

2015

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## Recommended Citation

Swoboda, A.J., "Eco-Glossolalia: Emerging Twenty-First Century Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology" (2015). *Faculty Publications - Portland Seminary*. 95.  
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# **Eco-Glossolalia: Emerging Twenty-First Century Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology**

A. J. Swoboda<sup>1</sup>

## **ABSTRACT**

This study sets out first to chart developments in an emerging and growing body of research in the field of Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology. This literature is grouped within three main trajectories characterized as Pentecostal and Charismatic Social Justice Theology, Pentecostal and Charismatic Spirit/Creation Theology, and distinctively Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology. Second, this study experiments with a possible pneumatological metaphor that can remedy the growing need for Pentecostal scholarship in the area of ecotheology: *the Spirit baptized creation*.

*Keywords:* ecotheology, Pentecostal, Charismatic, ecological crises, global warming

## **Introduction**

This article discusses Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology in the twenty-first century. First, it outlines three central trajectories of twenty-first century Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology and Theology of the land: Pentecostal and Charismatic Social Justice Theology, Pentecostal and Charismatic Spirit/Creation Theology, and distinctive Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology. Second, it suggests a pneumatological approach to the ecological crisis based on the *Spirit baptized creation* with a reflective conclusion in regards to potential horizons within Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology.

We begin with a crisis. Evidence suggests significant changes in the earth's ecosystem as a result, presumably, of human inhabitants. The global average surface-temperature has increased 0.74° Celsius (1.3°F) over the last century

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causing sea levels to rise approximately 17cm (Houghton, 2004; IPCC, 2007). Polar ice caps are melting, resulting in the potential destruction of many islands, such as the Maldives. Climate models project additional warming of 1.1° to 6.4° Celsius with sea-levels rising 18 to 59 cm by the end of the century. The ecological, economic, and cultural consequences are enormous. According to the World Water Council (2010), 1.1 billion individuals lack safe drinking water, 2.6 billion lack adequate sanitation, 1.8 million die from diarrheal disease (90% women and children), and 3,900 children die daily for lack of water or hygiene. Furthermore, farming has depleted rain forests at alarming speeds, global carbon outputs from industry outweigh the ecosystem's ability to digest them, and species loss seems commonplace.

Lynn White (1974) placed the blame of the ecological crisis on Western Christianity's failure to achieve a theological heritage inclusive of all of non-human existence. Christian theology has since attempted a range of responses (Granberg-Michaelson, 1988; Nash, 1996; Gottlieb, 2004). Since the 1970s, Christian green theology has sought to fill the lacuna in late-modern theology. Roman Catholics such as Karl Rahner (1966), Teilhard de Chardin (1965), Matthew Fox (2000), and Thomas Berry (2006) have framed a robust ecological conversation. In the Orthodox tradition, Paulos Gregorios (1978) and Patriarchate Bartholomew (Bartholomew and Chrysavgis, 2003) are re-imagining. Protestants such as Paul Santmire (1985) and Jürgen Moltmann (1997) have produced anew a green theology. Similarly, the ecofeminist approach has made a contribution through Sallie McFague (1993), Rosemary Ruether (1993), and Elizabeth Johnson (1997). Yet in stark contrast, Pentecostal and Charismatics have played a significantly less visible role in the ecumenical ecotheology dialogue.

Undoubtedly, Pentecostal and Charismatics have taken strong stances against demons, disease, and poor exegesis, yet they have often struggled to face the larger societal and systemic evils of our day; what Murray Dempster calls a 'social quietism' (Dempster, 1993: 52). It has become clear that Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology and eco-ethics are noticeably *quiet*. Some, such as Mel Robeck, have sought to understand the origin of this quietism. Robeck (1993) has illustrated the looming problems with a Pentecostal uncritical alignment with the National Association of Evangelicals in 1945 and its distancing from the World Council of Churches and the potentially fruitful ecumenical relationship that would come from it. This could perhaps explain why Pentecostals have been virtually absent from the ecumenical ecological conversation; yet can this account for it entirely? Simon Chan has similarly shown that Pentecostalism has shied away from a liturgical richness often pitting tradition and creedal Christianity against 'the spontaneous and novel work of the Spirit' (Chan, 2000: 22-23).

