

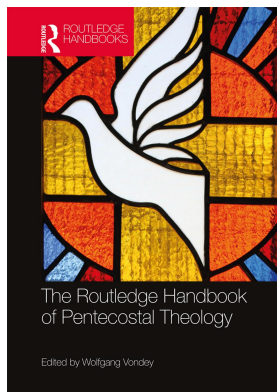
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## The Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology

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### Tradition

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## 9

# TRADITION

## Retrieving and updating Pentecostal core beliefs

*Simon Chan*

Is there any sense to speak of a Pentecostal tradition if Pentecostalism is more of a movement than a structured community? Even when the first Pentecostals organized themselves, they consciously eschewed the word “church” as a self-designation. Yet, over time, Pentecostals recognized the need for ecclesiastical structures; in fact, their existing fellowship and assemblies formed a *de facto* structure. But it is only in more recent times that Pentecostals have begun to think theologically about themselves as a tradition. This interest may have been the result of their long-running dialogues with the Roman Catholic Church and the emergence of theological scholarship among Pentecostals. It is therefore not surprising that interest in the nature of tradition coincides with interest in Pentecostal theology and especially ecclesiology. In this chapter, I suggest that tradition as a source for Pentecostal theology reveals a deep-seated internal conflict among Pentecostals between a weak ecclesiology and the need for ecclesiastical structures. The formation of Pentecostal tradition relies strongly on the theology of the Pentecostal movements, and the way this theology is articulated, practised, and traditioned. The chapter begins with a definition of the nature of tradition and details the nature of the conflict. I then illustrate the conflict in the case of glossolalia and conclude with a discussion of the relationship of tradition to the development of doctrine and the formulation of tradition through *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement*.

### **The nature and problem of tradition**

Alasdair MacIntyre’s (1988, 12) well-known definition of tradition may serve as a starting point for the discussion.

A tradition is an argument extended through time in which certain fundamental agreements are defined and redefined in terms of two kinds of conflict: those with critics and enemies external to the tradition who reject all or at least key parts of those fundamental agreements, and those internal, interpretative debates through which the meaning and rationale of the fundamental agreements come to be expressed and by whose progress a tradition is constituted.

In an earlier work, MacIntyre (1981, 207) defines “a living tradition” as “an historically extended socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition. Within a tradition the pursuit of goods extends through generations, sometimes through many generations.” In a given community, a tradition concerns the “pursuit of goods” necessary for the continuity and survival of the community. Those definitions could be applied principally to any community, although they do not immediately convey what those “fundamental agreements” or “goods” are. It suggests that external threats to the fundamental agreements could harm, while progress in internal debate over those agreements could help, the tradition. There is a clear historical dimension to a tradition: the “goods” are not created *in vacuo* but are passed from generation to generation (“through time”). Tradition presupposes a stable community with a history, and the history of any community is the accumulation of its collective memory expressed in its core beliefs, shared values, stories, and practices. For the healthy development of any community, two on-going activities are always evident: retrieval (*ressourcement*) and updating (*aggiornamento*) of its fundamental agreements. If these fundamental agreements are lost or radically altered, the community loses its distinctive identity, morphs into something quite different from what it was originally envisioned, or simply disintegrates.

There are a number of features in MacIntyre’s definition which can be fruitfully applied to the development of the Pentecostal tradition. According to Coulter (2014, 2), what binds a Pentecostal community together is “a common narrative identity into which persons became caught up as they encountered Christ in the Spirit.” These narratives or stories (see Chapter 4) are meaningful to the extent that they embody the distinctive Pentecostal ethos for “[a]part from the spirituality of encounter within the pentecostal ethos . . . these narratives lost meaning” (Coulter, 3). This emphasis would explain the pervasiveness of early Pentecostal testimonies and why they followed a certain theological pattern (see Chapter 16). Each personal testimony which conforms to the community’s narrative is a “commitment act” signalling initiation into and finding validation within the Pentecostal community (McDonnell 1983, 337). The personal stories, in turn, reinforce the community’s narrative.

