JEPTA

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Please do not send your file in a ‘text only’ format. A hard copy version of the paper is no longer acceptable since it means retyping it so electronic versions are preferred.

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Normal no indent for first paragraphs font Palatino Linotype 9.5 pt and justified, single spaced.

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Book reviews are in 2 columns.

Footnote reference number superscript, font Palatino 9.5.

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Abstract: At the head of each paper should be summary of 100-500 (within the 5000 word limit) words and 3-4 keywords on a separate sheet.

Tables and captions to illustrations: Tables may not be printed with the text depending on size. The captions, tables and figures should be numbered by Arabic numerals.

(Cont.. on the end inside page)
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The Journal of the Pentecostal Theological Association (JEPTA) is a peer-
reviewed international journal which has a pedigree stretching back to 1981
when it began as the EPTA Bulletin. Despite its European origins JEPTA has
interests in Pentecostalism world-wide., It aims to promote and report
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- Theology
- Pentecostal / charismatic education
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Editorial Addresses

Editorial Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor above. Books
for review should also be sent to Dr Kay.
A Challenge from Donald Gee: How to be Faithful to the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost

Peter Hocken

I am grateful for the invitation to give the annual Donald Gee lecture. I became aware of the significance of Donald Gee when I was at Birmingham University studying under Professor Walter Hollenweger. Though my eventual Ph. D. thesis was on the origins and early development of the charismatic movement in Britain, I researched the origins of the Pentecostal movement, which later issued in some articles in the Dictionary of the Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements and an article on Cecil Polhill in Pneuma. I lived in the United States for many years becoming actively involved in the Society for Pentecostal Studies, which I served as executive secretary from 1988 to 1997.

During my studies, I acquired many copies of Pentecostal and charismatic periodicals, including almost all issues of Pentecost, edited by Donald Gee from its origins in 1947 until his death in 1966, the whole period of its existence. Professor Hollenweger always spoke of the importance of Donald Gee, and had hoped – without success – to find a student willing to do a Ph. D. thesis on Gee’s editorials in Pentecost. The key ideas developed in this lecture find their starting point in these editorials.

My lecture is presented as ‘A Challenge from Donald Gee’. Gee’s editorials were intended to be challenging – to Pentecostals. In these editorials, he consistently manifested a remarkable honesty in facing the weaknesses he saw within the Pentecostal movement, of which he probably had a better general knowledge than anyone else of his generation. But at the same time he was unmistakably Pentecostal - and Assemblies of God – in the convictions he expressed. At the heart of these convictions was his understanding of Pentecost, the term he often used to describe the whole movement, following a pattern that went back to Azusa Street in 1906. The weaknesses and deviations he identified within the movement he saw as endangering Pentecostal fidelity to the heart of Pentecost. All his writings,

1 Peter Hocken, Hainburg an der Donau, Austria, November 2009, mfach@gmx.at
teaching and ministry could be said to have been devoted to the heart of Pentecost and to the need for Pentecostals to remain faithful to this work of the Holy Spirit.

**The Pentecostal Movement as Revival**

Gee understood the Pentecostal movement as a Revival. In 1953, he wrote that: ‘Pentecost is more than a denomination; it is a REVIVAL.’ It is interesting that he made this statement in the knowledge that people who were not Pentecostals were being baptized in the Holy Spirit without joining Pentecostal assemblies. For in this same article he had written:

My friend\(^3\) says that a certain preacher, after receiving his personal Pentecostal experience, has ‘gone back to the churches.’ But he has not, as I suppose, left the Church. This contradistinction between the Pentecostal Movement and the ‘churches’ is a bad hang-over from the early years of mutual ostracism. ... Let us beware of making it our supreme aim to drag people into our own denomination. If they can maintain unsullied and intact their Pentecostal witness where they are, then let them do it. Our experience causes us to expect that they will have difficulty. ... Our prayer will henceforth be that the floodgates of Pentecostal grace and power that should follow speaking with tongues may be manifested in any and all of the churches.\(^4\)