This article suggests that Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology remains much like their *glossolalia*, full of beauty and mystery, but in desperate need of interpretation. Within Pentecostal and Charismatic communities, ecotheological efforts are often viewed with suspicion. On the one hand, for many Pentecostals, ecotheology is perceived as a needless endeavor, including those who view it as an unnecessary critique of conservative capitalism. Others, committed to apocalyptic eschatology, believe that, since the world is going to ‘burn up anyway’, Christians need to busy themselves in saving souls, not soils. For these and other reasons, Pentecostal soteriology in the West remains almost entirely an individualistic and anthropocentric affair. On the other hand, in light of the ecological crisis at hand, renewed ecotheology is paramount. Moreover, Pentecostal ecotheology, if based on a very communal understanding of Pentecost where the Spirit baptizes ‘all flesh’ (Acts 2:17), will be by definition a critical questioning of individualistic soteriology. It will suggest a pneumatological experience of creation in God’s world as a novel work of the Spirit, a renewed experience, and an uncovered creed long lost and forgotten in the Pentecostal community of caring for and living within God’s creation (rooted in the first chapter of Genesis). In order to clarify current developments in Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology, this paper distinguishes between three central trajectories, characterized as: Pentecostal and Charismatic Social Justice Theology, Pentecostal and Charismatic Spirit/Creation Theology, and distinctive Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology.

### **Pentecostal and Charismatic Social Justice Theology**

The first trajectory, Pentecostal and Charismatic Social Justice Theology, envisions social justice and ecological care as a charismatic Spirit-inspired activity. Beginning with Larry Christenson’s (1974) exploration of a charismatic social justice, we see a preliminary attempt at an explicitly Charismatic approach towards social-action based almost entirely on the pneumatology of Charismatic Roman Catholic Killian McDonnell. This ‘Spirit-filled’ approach to social justice is derived from, ‘a charismatic approach to social issues...which is both initiated and carried out in the power of the Holy Spirit’ (McDonnell, 1974: 11). That is to say social action is authored first by the Spirit of God, second by human agency. Spirit baptism, therefore, becomes both a social/political force in the *personal* and becomes the power for transformative practice in the *cosmos*.

Pentecostal social theology and praxis have been influenced heavily by liberation theologies (Sepulveda, 1988). Globally, Pentecostalism and liberationist communities often exist hand-in-hand, attempting to bring sustainable freedom to oppressed peoples and lands. This is no more true than in the Southern

hemisphere where Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism have increasingly thrived numerically, especially in Latin America. These cultures, where Pentecostals and Roman Catholics interact, often breed liberation theologies from the ground up with emphasis on a return to ethical living, freedom of the oppressed, and in many cases the defense of rainforests, water supplies, and farm land.

As José Comblin (1989) has shown, social justice, ecological ethics, and equitable and sustainable living are central tenets of liberation theology. This is only one example of how Chilean Pentecostal Eldin Villafañe's (1993) extensive research has greatly assisted Pentecostal scholarship by bringing such liberationist voices of South America to the discussion. Villafañe has suggested over and over again that Pentecostal spirituality, embodied in such cultures (e.g. Chile), engenders a religious/political climate concentrated on a sort of holistic soteriology. This liberationist soteriology emphasizes salvation of the soul/spirit *and* a deep and sincere desire for the salvation of the entire world. This soteriological holism will often lead him to situate his ethical programme to the forefront of his pneumatology.

