

Abstract of

"The Place of Pentecost: David Johannes du Plessis, the Assemblies of God, and the
Development of Ecumenical Pentecostalism"

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This dissertation focuses upon the work of the Reverend David J. du Plessis, an individual with deep connections to both denominational Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement in mainline American churches of the 1960s. His lifelong spiritual journey, ecumenical efforts, and ubiquitous presence in the Spirit-based revival constitutes a significant portion of this project. This study also analyzes the Assemblies of God, the classical Pentecostal denomination that grappled most with the growing renewal movement and the unwelcome implications of du Plessis's work.

Du Plessis favored a Pentecost set free and remained unconcerned with matters structural or denominational. He focused upon the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and came to share his experience with any Catholic or Protestant who would listen. For him the Charismatic Movement, rather than a means of bolstering classical Pentecostal denominations, was instead God's great mechanism for renewing the Church and bringing all believers into spiritual unity. The Assemblies of God, by contrast, remained hesitant to accept either the new revival or the broadly ecumenical overtones of du Plessis's ministry. Their 1962 decision to defrock the evangelist for his activities represented caution born out of long-held conservatism and their own history of controversy with uncontrollable schismatics. Quite simply, the speed with which du Plessis moved and the boundaries he summarily ignored raised too many concerns for a group seeking a practical Pentecost.

Though the Assemblies of God eventually began embracing charismatics and readmitted du Plessis into their ranks in 1980, associated ecumenical dialogue often happened only under their aegis and on their terms. A tacit debate persisted over whether

classical Pentecostalism should shepherd such revivals or if the Charismatic Movement must continue as a separate renewal in places ecclesiastically and theologically diverse. Even so, that du Plessis and the Assemblies of God could come together to accept charismatics with a common Pentecostal encounter suggests great potential for unity within such shared spiritual experience. This project thus highlights the debate over the “place of Pentecost” and recalls the contributions of an often forgotten Pentecostal ecumenist.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE PLACE OF PENTECOST:

DAVID JOHANNES DU PLESSIS, THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, AND THE
DEVELOPMENT OF ECUMENICAL PENTECOSTALISM

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFM	Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa
A/G	Assemblies of God
AMs	autographed manuscript
COGIC	Church of God in Christ
EP	Executive Presbytery of the Assemblies of God
FGBMFI	Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International
IBRA	International Broadcasting Association
IMC	International Missionary Conference
NAE	National Association of Evangelicals
NCC	National Council of Churches
NOLR	New Order of the Latter Rain
PFNA	Pentecostal Fellowship of North America
PWC	Pentecostal World Conference
TMs	typewritten manuscript
WCC	World Council of Churches

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INTRODUCTION

UNCOVERING PENTECOST

Any investigation of American Christianity will discover a deep strain of Spirit-based religious practice. Though this broad impulse can take many forms, it has for the past century most often manifested itself as Pentecostalism. From humble beginnings Pentecostal groups now compose two of the largest denominations in the United States¹ and have untold influence around the world.² If one reads closely enough between the lines of contemporary American religion, the impact that Pentecostalism has had upon other traditions is no less pervasive. From the so-called modern “praise and worship” movement to the growth of charismatic non-denominational churches to the expansion of present-day televangelists like Joyce Meyer and Bishop T. D. Jakes, Pentecostalism’s legacy is ubiquitous. Because of its vast reach, the story of how Pentecostalism came to be translated “from the margins” to a more central place in the religious settlement of this country is one worthy of study.

¹ “Catholics, Mormons, Assemblies of God Growing; Mainline Churches Report a Continuing Decline,” *National Council of Churches USA*, February 12, 2010, <http://www.nccusa.org/news/100204yearbook2010.html>. Two Pentecostal groups appear in the top ten: the Church of God in Christ at number five and the Assemblies of God at number nine.

² The following trio of books can provide a helpful though by no means exhaustive introduction to world Pentecostalism and related scholarship: Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Harvey Cox, *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, MA: Da Copa Press, 1995); Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, revised and updated. (USA: Oxford University Press, 2007).

While a full-scale investigation of related developments is likely the work of multiple volumes describing the various stages of the revival's growth and translation to the American populace, a central part of that story would be the Charismatic Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Now a largely forgotten religious revival given relatively little scholarly attention, the movement's impact during its heyday was immense. Essentially a "pentecostalizing" of mainline and Roman Catholic churches, the Charismatic Movement was spearheaded by certain Pentecostals who with open arms invited their fellow Christian brothers and sisters into the fold at the same time their non-Pentecostal counterparts stretched out their arms for a new kind of experience. Because of its vast influence in transmitting charismatic practice across the religious landscape and establishing a ubiquitous presence through the careers and media empires of its inheritors, it is odd that the Charismatic Movement of the 1960s and 1970s has faded from memory. Yet fade it has, leaving little knowledge of a vibrant and vital chapter in American religious history.