Today, however, this pattern is not always apparent. What we hear are a plethora of conflicting stories that are phenomenologically similar but do not readily share theological affinity. Testimonies, which ensure the passing down of the Pentecostal story from generation to generation, no longer form an important part of worshipping communities. If tradition is about a line of reasoning (“arguments”), then, what we are seeing today would not be readily understood in terms of a Pentecostal tradition (or traditions). Instead, what we have are communities of feelings but not a coherent community with shared fundamental agreements. Many churches have become collectivities of individuals in constant flux. In this respect, part of the Pentecostal movement is perhaps better described as a “common consciousness” comparable to the fluid “women’s experience” of feminist spirituality and New Age spirituality (Woodhead 1995, 207). On the other hand, there are still Pentecostal churches rooted in a tradition or seeking fresh understandings of their tradition, and it is in reference to such churches that this essay is primarily concerned.

The sign of a robust community is a strong traditioning process. But Pentecostal communities have been weak at traditioning because they have not, until recently, thought much about their ecclesiology (Chan 2000b). Pentecostals have always emphasized the work of the Spirit, but spiritual operations are often understood in relation to individuals and harbour a weak ecclesiology (see Chapter 27). The church as a body is not just an amorphous collection of living cells but assumes a visible form and structure. Theologically, the church as a living body of Christ is a spiritual organism existing as a visible structure joined to Christ its head;

it is the *totus Christus* (Chan 2000a). A body without flesh and bones is not a real body but a docetic body. Similarly, if the church is merely a collectivity of persons and not bound together by the Spirit with its institutions, ministry, sacraments, and hierarchy—if the “real” church is to be found only in its “spiritual” activities—then it is a docetic church. The church in all its visible authority structures and its gifts is the dwelling place of the Spirit (Eph 2:20, 21 cf. 4:4–11). But the church does not control the Spirit; rather, it is the Spirit who controls the church. The fear of structures has led to the degrading of Pentecostalism as a tradition. If there is to be a vibrant Pentecostal tradition, Pentecostals must resolve this internal conflict.

The problem of a weak ecclesiology will not be resolved as long as Pentecostalism is impelled by the spirit of Joachimism and, with it, a tendency to pit charisma against institution. Moltmann’s (1992, 295–98) wide influence among Pentecostal scholars has in some way contributed to this state of affairs: his understanding of salvation history reflects favourably the idea of progress in Joachim of Fiore, with its tendency to pit freedom of the Spirit against the church’s institution, authority, and hierarchy. It is not uncommon to find Pentecostal scholars taking a similar position, as evident in resistance to my own work:

[A]s a Pentecostal I resist Chan’s insistence on a hierarchical Trinitarian ordering which is reflected in Church hierarchy, instead preferring a social reading of the Trinity. Ultimately, Chan’s project is overburdened by hierarchical assumptions and a High Church episcopacy that many Pentecostals would find disconcerting.

(Althouse 2009, 238)

Instead of considering why a hierarchical understanding of the church is necessary (or unnecessary) for a Pentecostal ecclesiology, Pentecostals often dismiss hierarchy, as if it is so obviously wrong for Pentecostals that no further reason is needed. But the issue is far from settled: in their dialogues with Catholics, Pentecostals expressed surprise that some of their commonly held assumptions, like believer’s baptism, Free Church ecclesiology, and a memorialist view of the Lord’s Supper, were not uniformly held by all Pentecostals (Robeck 2012). It would not come as a surprise, therefore, if the work of Pentecostal *ressourcement* challenges some of the assumptions of many classical Pentecostals from the West concerning egalitarianism as a universal norm (Hocken 2016, 10–11).

Many social anthropologists, ethnographers, and historians have also questioned a unidimensional concept of egalitarianism, authority, and human agency. They have demonstrated that what are regarded as universal values are actually culturally conditioned (Brusco 1995; Williams 2014). Mahmood (2005, 16) notes that “anthropologists . . . have long acknowledged that the terms people use to organize their lives are not simply a gloss for universally shared assumptions about the world and one’s place in it, but are, actually constitutive of different forms of personhood, knowledge, and experience.” Church leadership, for example, cannot be reduced to the question, “Who’s in charge?” (Williams 2014, 272). In Pentecostal churches outside the West, men usually exercise formal leadership while women assume informal or prophetic leadership (Martin 1998). In mega-Pentecostal churches in Asia, like Yoido Full Gospel Church in Korea and the Word of Life Church in China, woman leadership predominates (Ma 2018). Outside the West, leadership roles of men and women are a lot more complex than the way Western egalitarians (and their opposition) make them out to be.