Murray Dempster (1993) has illustrated how there remains a meta-tension between Pentecostal and Liberation theologies: *eschatology*. Although Pentecostal traditions often mesh with social justice *praxis* found in liberation theologies, an ensconced *theological* suspicion in Western Pentecostals concerning the overall intention and vision of Liberation Theology often argues this somehow takes away from the real gospel of Jesus Christ. This theological divergence contributes substantially to how the two often exist in praxis. Dempster has argued that immanent views of eschatology, juxtaposed to liberation theologies, would lead to this 'social quietism'. To this end Dempster attempts to 'resolve this uneasy tension between belief and practice highlighting the eschatological significance of Christian social service and action' (Dempster, 1993: 54). Murray does this in two ways. First, using an Acts 2 hermeneutic, Murray identifies key concepts within Pentecostal theology that embrace such forms of social action. Second, he argues that eschatology should, instead of putting off social concern, fuel new levels of social action such as ecological justice (an argument similar to that of Macchia, 1993). Dempster concludes that Pentecostalism does have the power to be a significant social force resonating with an expectant eschatology.

### **Pentecostal and Charismatic Spirit/Creation Theology**

The second trajectory is that of Pentecostal and Charismatic Spirit/Creation Theology. According to Dutch Pentecostal pastor/theologian Jean-Jacques Suurmond (1988: 3), 'As yet, neither Pentecostalism nor Charismatic renewal has produced a *consistent theology involving the whole of life*'. Suurmond, in

the first published substantive Pentecostal ecotheological writing, appeals for what he called 'a charismatic lifestyle' based on Paul's account of Christ's ascension (Ephesians 4:1-16; 1 Corinthians 15:28). This 'ecological lifestyle' is one that ultimately attempts to realize Paul's vision that 'God may be all in all' (1 Corinthians 15:22). It is in this charismatic lifestyle that we find 'a life in harmony, not only with the ecological structure of the whole creation, but even with the inner life of the triune God'. Later, Suurmond writes, 'here, I think, lies the distinctive contribution of the Pentecostal experience, i.e., its appeal to the churches and the world for an ecological lifestyle' (1988: 27). The mark, therefore, of the charismatic community is the radical acceptance of all of the different parts of the church and world, a kind of ecclesiological 'ecology' (Suurmond, 1988: 27). For Suurmond, three elements of this inter-connected lifestyle are essential: a *personal* ecology, an *ecclesiological* ecology, and a *universal* ecology.

Clark Pinnock's (1996) watershed *The Flame of Love* proved to be an ecumenically influential pneumatological text, widely accepted and engaged both within Pentecostalism (Macchia, 1998) and Protestantism (Moltmann, 1997). Pinnock's compelling account emphasized the prevenient Spirit's role in the creational process. He (1996: 49-72) argues that the Spirit's creative role at earth's creation must not trump the ongoing nature of the Spirit's creative relationship with creation. That is to say *creatio ex nihilo* (creation out of nothing) should never overshadow the *creatio continua* (continual creation) as it often has in Protestant theology. These two must be understood as not being mutually exclusive. As the 'Spirit in Creation', Pinnock offers a framework for charismatic ecotheology *especially* an ecotheology formed pneumatologically. Pinnock speaks of the 'presidency of the Holy Spirit' over the creative process signalled in the first chapter of Genesis. Here, God's *creative* power and authority is matched with Trinitarian mutuality, overflowing life to the created order. As a centerpiece of the creative process, the Spirit is not to be relegated to the status of a third-wheel in the Trinitarian construction (Pinnock, 1996: 50). Thus, Pinnock borrows the Cappadocian idea of the *Perichoresis* and utilizes it as a thematic basis of love throughout the text. Within this *Perichoresis*, the Trinity is understood within the dance of eternity, dancing through creation. At one point, Pinnock considers the Holy Spirit as a ballet dancer dancing over creation.