This extract manifests some characteristic qualities of Donald Gee. What mattered most to him was the Lord Jesus Christ. Uppermost in his mind was the centrality of baptism in the Spirit. What he cared about was the Lord Jesus and the reality of Pentecost. So he learned to abhor all forms of narrowness and sectarian spirit. But he was a realist: hence the comment that is entirely non-judgmental, ‘Our experience causes us to expect that they will have difficulty.’ This represents a change from the younger Gee who had written in a book first published in 1930: ‘In the early days of this Pentecostal Outpouring there were those who emphatically taught believers to receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, but to 'stay in their churches'. There was failure to recognise that 'New Wine needs New Bottles' (Matt. ix. 17). The futile endeavour to force the New Wine of 'Pentecost' into the Old

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\(^2\) ‘‘Tongues’ and Truth’ *Pentecost* (Sept. 1953).
\(^3\) Almost certainly David du Plessis.
\(^4\) du Plessis, Sept. 1953.
Bottles of existing Denominations produced the double disaster predicted by our Lord.’\textsuperscript{5}

However, by 1947 Gee had modified this harsh conclusion, no doubt because his experience had become far more international. In the first year of \textit{Pentecost} magazine, he had written: ‘Before we became so Movement-conscious we thought more often of the Pentecostal Revival as a means of grace to quicken whomsoever the Lord our God should call. Denominational loyalties were a secondary consideration. Let them remain such. The vital necessity of the Movement is that it shall continue and grow as a Revival. Nothing less deserves to be called ‘Pentecostal’.’\textsuperscript{6}

In fact, the change in Gee’s position seems to have dated from 1935 or 1936, when he paid a visit to some Reformed pastors in France who had been baptized in the Spirit through Pentecostal influence. This group, led by Pastor Louis Dallièrè, was to eventually become the Union de Prière de Charmes, which still exists today, and foreshadowed the charismatic renewal of the 1960s. Gee was clearly impressed, for he wrote in \textit{Redemption Tidings}:

\begin{quote}
For the present the Revival is beautiful in its infancy and innocence, and the pastors are humble servants of God with a very loving spirit. They long to see the Holy Spirit working once again in \textbf{OLD-TIME POWER} in their beloved Churches.\textsuperscript{7}
\end{quote}

Gee saw that as long as the consciousness of Pentecost as a revival dominated, there would also be the sense that Pentecost has a significance for the whole Christian world. So he wrote in 1954:

\begin{quote}
Perhaps the most urgent of all questions facing the Pentecostal people themselves is whether those elements of durability within the Movement shall lead them into becoming just one more distinctive denomination among all the others, or whether they shall still try and hold tenaciously to the original concept of the Pentecostal Movement as a \textbf{REVIVAL} to powerfully affect Christians everywhere without crystallising itself in the process.\textsuperscript{8}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{6} D. Gee “Are we too ‘Movement’ conscious?” \textit{Pentecost} 2, December 1947.

\textsuperscript{7} “A Day with the Huguenot Pentecostal Revival”, \textit{Redemption Tidings} 12/4 (Feb. 15, 1936), pp. 1 – 2.

\textsuperscript{8} Donald Gee, “Pentecost Re-Valued” \textit{Pentecost} 28 (June 1954), inside of back cover.
Gee returned to this question in a deliberately ecumenical context in the last issue of *Pentecost* for 1959. Speaking of the rejection of the first generation of Pentecostals, he wrote:

> When believers rejoicing in Pentecostal glory found themselves cast without the pale by the recognized churches they reacted by a counter-ostracism. There was hardly any inter-fellowship between the Pentecostals and all the rest. Very soon the vision of a gracious revival to refresh the whole Church faded. ... Best of all is the news that leaders in these other circles of Christian work and witness are receiving a personal Pentecost and even speaking in tongues. ⁹

In a private letter to an Anglican charismatic less than a year before his death Gee wrote: ‘The trouble with some Pentys is that they have become so denominationally minded. They came out, and so everyone else must also! They want to rope everybody into their sect. But those who try to remain in the older denominations to revivify them will have a job on. But I hope history will not repeat itself.’ ¹⁰

**Revival and Renewal**

For me as a Catholic, Donald Gee’s reflections lead directly into the questions: What is revival for? Is revival enough by itself? I want to pick up some of his statements: first, ‘the Pentecostal Movement as a REVIVAL to powerfully affect Christians everywhere’. Gee may only be speaking here of individual Christians being revived on a scale to impact church life. But when he writes of those ‘who stay in the older denominations to revivify them’, the phrase ‘to refresh the whole Church’ prompts the question: was he feeling his way towards a vision for more than individual transformation on a big scale? Like all committed Catholics, I experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit from the start as a personal transformation that was not just for me or for many individual believers, but as for the whole Church. It is both personal and corporate. That is to say, it concerns both Revival and Renewal. But I also realized from the beginning the truth of what Gee wrote: that we charismatics ‘have a job on’! The coming of the Holy Spirit is always deeply challenging, to believers and to the church at all levels.