Usually it is the dominant culture that regards its particular view of equality and freedom as universally valid. But one must ask, à la MacIntyre: Which equality? Whose hierarchy? In point of fact, if there is to be one church, hierarchy is necessary. As Edith Humphrey (2003, 140) has argued, “oneness requires order if there is to be more than a simple unity” and “this

order must be constituted by hierarchy (i.e. with a *hieros*, ‘sacred;’ *arche*, ‘head’ or ‘source’), if we are speaking about unity among persons with wills and affections.” The real issue for Pentecostals, therefore, is not a choice between egalitarianism and hierarchicalism but what kind of equality or hierarchy is needed for the church to develop as a strong and living tradition. It is precisely a failure in Pentecostal history to develop a sound theology of church order that has led to the repeated abuse of authority, as seen in the Latter Rain movement in the 1940s, the Shepherding movement in the 1970s, and more recently, the New Apostolic Reformation which is essentially a reinvention by the late Peter Wagner of the two preceding streams (McNair Scott 2014, 182–93). These abuses of authority show that Pentecostals need a theology of church order and authority, but without a robust ecclesiology, they cannot develop such a theology where spiritual gifts are properly regulated without stifling the freedom of the Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 12 and 14; 1 Thess. 5:19–22). In fact, it is when Pentecostals develop a theology of church order that they can contribute to the renewal of the traditional liturgy (Chan 2011, 120–22) and shape a constructive and therapeutic sense of tradition.

### The Pentecostal *sensus fidelium*

Pentecostalism as a historical movement has its precursors. Its language of Spirit baptism is traceable to John Fletcher and Charles Finney, and the experience of glossolalia can be found sporadically in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. But what set Pentecostals apart was the theological connection between Spirit-baptism (see Chapter 23) and glossolalia and their placement as an “initial physical evidence” of Spirit-baptism (see Chapter 28). It is this special connection between Spirit-baptism and glossolalia which gave Pentecostals their distinctive identity. As Frank Macchia (1998, 12) points out, speaking with tongues may not be central to the gospel, but as the most distinctive part of the Pentecostal community “tongues have a place in the Christian credo of Pentecostal churches.” The initial evidence doctrine, taken in isolation, may not be a broad enough basis for sustaining the Pentecostal tradition, but as part of the “crown jewel” of Pentecostal faith (Macchia 2006), and when taken together with other core beliefs, it becomes necessary for Pentecostals to continue to focus on this vital issue if Pentecostal churches are to develop as vibrant and distinctive Pentecostal communities. The current state of affairs in many Pentecostal churches is that while the doctrine is officially endorsed, a significant number of Pentecostal ministers and theologians have raised doubts about it. According to a recent survey, the initial evidence teaching is the primary theological reason for Pentecostal scholars leaving their denomination (Lewis 2008, 76). This does not augur well for long-term theological traditioning, since without an adequate “rationale of fundamental agreements,” the Pentecostal tradition will break down.

In its initial years, this core belief was supported experientially by the Pentecostal faithful. In other words, it was grounded in the *sensus fidelium*, which could be understood as consensual orthodoxy implicit in the shared experience of the faithful, both the laity and the leaders. The role of the theologian is to articulate the *sensus fidei* among the Pentecostal faithful. This task means that there must be constant dialogue between Pentecostal leaders (including scholars and theologians) and the people in the pews. The Pentecostal *sensus fidelium* can be defined as the whole church consisting of leaders *and* people working in mutual dependence to discern the movement of the Spirit. From this process of shared discernment, a consensual set of core beliefs emerges. Pentecostal theologians, in particular, cannot ignore the experience of the faithful, if they are to be true to their calling as theologians of the church, any more than the faithful can ignore the direction of the theologians who seek faithfully to articulate the *sensus fidei*.

The situation is bleak if Pentecostal theologians abandon their church's core belief and ignore the *sensus fidelium*, for it is in dialogue that those who have difficulty coming to terms with the doctrine of initial evidence will find their own experience validated. Jack Hayford, in commending the "beauty" of glossolalia, implicitly accepts the "initial evidence" as experience, even though as a doctrine he finds it problematic: "Doctrinal arguments presented by separate sectors of the church neither convinced me nor dissuaded me. I somehow sense there was a valid experience somewhere between the cracks of human debating" (Hayford 1992, 35). Speaking as a pastor, Hayford (1992, 96–97) notices that despite the inability to articulate the integral connection between being filled with the Spirit and glossolalia, the fact of the matter is that whenever he prayed for people to be filled, glossolalia followed.