Augustinus Dermawan (2003) sets a more critical tone regarding Pentecostal ignorance of ecological issues. Dermawan offers a pneumatological ecotheology from an Asian Pentecostal context. He likewise articulates the roots behind Pentecostal ignorance of ecological concerns: otherworldliness and pessimism. First, Pentecostals are otherworldly in the sense of being 'heaven-focused', or

what Russell Spittler (1988) called a Corinthian spirituality. Second, there is an attitude of eschatological pessimism in light of the world nearing its end. Ultimately, Dermawan contends, the Spirit brings humanity back to its earthly responsibility.

Steven Studebaker (2008) uniquely offers a critical analysis of what he sees as a Pentecostal/Evangelical marriage to a paradigm of common/special grace and revelation as the potential rationale behind Pentecostal eco-ambivalence. The danger, writes Studebaker, with extrinsic soteriological models of creation is a built-in separation of creation from its salvation *and* redemption by the same Spirit. What Studebaker proposes is a return to a 'unified theology of grace' resulting in 'the unity of the Spirit's work in creation and redemption' (2008: 949) side-stepping extrinsic/intrinsic soteriological dualism. Eventually, such a theological correction will help to overcome hierarchical models of the Spirit's presence within creation (2008: 953). Studebaker admits that this will be hard to swallow for Pentecostals who often understand the Spirit having a differing stance toward believer and unbeliever, as well as human and non-human creation. This understanding, Studebaker reminds us, leads to a hierarchical view of creation with humans at the top.

Pentecostal and Charismatics have displayed a keen ability to catalyze pneumatological dialogue outside their own traditions in more recent constructions. Pentecostal Peter Althouse exemplifies this in his ongoing theological exegesis of Jürgen Moltmann's *kenotic* pneumatological theology. Althouse calls this 'theology of divine *kenosis*...the descent of the Spirit as the presence of God in creation (becoming) vulnerable in the suffering of the world' (Althouse, 2009: 158). Althouse suggests a *kenotic* pneumatology emphasizes God's encounter with creation by means of his omnipresence both in the Trinity and the greater universe. He further contends that the ongoing *kenosis* of the Spirit in the suffering of creation offers another interesting potential in Pentecostal pneumatology. Drawing on Moltmann again, the Spirit's earthen experience is paralleled by the inner-relational connectedness of the Trinity through the creative process of the Father through the Son filled with the Spirit. It is, therefore, in this panentheistic vision that God opens himself up to creation. Creation and cross become the two 'modes of divine *kenosis*' (2009: 166). Althouse further points out that even Moltmann's own pneumatology emphasizes the *charismatic* elements of the Spirit.

Amos Yong's (2005) groundbreaking text offers fresh insights into a distinctively Pentecostal theology of creation arising out of his global pneumatological theology. Hinging on an Acts 2 pneumatological vision, Yong examines the larger issues facing Pentecostalism today, such as the continuing yet changing struggle between Pentecostalism and the social sciences, natural

sciences, and ecology. Yong believes change is taking place in these regards. In Pentecostal Bible Colleges, as well as among the laity, he sees promise of Pentecostals entering, not only the social sciences, but the natural sciences as well, a shift that is quickly changing the tone of the conversation taking place in both Pentecostal academics and churches.

Of importance here, two theological loci are worth mentioning in regards to Yong's text. First, in a soteriological move, Yong constructs what he calls 'the multidimensionality of salvation' (2005: 97-99) similar to the four (five)-fold gospel prevalent among early Pentecostals. Of the seven over-arching soteriological perspectives in this multidimensionality of salvation, four are of importance here: namely the material, social, cosmic, and eschatological elements of his soteriology. Here, we observe a more robust soteriology that goes beyond, although importantly includes, what he calls 'personal salvation' (2005: 91-92). No doubt, an ecological theology is closely tied to this soteriological framework. And second, alongside this enlarged soteriology, Yong frames the ecological discussion anew in a pneumatological context, what he calls the 'pneumatological imagination' (2002). Again, this entire Pentecostal pneumatological vision pivots on the reconstituted vision of Joel 2:28-32 in the narrative of Acts 2:17-21. His use of the narrative from Joel 2 and Acts 2 as a central point for this Pentecostal framework draws attention to the theological importance of the natural language employed in regard to the Spirit of God; 'violent wind', 'divided tongue', 'as of fire', 'blood, and fire', and 'moon to blood' (2005: 268). These naturalistic metaphors, used throughout the Hebrew Bible, prove important on two levels. They create, first, a continuing correlation between the Spirit's presence in creation and these elements as a mode of understanding experience and the God-life. Second, they show that the Spirit is 'amenable to phenomenological portrayal drawn from the experience of the natural world' (2005: 269). Natural metaphors, therefore, have power to 'convey theological pneumatological expression' (2005: 269). Simply put, natural every-day agents have the same power as a parable; they point to something deeper.