My first contribution to a Pentecostal gathering had as its title, ‘The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement as Revival and Renewal’ ¹¹. Years later I

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returned to this theme in a lecture at Nantwich. Renovation speaks of divine intervention, of radical conversion, of new life, of what was dead being made alive. Renewal speaks of revitalization of something that already exists being refreshed, with everything (personal life and church life) being re-centred afresh on Jesus Christ. Revival is a word characteristic of Evangelical - Pentecostal Christianity, that focuses on the essentials, on central life-giving truths of biblical faith (Jesus, Holy Spirit, gospel, cross, baptism in the Spirit); renewal is more the language of the historic churches, as they take the essential core truths and apply them to the wider life of the Church.

Revival focuses on the conversion of the individual believer, hopefully on a massive scale; renewal is based on conversion or turning back to God but begins in the Church, impacts the Christian and moves from transformation of the person to transformation of the Church. In this way the term renewal concerns all aspects of church life – worship, communal, pastoral, educational, missionary, social. Renewal is supremely renewal of church but requires personal transformation. It is an ecclesiological concept. Renewal inevitably leads into the ecumenical issue. Renewal in and through the Holy Spirit is allowing the baptism in the Holy Spirit to form one body and to transform the whole of Christian life. Of course this cannot happen without the transformation of church members. But if revival does not work outwards into transformed corporate life, there will be increasing tension between the corporate patterns and individual believers or groups seeking to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. This is a recipe for further division and the breaking up into even more denominations.

When a revival movement is rejected by the existing church bodies, its focus is to spread revival and the issue of renewal does not immediately arise. Donald Gee belonged to the first two generations of the Assemblies of God. But as the Pentecostal movement enters into its fourth and fifth generations, the issue of renewal cannot be avoided. The longer the

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13 The Airport church in Toronto took up the term “renewal” to describe what many called “the Toronto blessing”, largely I think because Toronto had little impact on non-believers but was experienced by many as a “refreshing” of existing Christian faith. However, I never felt that the Toronto usage was particularly appropriate as it did not have the characteristics I am associating with renewal.

14 The small denominations in the USA that in effect became Pentecostal in the early years were all very recently-formed out of the Holiness movement and were still in an embryonic stage. However, in a few places, such as Sweden, the separation of the Pentecostal movement from the denominations was a more gradual process, as Gee recognized (“Contact is not Compromise” *Pentecost* 53 [Sept. to Nov. 1960]).
Pentecostal movement continues, the more Pentecostals face the issue of corporate renewal for their own denominations and movement. The newer currents such as Latter Rain, the new charismatic churches and Toronto present the Pentecostal denominations with parallel questions to those the Pentecostal movement posed to the older Churches.

**Did Donald Gee prepare the Way for Pentecostals to Embrace the Need for Renewal?**

First, Gee's openness to the work of the Spirit beyond the confines of the Pentecostal denominations contributed significantly to Pentecostals being free to think in a bigger framework. Second, Gee had a real heart for unity among Christians. He felt deeply the scandal of Pentecostal division. His openness gradually extended beyond an openness to the Evangelical heritage, but extended even to those in the World Council of Churches and to Roman Catholics. He was cautious in these new relationships, but he always manifested a generous spirit ready to recognize God's work in other Christians. Obviously his friendship and close association with David du Plessis had a big influence. The relationship between Gee and du Plessis is an important thesis topic waiting to be written because of the wider significance of their friendship. While du Plessis did not play any part in Gee meeting Benedict Heron, a Catholic Benedictine monk, whom he initially mistook for an Anglican, du Plessis' reports on his contacts with Catholics and on the Second Vatican Council must have influenced Gee in his positive sense about Fr Heron. Heron had sent Gee a pamphlet about the Catholic ecumenical pioneer, the Abbé Paul Couturier, about whom Gee responded ‘Such are true Saints of THE CHURCH.’