The dialogue between church theologians and the people of God can be restated in terms of the relationship between primary and secondary theology. The widespread experience of Spirit baptism coupled with glossolalia constitutes the *theologia prima* of the Pentecostal faithful. The initial evidence *doctrine* is the attempt to make sense of the experience and could therefore be called *theologia secunda*. The first is the experience of the people of God, including, hopefully, the Pentecostal theologian; the second is primarily the work of theologians. *Theologia prima* as lived theology is far richer and deeper than one's ability to articulate it. It includes tacit knowledge (Polanyi 1983) involving all our senses which cannot be fully expressed in words. Secondary theology serves as pointers to and seeks to make the best sense of primary theology. What the early Pentecostal leaders lacked were the conceptual tools for such a task, and consequently, they were unable to transmit their lived experience to subsequent generations.

If we begin by taking seriously the *sensus fidelium* of the early Pentecostals in which the connection between Spirit-baptism and glossolalia was consistently experienced and affirmed, then the corollary question of how to make the best sense of this experience today entails two methodological issues. First, if the Bible taken as a whole is the key text of the Pentecostal community, then we need to approach doctrine canonically, going beyond the methods of "biblical theology" or exegeting key texts which locate Spirit baptism in the context of salvation history (Stronstad 1984; Fee 1985; Menzies 1991). A canonical approach takes other related teachings from the canon into consideration and moves beyond biblical to systematic and historical theology, and such an approach was in fact characteristic of early Pentecostals (Thomas and Alexander 2003; Green 2012, 189–90).

Equally, the Pentecostal community does not exist in isolation from other Christian communities. There are older Christian communities which share spiritual affinities with Pentecostals, and Pentecostals need to draw from the larger Christian tradition where they discover a more developed theology of prayer than in modern-day Protestantism and evangelicalism. Here, they will discover that glossolalia as prayer, although called by different names, finds its "fit" within the mystical tradition. It shares the same logic as mystical silence; they are part of the same "language game" (Chan 1997, 2000b). In contrast, while the initial evidence doctrine has become a stumbling block to many Pentecostals, the expectation of glossolalia, when one is filled with the Spirit, continues to be taught to and experienced by millions of Catholic charismatics in their Life in the Spirit Seminars (International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services 2011) in a manner that comes surprisingly close to the classical Pentecostal view.

### Tradition and the development of doctrine

Any community as a "polis" inevitably faces conflicts or challenges from without and within. Usually challenges from without force members of the community to respond, and differing responses can result in internal conflicts. For the most part, classical Pentecostals

have not been very successful in their attempt to respond to external and internal challenges. Some seek to defend classical Pentecostal doctrines in the way they were originally formulated (Arrington 1992–1994; Horton 1995). Others accept the experience of glossolalia but question its dogmatic status (e.g. Clifton 2007). The former understand the initial evidence doctrine statically, while the latter find it indefensible and reject their own core belief.

The Pentecostal community needs to be open to change if it is to respond effectively to these challenges. The changes, however, should not fundamentally alter its core beliefs; otherwise, the community loses its basic identity. Thus, faithful traditioning is about changes in historical continuity with a community's core belief (“an argument *through time*”), not its abandonment or substitution. In the case of the Pentecostal community, the initial evidence doctrine requires revision and reconfiguration so as to make better sense of the “integral connection” between Spirit baptism and glossolalia (Macchia 1998, 4–5).

If we apply the characteristics of tradition to the Pentecostal movement, we begin to see that what is at stake in Pentecostal theology today is not so much the development of doctrine as the rapid mutation of Pentecostal core beliefs (Chan 2016). There are many factors contributing to the unravelling of the Pentecostal tradition, not the least of which is the theology of glory and triumphalism (Courey 2015), as seen in many evangelicals–turn–charismatics who have also largely abandoned the doctrine of Spirit baptism and initial evidence. Another factor is that Pentecostalism today is widely defined phenomenologically rather than by “fundamental agreements.” The hyphenated descriptor “Pentecostal-charismatic” is indicative of this fact, since it covers a vast range of disparate organizations and movements whose common denominator is extremely fluid and almost impossible to pin down as a single theological tradition. The problem with a phenomenological description is that it lacks theological specificity and may even be contradictory (Kent 1995, 86–103). Such lack of theological focus hampers the formation of a Pentecostal tradition.

