and how that no one in the early church ever referred to themselves as a Pentecostal and how that no one was ever called a Pentecostal. I thought, “Why are we calling ourselves by something different than the first century Christians?” And then I realized, if we are calling ourselves by something different, it must be because we are something different than what they were. My friends, I don’t want to be something different than what the early Christians were. I don’t want to be a part of some modern concoction of man. I just want to be a Christian!

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We want to thank brother Bill Davis for taking the time to tell us about his involvement in Pentecostalism. We appreciate his honest heart in pursuing the truth and his courage to stand in the old paths in obeying God’s word. This three part series has been put together in one document and can be printed and passed out freely. www.seektheoldpaths.com/pentecostalism.pdf

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