Yong (2005: 273-77) sees latent potential in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition as an aid to Pentecostal Ecotheology. Others (Norris, 2009), along with Yong, have suggested Wesley's experiential theology is his greatest echo in Pentecostal theology. Going beyond his extant readings in science and natural history, Wesley had a unique theological outlook on the created order. As with Wesley, Yong extends an interesting discussion on the philosophic understandings of Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914), a promising character for Yong because of his semiotic/ontological scientific writings. In these discussions with science and the biblical narrative, Yong sees an important turn in ecological writings. He



points out that a significant portion of modern ecotheological writings have to do with the idea of the 'Creator Spirit', the Spirit of God intimately related to the creation and continuation of creation. This theme, Yong points out, has been extensively developed by scholars in the biblical, theological, and philosophical communities. It has only been recently that this same connection has been made in Pentecostal scholarship. Echoing Frank Macchia, 'the eschatological spirit of the Kingdom to come, Pentecostals have tended to neglect the full breadth and depth of the Spirit's work in all of creation today' (1998: 38). Beyond this, Yong (2005) deals primarily with a pneumatological theology of the environment, or how Pentecostals can develop a theology of creation care by envisioning Acts 2 as a transcending vision intended to include all living things.

Yong (2006) further breathes new life into the theology/science dialogue by highlighting the connection between a theology of the Spirit with that of an engagement of the emergence theory of Philip Clayton. Utilizing Clayton's emergence theory, Yong suggests that there remains a central connection between biblical creation narratives and scientific understandings of natural history such as in that of emergence theory. In particular, Yong points to the Genesis Yahwist/Priestly creation accounts which provide promising material for emerging pneumatology of creation. Ensuing his examination of emergence theory, and an overview of *Rûach* language in the creation narratives, Yong proposes three routes to a pneumatological theology of creation that can contribute to emergence theory and science. First, it 'brings philosophical theory and biblical text together in mutually beneficial ways' (Yong, 2006: 201). Second, the pneumatology plays a role to 'fill out the theological content of Clayton's emergence theory' (2006: 201). Third, creational pneumatology 'provides some relief to the strain imposed by the acknowledged theological dualism in Clayton's emergence theory' (2006: 201). Eventually, Yong's overall vision is that of a scientific/theological dialogue that is mutually edified and transcends modern Western dualism so prevalent in modern understanding, a conversation that would ultimately benefit Pentecostals.

### **Distinctive Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology**

The third stream which we will examine is that of distinctive Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology which includes a number of variant motifs: healing, covenant, and full-gospel theology. The first of these is the healing motif within Pentecostal Ecotheology. For example, Hunter (2000) offers an introduction for Pentecostals to the larger issues related to the ecological crisis nearly 12 years after Suurmond's (1988) initial article. Utilizing Harvey Cox's (1965) technological theory, Hunter contends that human vocation has become less about vocation/work and more with technological power *behind* the work. That