Instead, the Pentecostal tradition must be understood in all its theological specificity. As Daniel Castelo (2017, 47) has observed, “Pentecostals insist on describing themselves in terms of *theological concern*” and thus “focus their attention, testimonies, and passions on *who God is and what God is doing*, and they specify ‘God’ as none other than the One proclaimed by and at work in Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit” (emphasis original). This theologizing is why Pentecostal traditioning must begin with its roots in Pentecostal doctrines. Even though its early doctrinal formulation left much to be desired, it needs to be retrieved and rearticulated in a way that is faithful to the Pentecostal *theologia prima* and also responsive to the changing contexts in which Pentecostals find themselves. Such is the nature of the development of doctrine, and the failure of classical Pentecostals and modern charismatics is a failure in understanding the nature of the development of doctrine. In this respect, Pentecostals have much to learn from the older Christian traditions. Catholicism and Orthodoxy are better at retrieval and updating; for them, *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* must always go together (D’Ambrosio 1991).

If a living tradition is a “historically extended socially embodied argument,” then Pentecostals need to take the historical extension of their distinctive core belief more seriously, namely, the connection between Spirit baptism and glossolalia. Arguably, this is best done by locating glossolalia within the mystical tradition. Glossolalia as initial evidence shares the same logic as the Christian mystical experience where in the paradoxical *act* of surrender (an active passivity), the person crosses a threshold and experiences a major paradigm shift, an epiphany, to which he or she spontaneously responds in glossolalic utterances, or in the case of the mystic, in silence or a kind of “sleep,” as seen in St. Teresa of Avila (Chan 2000b, 40–72; Castelo 2017, 126–157). For Catholics with a long history of mysticism and a

mystical theology undergirding it, glossolalia could be meaningfully assimilated. But Pentecostals, lacking knowledge of the mystical tradition, are unable to find the language that adequately encapsulates their experience. We see this again in Hayford (1992, 47–50), when commenting on the phrase, “they began to speak . . . as the Spirit gave them utterance,” who comes close to what we have noted in Christian mystical experiences, namely, an active receptivity. According to Hayford, we need to make a decision, yet it is the Spirit who enables us to speak: glossolalia is “naturally supernatural.” Hayford (1992, 38) also links glossolalia to deep intimacy: “Asking questions of someone who spoke in tongues like ‘How did you do it?’ seem like invading a personal privacy, like asking a couple to describe their wedding night.” One is reminded of Christian mystics who often speak of union with God in terms of the intimacy of nuptial union. But unlike Hayford, the mystics are quite explicit about it, sometimes using highly evocative and sensual language, such as the poem of St. John of the Cross (2005, 30). It is this explicit capturing of Pentecostal core experiences that promises ground for the recovery of a Pentecostal tradition.

### The recovery of a Pentecostal tradition

There are positive signs of change in recent years. First, a growing interest in ecclesiology among Pentecostal scholars inevitably raises the issue of tradition (Thomas 2010; Green 2016). Second, Pentecostal *ressourcement* is gaining pace. Perhaps the most important rediscovery is that early Pentecostals were far more sacramental in theology and practice than their present descendants. This fact has been highlighted in a number of recent works. Daniel Tomberlin (2010) has shown that water baptism, the Lord’s Supper, footwashing, and anointed touch (anointing with oil and laying on of hands) were no mere rituals but in them Christ was encountered in a real way. Healing was reported in the sacrament of footwashing (75) and the Lord’s Supper (168–78). As he puts it, “early Pentecostals intuitively knew that there is a ‘real presence’ in the celebration of the sacraments. . . . In the early published writings of the Church of God, the Lord’s Supper was known as ‘the Sacrament’” (76–77). Chris Green (2012), in a wide-ranging exploration of early Pentecostal literature, has uncovered pervasive sacramental teachings and practices. According to Green, what led to the loss of Pentecostal sacramentality was the “marriage” between Pentecostals and evangelicals after the Second World War. Similar works of retrieval are being done in the United Kingdom, most notably by Jonathan Black of Apostolic Church (2016). Black has shown how central the Lord’s Supper was for the early Apostolic Christians: “The church feeds on Christ ‘substantially.’ It is this substance of ‘His body and His blood’ which is the church’s sustenance” (95). The Apostolic Church even compiled a hymnal on the Lord’s Supper (Macpherson 1974). Black has also shown that the early Apostolic churches set Spirit-baptism “firmly within the context of the church and leave no room for it to be considered a privatised Christian experience” (33). Pentecostal theology is more than an interpretation of sacramental practices; it is at heart a tradition attuned to a sacramentality that emerges from the very being of the Pentecostal life.