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15 “Our many divisions call for hearty repentance before God. They are a constant scandal, and not least when we project them on to our mission fields. The Pentecostal Movement has its own confessions to make before it criticizes others, for our divisions are notorious and worldwide.” (“Pentecostals at New Delhi” *Pentecost* 59 [Mar. to May 1962]).

16 Donald Gee had attended part of the Faith and Order conference held at St Andrews, Scotland, in August 1960 with David du Plessis (photo and small item in *Pentecost* 53 [Sept to Nov 1960], p. 16). See also editorial in the same issue. Gee was then invited as an observer to the WCC Assembly in New Delhi in 1961, but he withdrew after warnings from other Pentecostal leaders that his participation could seriously endanger his role in the worldwide Pentecostal movement.

17 See Peter Hocken, *Streams of Renewal* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997), Ch. 8, pp. 44 – 49.

18 The four letters from Gee to Heron are printed in an Appendix in *Streams of Renewal*, pp. 194 – 97. The letter of Oct. 1963 mentions du Plessis and the Council (p. 196).

19 Ibid., p. 194.
Third, as a Pentecostal of the second generation, Gee understood that the continuation of the dynamism and fervour of the first generations can never be guaranteed for the future and has ever to be sought afresh from the Lord. His spiritual and pastoral astuteness together with his honesty and his hatred of humbug led him to write in *Pentecost* about Pentecostal weaknesses and shortcomings in a way that no other Pentecostal was doing. Perhaps only he could do this, seeing the respect in which he was held throughout the world. So he could write: ‘One is almost afraid to publicize some of these [charismatic] testimonies, lest Pentecostal extremists rush in to indoctrinate these novices with their own queer ideas and practices’\(^{20}\). And again: ‘But if, and where, some Pentecostal churches themselves have become ‘old bottles' without further supplies of new Pentecostal wine (sadly we recognize the possibility) there must arise tensions from timidity and even from envy.’\(^{21}\) This recognition was a significant preparation for Pentecostals to face the need for renewal in the third and subsequent generations of their movement.

As he opened up to the charismatic movement and to other Christians beyond the charismatic realm, were there any signs that Donald Gee saw the need for renewal in the way I am describing it? His writings do not really enter into this dimension, for his concept of spiritual transformation did not extend to that of corporate bodies, at least beyond the local level. As I read Gee, the one major obstacle in his theology to such a recognition was the widespread Evangelical belief accepted by most Pentecostals in the ‘invisibility’ of the Church. In an article on Pentecostal attitudes to the ecumenical movement, Gee wrote this revealing sentence:

> ‘The Pentecostal Churches are committed to the concept of the true Church being a spiritual entity comprised of all who are truly in Christ by virtue of the new birth, apart from membership of an outward organisation. Even among themselves they regard ecclesiastical organisation with profound suspicion.’\(^{22}\)

Note the phrases ‘spiritual entity’, ‘outward organisation’ and ‘ecclesiastical organisation’. ‘Institution’ is another word that has totally negative

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\(^{20}\) “Contact is not Compromise” *Pentecost* 53 (Sept. to Nov. 1960).

\(^{21}\) “At the Crossroads” *Pentecost* 56 (June to Aug. 1961). “We recognize that part of your difficulty in the past in accepting your Pentecostal brethren into your midst has been some of our extravagances in word and deed.” (“To our New Pentecostal Friends” *Pentecost* 58 (Dec. 1961 to Feb. 1963).

overtones for Gee. In an editorial expressing very similar convictions he wrote: ‘Institutions cannot love. They are the organized and systematized expressions of practice and doctrine.’ Gee concludes with the statement: ‘For, after all, denominations ARE made up of individuals.’

Gee’s theology prevented him from believing in the renewal of denominations. However, his vision was not completely individualistic, for he did believe in dynamic local assemblies. While he did not believe in renewal beyond the local level, his openness to the work of the Holy Spirit in the charismatic movement can be seen as preparing the way for Pentecostals to move forward and to revise their thinking in the light of Holy Spirit renewal in the other Christian Churches.

Towards a more Ecumenical Ecclesiology

The fundamental theological issue as Pentecostals face the issue of the renewal of their corporate life is probably ecclesiology, a subject to which Pentecostal scholars are beginning to pay serious attention.