is, the modern vocation enterprise emphasizes efficiency, not the work itself. This has, in turn, led to a loss of experience of God's creation. In this light, Hunter asks how Pentecostals have previously engaged creation? Hunter notes a number of prayer services, church events, and important ecclesiological advancements in Korea where creation is centered in praxis and piety (2000: 150). But as a whole, for Pentecostals, creation care is a non-issue. On their hypocrisy, Hunter comments that while many Pentecostals repudiate the practice of smoking, those who condemn smoking 'find themselves passively taking in many of the same chemicals and seem less concerned about enough air for future generations to breath' (2000: 153). Utilizing again a Pentecostal healing motif, he asks why it cannot be extended creationally, for a sick creation makes us all ill. At the time, Hunter's piece broke new ground for many Pentecostals, and therein lies its strength. In total, Hunter's work serves best as an opening page than a substantive chapter for Pentecostal Ecotheology.

Another important strain is that of the covenant motif, illustrated by Pentecostal scholar Jared Boone (2009). Boone argues for the care of creation covenantally on the basis of Israel's responsibility to protect *shalom* (peace) of the land. Boone suggests, that, 'the care of creation should be motivated by both love for God and love for the neighbor' (2009: 17). This is reflected in two ways: first, love for God and God's creation, and, second, a realization of love for all living neighbors and the wellbeing of all humanity based on the motif of *shalom*. Through utilizing the Hebrew concept of *shalom* as humanity's task, Boone suggests that human beings are to be 'caretakers' of the earth to usher in this *shalom*/peace of God. Boone's examination highlights many historical/theological themes in Israel's story for the purposes of ushering in this *shalom*: land-laws, Sabbath-keeping, and the Jubilee narratives. In a sense, therefore, Jesus, and Pentecost by extension, are the recapitulation of these *shalom* themes of the Hebrew people. Such historical/theological studies as Jared Boone's typify a growing understanding within the Pentecostal tradition of the long-withstanding *traditio* of eco-justice preceding Pentecost.

A third strain is what we might call the four-fold 'full-gospel' approach to Pentecostal Ecotheology. This 'full-gospel', the theological paradigm of earliest Pentecostalism, was to some extent original to the Holiness tradition and borrowed by the earliest Pentecostals. As Donald Dayton (1987) has argued, this 'full-gospel' was based on four central loci:

- (1) Salvation and justification by faith
- (2) Healing of the body through the atonement
- (3) Pre-millennial return of Christ
- (4) Spirit baptism evidenced by *glossolalia*.

Australian Assemblies of God scholar Shane Clifton's (2009) creative approach criticizes an impotent and undeveloped 'full-gospel' vision as the ecological curse of Pentecostal movements. Clifton's critique, while focusing on Pentecostalism, argues that Christianity at large is guilty for the creational demise by way of its 'otherworldly' concern, echoing such voices as sociologist Margaret Poloma (1989) and theologian Harvey Cox (1965). He argues that this drive comes from predominantly a fundamentalist (similar to Assemblies of God and Foursquare) impulse and narrow eschatological vision. To illustrate, Clifton examines his own experience within the Australian Assemblies of God as his focal point where he has encountered opposition to his environmental questions. On a doctrinal level, he suggests that observing young earth creationism and literalistic views of creation (readily opposed to creation care) do not need to be essential elements of Pentecostal doctrine, as evidenced by the fact that even the Assemblies of God in Australia did not adopt such views until 1992 (2009: 120-21). These awry hermeneutics matched by Western philosophic imperialism have alienated most Pentecostals from creation care. Drawing from John Douglas Hall (1990), Clifton argues that hierarchical views of human predominance in the creational sphere, often misconstrued in the doctrine of *imago Dei*, have left Pentecostals stranded. He sees eventual promise in a return to a pneumatological theology of creation. This push will force Pentecostals to overcome what he calls 'fundamentalist conceptions of creation, salvation, and eschatology, and materialist understandings of prosperity...(which) can no longer be called a "full gospel"' (2009: 126). If this Pentecostal message is 'full' as it is often preached, would it not make sense to include elements of this gospel that capsule the remainder of God's creation? Where Clifton's argument is strong is his critical examination of historical structures within Pentecostal movements for the purpose of his environmental agenda.