The recovery of Pentecostal sacramentality fleshes out two other related doctrines which are critical in advancing the Pentecostal tradition. One is a robust incarnational theology. Tomberlin (2010, 87) describes Pentecostal spirituality as “not simply spiritual; it is *encountering* the Holy Spirit with our human senses as the Spirit moves and interacts in our *physical world*. Pentecostalism is a *physical spirituality*” (emphasis original). Without the Incarnation there is no *body* of Christ on earth (Black, 100–102). This incarnational theology in early Pentecostalism stands in sharp antithesis to the Third Wavers and modern evangelical charismatic Christians who tend to focus mostly on a “spiritual” Christ especially in their worship



“experience” (Ward 2005). Third Wave charismatics, therefore, cannot be said to represent a genuine development of the Pentecostal tradition.

A second positive development is a discovery of the mystical dimension of Pentecostal theology. Here again, Pentecostals have much to learn from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal teaching that the sacramental and the mystical are intimately linked: the sacrament is by nature a mystery which defies explanation; it is “objective efficacy which cannot be further analysed” (Lewis 1978, 105). In the Incarnation, Christ is revealed as the sacrament of God—the mysterious union of the divine and the human. The mystical union between Christ and his church and each individual Christian, between bread and wine and the body and blood, is predicated on the mystery of the Incarnation. The recovery of the sacramental and mystical shows that the theological roots of Pentecostalism are much deeper than its historical roots in the Holiness-Keswick traditions. This recovery is a hopeful sign that Pentecostal core beliefs can be adequately developed using sacramental and mystical resources. The recent work of Daniel Castelo (2017) has shown that Pentecostalism can indeed be understood theologically as a specific manifestation of Christian mysticism (see also Chan 2000b; 2019). With this understanding, the classical formulation of the Pentecostal doctrine of initial evidence can be reformulated without denying the *theologia prima* the Pentecostal forebears were trying to communicate (Chan 2011, 4–7). Only as Pentecostal churches begin to revitalize their tradition through *ressourcement* will they be able to preserve their Pentecostal identity. The emphasis on Pentecostal theology as mystical is a helpful step towards articulating a Pentecostal tradition.

### Tradition between *aggiornamento* and *ressourcement*

The contemporary Pentecostal movement is so fluid that it is often difficult to tell apart internal and external conflicts. Some classical Pentecostals have turned charismatic, embracing many of the beliefs and practices of the Third Wave like apostleship which carries “frightening implications” (Blumhofer 1993, 3), while other classical Pentecostals have clearly rejected them (Rice 2005). Historically, Pentecostals are better at *aggiornamento* than *ressourcement*. This is epitomized in their popular slogan: “God is doing a new thing!” Much of Pentecostal scholarship is focussed on engaging cultures and seeking relevance without a corresponding concern for the Pentecostal tradition (see Yun 2003, 148–49). The problem of updating without the prerequisite of retrieval is the tendency to succumb to the spirit of the age. The Third Wave is a clear example of cultural accommodation. Some may see this new charismatic movement as an ally in its rejection of secularism in the West. Ben Pugh (2017, 122), for example, gives John Wimber and Bill Johnson high marks while conceding that Johnson’s eschatology “teeters on the brink between inaugurated and realized” (119). Pugh even compares it favourably with Radical Orthodoxy. But the new charismatic movement not only lacks the sophistication and nuances of Radical Orthodoxy, it also draws from the worst features of the pre-modern by its uncritical acceptance of the animistic worldview (Priest, Mullen, and Campbell 1999) and from the worst of late modernity by reconstructing the individual in accordance with the flux and fluidity of the moment (Walker 2002). Nowhere is its capitulation to modern culture more evident than in contemporary forms of “praise and worship” (Percy 1996; Ward 2005). Tradition as a source for Pentecostal theology remains volatile and often immobilized between the demands of updating and retrieving its fundamental agreements. Pentecostal theology has only recently become attuned to the tensions between sacred and secular manifested with particular clarity in Pentecostal worship.

## Conclusion

Pentecostalism as a tradition, historically and theologically, faces significant challenges that impact the articulation, development, and function of Pentecostal theology. The rediscovery of early Pentecostalism's sacramental and mystical tradition in the context of an emerging ecclesiology has a profound effect on the future of Pentecostal churches and their core identity as a shared tradition. The common assumption that the Pentecostal trajectory is basically Free Church and egalitarian is perhaps relevant to a small segment of the Pentecostal world, namely, Pentecostalism in the West. For the development of the Pentecostal tradition as a whole, the best form of *aggiornamento* is through *ressourcement*.

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