Simon Chan from Singapore has directly taken up the ecclesiological issue of the relationship of the believer to the church. In an article entitled ‘Mother Church: Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology’, Chan quickly gets to the heart of the revival–renewal problematic:

Pentecostals share with their Protestant counterparts a very weak, sociological concept of the Church. This has two very negative consequences. First, the church tends to be seen as essentially a service provider catering to the needs of individual Christians. Rarely are individuals thought of as existing for the church. When the church is seen as existing for the individual, then the focus of ministry is on individuals: how individual need can be met by the church. But when individuals are seen as existing for the church, the focus shifts from the individual needs to our common life in Christ: how we as the one people of God fulfil God's ultimate purpose for the universe, namely, to glorify and enjoy God for ever (cf. Eph.1: 6, 12, 14 etc.).

The most fundamental difference between Catholic and Evangelical–Pentecostal ecclesiologies is that Catholics start from the church and then proceed to the Christian, whereas Evangelicals and Pentecostals start from

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24 Miroslav Volk from a Pentecostal background set the tone with his book After His Likeness. Today Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen from Finland is focusing on ecclesiology.
25 Art. in Pneuma 22/2 (2000), citation from pp. 178 – 79. This issue also contains articles by Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen and Ralph del Colle, with a review by David Cole, relevant to the same issues.
the individual believer and only then consider the church. So the challenge is whether Catholic ecclesiology can allow a full place for the creative work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian and not suffocate the Spirit through corporate squashing of the individual, and whether Pentecostal ecclesiology can break out of individualistic thinking and envisage the church not just as intrinsically a body, that is necessarily visible. Can a real body be constituted simply by the voluntary association of individual believers?

Another major difference concerns the role that authority plays in shaping and preserving the unity of the body of Christ. Protestants are typically suspicious of authority with teeth because of the abuse of church authority over many centuries when unity was easily confused with uniformity. But in the Catholic understanding the unity of the church is primarily built up through celebration of liturgy, especially through the eucharist. The role of the eucharist is even more strongly emphasized by the Orthodox Churches. The body is formed above all through the celebration of the eucharist or Lord's supper led by those in the historic succession of church authority. Where the character of the church shines forth (or should shine forth) most clearly is in the liturgical worship of the church, especially the Eucharist. Many scholars think that it was through the experience of holy communion in the eucharist that the apostle Paul arrived at the idea of the church as a body: ‘Because there is one bread, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of of the one bread.’ (1 Cor. 10: 16 – 17). In other words, the church is formed as a body by feeding on the body of the Lord. The unity of the church is not first institutional, but spiritual and incarnate.

This point leads straight into the objection of the historic churches to Donald Gee's ecclesiology. For Gee, typically in the Pentecostal revival, treats visible expressions of church in terms of organization and so only as institutions. As the organization is merely human, so too is the institution. For Catholics, Orthodox and Anglicans, for example – and others – the organic body of the church has an institutional component, but it is much more than an organization or an institution, which though necessary is not the most important aspect of the reality of church and only belongs to the life of the church here on earth. For us, Gee's assertion that ‘denominations are made up of individuals’ seems to be the spiritual equivalent of Margaret Thatcher's famous declaration, ‘There is no such thing as society.’

In 2001 and in 2007, the Vatican managed to offend many Protestants with declarations that the Protestant denominations and communions are not properly churches in the Catholic sense. In the Catholic assessment, there is something lacking that prevents recognition that Protestant
eucharists are the same reality celebrated in Catholic liturgies. However, the way these statements were made was unfortunate. Negative statements about others will inevitably offend them. Two key elements were missing from the presentation of these documents: first, there was no mention of what the Catholic Church can say positively about the Protestant communities and Protestant celebrations of the Lord’s supper. They are not nothing! The Catholic Church has recognized that the Holy Spirit is at work in Christian communities of faith outside the Catholic communion, and not just in churches recognized as churches. Secondly, there was no mention of the fact that other Christian communities of faith can be a better witness to fellowship in Jesus Christ than many Catholic expressions.

So how can a sympathetic Catholic understand the Pentecostal movement? I am arguing for a genuine theology of revival movements and of currents of renewal as they relate to the reality of church. The Pentecostal movement as a revival in its essentials is demonstrably a work of the Holy Spirit. The Pentecostal revival contains giftings and endowments of the Holy Spirit that are of vital importance for the whole church. Here Gee’s sense was profoundly right. The Pentecostal revival is not just for Pentecostals. But while the Pentecostal movement could not have come into being without a strong impulse of the Holy Spirit, the same is not true to the same extent of the Pentecostal denominations: ‘the [Pentecostal] movement was prior to and more basic than the resulting denominations’.”