Matthew Tallman (2009) continues this exploration of a Pentecostal Eco-theology. Tallman, alongside Clifton, utilizes the 'four-fold' gospel articulated by Dayton (1987) as a basis for a Pentecostal ecological ethic. In the end, Tallman argues that the foundation of Pentecostal theology, the 'four-fold' gospel, is a helpful starting point for Pentecostal Ecotheology. In Pentecostal history there lies a promise of potential, Tallman further suggests that 'Perhaps Pentecostals have already been ecologists, they just didn't know it' (2009: 152). Although showing some reservation about the ups and downs of using such 'four-fold' foundation, Tallman articulates some interesting proposals. Of significance, Tallman engages such pneumatological works of Mark Wallace's (1996) pneumatological ecology giving attention to the growing pneumatology in the ecumenical church. Through a re-invigorated examination of the Spirit outside of Pentecostalism, such as World Council of Churches and Roman

Catholicism, argues Tallman, Pentecostals can enter the conversation on such a wave of pneumatological excitement. It is in the Spirit, God experiences the pain of creation. But this essence of God's pain does not always sit well with Pentecostals.

### **The Spirit Baptized Creation**

We have briefly analyzed three major strains in Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology: Pentecostal and Charismatic Social Justice Theology, Pentecostal and Charismatic Spirit/Creation Theology, and distinctive Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology. But what will be the most promising future for Pentecostal and Charismatic Ecotheology? I agree with Simon Chan who writes, 'If Pentecostals today are to recover the full-orbed Pentecostal reality of the first ten years they will need to enlarge their understanding of key concepts like Spirit-baptism and glossolalia' (Chan 2000: 12). After a brief sketch both of Pentecostal Ecotheology and present global theology, I take Chan's words seriously, suggesting a pneumatological forwarding of the Pentecostal theme of Spirit baptism: *the Spirit baptized creation*. Three reasons for this are worth mention here. First, Pentecostal pneumatology offers a rich-seedbed of theological perspectives that may in fact set the scene for a more developed and profitable theology of creation for Pentecostal communities and remains a comfortable doctrine that may serve as a helpful conversation partner in non-academic Pentecostal communities. Second, Pentecostal and Charismatic pneumatology would essentially make ample room for all trajectories mentioned assuming a Trinitarian framework based on the inter-relationality of the Godhead. That is to say it would appropriately make room for further theological imagination on the topic. Finally, it stays true to a Pentecostal theology that hinges on Luke's narrative of the Spirit culminating in Acts 2.

Pentecostals, as keen observers of the biblical text, are aware of the Spirit's presence in all of creation. It is assumed in their pneumatological theology. In the Hebrew tradition, the *Rûach* hovers over the primordial chaos (Genesis 1:2), dries the post-flood earth (Genesis 8:1), leads the people of God through the desert (Exodus), and leads the community through Moses, David, and Judges (e.g. Numbers 11:17). We see David questioning in Psalm 139:7: 'Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?' Now while the Old Testament (OT) offers a very strong creational pneumatology, some have argued the New Testament (NT) does not appear to have such a developed Spirit/creation theology. For example, Eduard Schweizer (1989) has sought to emphasize the difference between the *Rûach* (OT) and *Pneuma* (NT) but others, like Moltmann (1997), have emphasized the continuity of the 'Spirit of life' in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Following Moltmann's

trajectory, I would like to argue that the metaphor most widely utilized in contemporary Pentecostalism of Spirit baptism can be extended to creation based on Old Testament narratives of the creational Spirit. In this extension, the same Spirit which gives and sustains life in the Old Testament is the same Spirit which empowers the church in the New Testament at Pentecost.