26 Peter Hocken, The Challenges of the Pentecostal, Charismatic and Messianic Jewish Movements (Franham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 76.

27 The new Pentecostal denominations that called themselves “Churches” seem to have had a more centralized form of government, e.g. the Pentecostal Holiness Church, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, the Church of God in Christ.
local level. But the key question then is the way that local churches fit into the regional church and to the universal church. I do not see that movements of revival that develop into a new denomination (or more often a cluster of new denominations) will ever by themselves form a real body in the sense of which the New Testament speaks of the church as the body of Christ.

In his encyclical letter on ecumenism *Ut Unum Sint* (2005), Pope John Paul II made a number of original statements, e.g.: ‘Ecumenical dialogue is not just an exchange of ideas; it is also an exchange of gifts.’ (para. 28). This profound insight can help us to understand how Revival needs Renewal and vice versa, and how the Evangelical and Pentecostal revivals need the historic Churches and vice versa. We have gifts to receive from each other – not easy because the gifts are very different!

The gifting of the Holy Spirit to the Evangelicals and Pentecostals is found especially in the core-convictions that drive these movements. So the challenge from the Evangelical and Pentecostal movements to the historic churches is whether the churches can allow themselves to be renewed and revitalized by these core-convictions: the uniqueness and authority of the Scriptures as the Word of God, the centrality of conversion and knowledge of Jesus, the atoning work of Jesus on the cross, the primacy of evangelism; and then with the Pentecostals, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the restoration of the spiritual gifts as normal equipment for the church community. Can the historic churches effectively counter the process by which they can become like self-contained religious systems containing great spiritual riches and be renewed through a new level of ‘living from the centre’? This living from the centre requires the witness of the Evangelicals and the Pentecostals.

The gifting of the Holy Spirit in the ancient churches is less easy to describe. But it is real and tangible. It is rooted in a profound grasp of the Incarnation, of the total transformation of Jesus in his resurrection-ascension, following his self-offering of Jesus on the cross, on the liturgy as mediating this Passover of Jesus to the Father, and an organic unity that is passed down from generation to generation. With the organic character goes a fulness and a concern for fulness. So the challenge to the Evangelical and Pentecostal churches from the ancient churches is more complex: but we can say it centres on incarnation (Word becoming flesh), on the corporate character of Christian life in the church, on the unity between the Word, the Spirit and the church, on rootedness in history and on the concern for fulness.
In my understanding, the groupings that have issued from revival movements can only truly form church when they become rightly related to the church of history and the heritage of the centuries. But this is not to say or even to imagine what form this relationship might take. It is not to say that you have to join us. We present major challenges to each other. Each has to receive from the other and we all need to change! So to say that revival and renewal are both necessary is to say that the Christian world including the Catholic and Orthodox Churches needs the Evangelical and Pentecostal movements of revival, and it is saying that these movements need the older churches, including – maybe especially – the Orthodox and the Catholic.

The Challenge of Newer Movements

Before I sum up, it is worth mentioning another dimension of the Holy Spirit’s work – and challenge – in our day. I refer to the new outbreaks of Holy Spirit manifestation that can give this question a sharper focus. In some way, the issues that faced the older Churches in the 1960s with the beginnings of the charismatic movement face the Pentecostal denominations in all the later movements of revival that break out and impact Pentecostals. First of all, there is the challenge to their own renewal. Do these new Spirit-outbreaks occur because the Pentecostal movement is not in reality what the Lord purposed it to be? Second, there is the challenge as to how to treat the new groupings that refuse to be contained within the Pentecostal or older denominations. So the Latter Rain movement that began in 1948 and then the whole wave of new charismatic networks and assemblies on which the Latter Rain had more influence than it did on the Pentecostal denominations. Incidentally there is as yet very little reliable literature treating the whole of this massive worldwide phenomenon. It is perhaps only in Britain with the work, first of Andrew Walker, and now of William Kay, that there are competent and thorough studies. More recently, the Toronto wave from 1994 did not enthuse most Pentecostal denominations, unlike the Pensacola phenomenon that happened in an Assembles of God church in the USA.

The new charismatic phenomenon has raised again the issue of the Ephesian 4: 11 ministries, originally raised by the Apostolic Church and largely rejected by the Pentecostal denominations, with Donald Gee as one of its most persistent critics. One may ask whether on this issue Donald Gee

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28 In Germany, the “new church” phenomenon has been extensively analysed by Reinhard Hempelmann; see for example Hempelmann, “Neue Freikirchen als weltanschauliche und ökumenische Herausforderung – eine Bestandsaufnahme” EPD Dokumentation (17 Februar 2003), pp. 5 – 10.
showed the same spirit of openness that he was later to show to the charismatic movement. The issue is not only whether you institute apostles and prophets in your own midst, but whether you are willing to have fellowship with those who do and whether you allow yourself to be challenged in any way by this phenomenon. It is the ecumenical issue in another form.

In my estimation, the new charismatic networks have evidenced a stronger concern for the issue of church than the Pentecostal movement has typically done, at least in the Northern hemisphere and perhaps most particularly in Britain, where the Brethren background of many leaders has played a role. What I see as a Catholic in the new charismatic groupings is a strong desire for church, a greater striving to form church. While I do not see them being able to form a coherent organic body, I have to say that I see this desire as itself something in which the Holy Spirit is involved. The Holy Spirit is arousing a thirst for church that the Catholic Church should not ignore.

When I say that the new charismatic churches like the Pentecostal churches are not church in the Catholic sense, I am not saying that the Catholic Church cannot learn anything from you or from them, including learning about church. We all have ‘gifts’ to receive from each other. When Christians long for church, God does not give them a stone. The form taken by the new charismatic churches expresses something from the Holy Spirit also concerning the church. I say this of the new churches because they have not yet become denominationalized and for the most part have set themselves against allowing this to happen – which most sociologists of religion say is impossible.

Conclusion

The conviction of Donald Gee that the Pentecostal revival was for the whole Christian world leads inevitably into the area of ecumenism. A movement claiming to be of the Holy Spirit and to have worldwide relevance has to be concerned with the unity of the whole body of Christ. In August 2009 I gave a paper at the EPCRA conference in Oxford on the Pentecostal and charismatic contribution to Christian unity. This theme was chosen because 2010 will see the celebration of the centenary of the Edinburgh missionary conference commonly accepted as the birth of the ecumenical movement. In my paper I looked at the reasons why these two great movements of the twentieth century, the Pentecostal and the ecumenical, have had so little to do with each other. Many Evangelicals and Pentecostals have not liked
what they have seen and heard of the World Council of Churches and they have read this back into the DNA of the ecumenical movement, seeing it as a merely human effort to reconstitute the unity of the Church. I believe that this position is based on an ignorance of the origins and inspiration of the ecumenical movement, which was profoundly missionary and arising from a deep conviction of the sin of division before God.

Here again Donald Gee can be a good mentor for Pentecostals today. He insisted to his fellow-Pentecostals that contact is not compromise. When he met other Church leaders, he was always a faithful Pentecostal ready to give witness to his Pentecostal faith. ‘In personal conversations one was perfectly frank about our strongly fundamentalist views in theology. These were respected within the broad range of acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.’ He was constrained in what he could do by the fears and warnings of fellow Pentecostal leaders. As a denominational leader with a teaching ministry throughout the Pentecostal world, he did not have the freedom of his friend David du Plessis, who was penalized for his ecumenical convictions. But the editorials in Pentecost and his correspondence with du Plessis show that Gee was fully one in spirit with du Plessis, who insisted that ‘he was free to go wherever the Holy Spirit was free to go’. Donald Gee had written in 1963 that ‘The time has come for the phenomena connected with the Pentecostal Movement to be integrated with older systems of theology.’ In Oxford leading Pentecostal scholars from all continents were manifesting a new openness towards a recentred ecumenical movement. That is my prayer for you, that you as Pentecostals will be able to take whatever place is appropriate in the coming together of all Christians and for you to give your Pentecostal testimony and to share your Pentecostal gifts with all others who confess the name of Jesus Christ.

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29 See Pentecost editorial with this title, 53 (Sept. - Nov. 1960) and “Pentecostals at New Delhi”, Pentecost 59 (March to May 1962).
30 Pentecost 53.