The Spirit baptized creation illuminates a deeper reality in the relationship between God and his broken created world. It is within this world that God has placed the Church and given of the Spirit. Clearly, the Church has been placed in a world of sincere and heart-wrenching bondage (Romans 8:23). In this context, liberation theologies have shown a strong ability to engage systemic bondages in creative and fresh ways. This approach to facing head on the systemic bondages of the day is Spirit-driven and must be an approach embraced by Pentecostalism on a contemporary level. As Paul writes to the Corinthians, 'Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom' (2 Corinthians 3:17). A thorough reading of Paul shows us he never limits his view of freedom; this is a freedom of all kinds. Yet how has this become interpreted in merely anthropocentric terms? Should we assume Paul is not speaking as well of cosmic freedom?

In its short history, the earliest Pentecostals understood those who had been baptized in the Spirit as receiving their voice once again. In the Spirit baptized life, black people had new life, the oppressed were freed, and the marginalized had a new place. Similarly, when placed in this context, a Spirit baptized creation has in turn received her voice again. On a contemporary scene, we find this theme expressing itself through the 'return of voice' in the work of Andrea Hollingsworth (2007) who seeks to re-contextualize lost voices silenced by colonialism, oppression, and injustice in the freedom of the Spirit. The Spirit, therefore, plays a crucial role, among other things, in releasing the oppressed not only from spiritual bondage, but material and structural bondage. Furthermore, the work of Leonard Lovett (1987) has synthesized Pentecostal pneumatology for the purposes of offering people of colour a sense of spiritual and liberative freedom in what he calls a 'pneumatological liberation theology'. Reflecting on his own history, Miroslav Volf (1996) reminds us the Spirit is attempting to release the oppressors at the same time as the oppressed in his study on his homeland Yugoslavian tyranny. This same Spirit is embodied in all creation.

Thus, Spirit baptism has historically significant eschatological implications for Pentecostal movements as the driving force behind the evangelization of the world in light of Christ's imminent return. In the same way, the Spirit is preparing Christ's return by making the 'kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10). God is doing this in part by means of Spirit-empowered

believers. But is their task *entirely* evangelistic? To conceptualize the entire creation as Spirit baptized, along with the believer as Spirit baptized, creates a sense of eschatological expectation in partnering with God's creation for the culmination of God's eschaton. Caring for the earth will be contextualized as eschatological mission. Sadly, eschatology has been perhaps the main driving force behind a Pentecostal ignorance of ecological care and the evangelization of the world. But we must begin to understand that those two are not mutually exclusive when the cosmic scope of eschatology is realized. The triune God desires all humans to experience salvation along with the remainder of creation. A brief reading of Jesus' parables of stewardship shows that the return of the King is always followed by a judgment of those caring for the King's property. The Spirit is the key to being a good landlord. It is the eschatological Spirit living in both the believer and the land that creates a unique relationship for such preparation. This emphasis will help move beyond what William Brown has called the 'crisis of culture' (1999: 25-27), which makes eschatological healing difficult. Frank Macchia perhaps writes best: 'Seen as an eschatological concept, Pentecost becomes a symbol, not only of the divine breath filling and charismatically empowering God's people, but also indwelling all of creation... The kingdom thus centrally involves but also transcends the church' (Macchia, 2006: 102-103). The Spirit-baptized church, therefore, can participate in freeing the Spirit-baptized creation.

We must be aware of a number of methodological and theological problems that remain. Does this Spirit-baptized creation imply that there is no longer any 'subsequent' infilling of the Spirit as the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions have emphasized? By no means. Rather, it re-contextualizes all of creation as the place of preparation for such an experience. The Spirit-baptized creation is always preparing the human person for fuller expressions of the Spirit-filled life. As well, does this erase the lines of the human responsibility as the tenderer of the garden? Again, the answer is no. For humanity is responsible for the creation God left them to tend. It is, therefore, the Spirit that embodies them both and creates a healing space where God can be 'all in all' (1 Corinthians 15:28). Clearly stated, it is the hope of many Pentecostals and Charismatics that such movements should develop not only a theology of creation, but also praxis of creation care based on such theology. Such a theology is beginning to emerge.

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