For many within contemporary Pentecostalism, the Charismatic Movement had reached its peak before their entry into the faith, leaving only those of a certain generation as guardians of the story. Even among those, the somewhat ambiguous relationship between denominations like the Assemblies of God (A/G) and their at times antagonistic interactions with the Charismatic Movement contributed to the dearth of reference to the now decades-old revival in the thousands of Pentecostal pulpits around the country. Members of the mainline fare little better, for as they are confronted with contemporary charismatic activity in its sometimes less than savory televised forms

(espousing theologies and politics far from their own) they want nothing to do with it, historically or otherwise.

Older mainline members who themselves lived through the revival may have feelings no less ambiguous than either their contemporaries or skeptical Pentecostal counterparts. While those who were involved in the movement continue to keep alive the revival's memory, they often do so only in their own circles—whether academic or ecclesiastical. Much of their writing comprises the primary and secondary material for this project, even if their publishing record for the larger public has been woefully inadequate over the past three decades. For whatever reason, there remains little popular awareness of a renewal movement whose activities had a regular presence in the news and culture of the time.

The reality of this contemporary ignorance of all things charismatic became quickly apparent to me upon entry into the Master of Divinity program at Princeton Theological Seminary less than a decade ago. There, in the midst of academic colleagues and future ministers whom I have come to respect deeply, I became acutely aware of how little of my own religious experience was understood by those of other communions. From the very beginning of my studies at Princeton I was queried about my Pentecostal faith, probed to see if I was one of “them,” and sometimes humorously asked if I played that favorite of instrument of all Pentecostals—the bass guitar. Over the course of meals in the Mackay Campus Center friends asked on more than one occasion if I could speak in tongues on demand. Though I averred each time, my sheer confusion at how little my intelligent and informed peers knew about my faith continued to perplex me. As time

went by and I learned more about the Charismatic Movement and its influence in decades previous, the more curious the situation became.

Throughout the period in which the movement was at its height, charismatics were marked by a deep desire to seek and experience the Holy Spirit while remaining in their own denominational framework. As they did so, they would often band together with like-minded individuals within and especially without their own ecclesiastical homes. Developments such as these caused many involved in the revival to openly consider this God's great plan for bringing all things into unity and reuniting a fractured Church. Pentecostal and mainline ecumenists alike looked to the unity of the Holy Spirit as the means of transcending or perhaps sealing much of the work done by the major ecumenical groups of the twentieth century.

It goes without saying that such hopes were, in the long term, premature. Even the most cursory glance at the current state of American religion reveals very little of the kind of spiritual unity seemingly presaged by the Charismatic Movement. After its zenith in the mid-1970s, the revival lost cohesion and resulted in either separate denominational groups of charismatics or the establishment of new churches for those who felt that leaving their mainline congregations was the best choice. While the cross-pollinating effects of the Charismatic Movement continue to echo through the religious landscape in the areas of worship and personal piety, little memory of the revival persists. For many on both sides of this divide, it seems unfathomable to imagine a time when Pentecostals and mainline church leaders would stride the halls of ecclesiastical power together—and even more so to imagine that they would want to in the first place.

This, then, was the unfortunate legacy I inherited upon matriculating at Princeton eight years ago. Indeed, my own ignorance of the Charismatic Movement persisted until the second year of my doctoral studies. Perusing Pentecostal primary and secondary literature in an effort to settle upon a suitable research project, I came across numerous references to a revival I had heretofore known little about. Upon learning how wide the renewal stretched and that a major figure within it like David du Plessis had not only been friends with the former president of my seminary but that he had also delivered a series of lectures about Pentecostalism there in 1959, I was flabbergasted. How surprising to discover that Princeton Seminary students forty or fifty years ago likely knew more about pentecostal experiences of the Spirit than my contemporaries. This project is therefore an effort to help remedy contemporary forgetfulness.

Historical, personal, and immediate, this dissertation will give focus to David Johannes du Plessis, an important Pentecostal figure who explored the world of ecumenism as a kind of itinerant pilgrim. His efforts—first in the ecumenical world and then by extension in the Charismatic Movement—remain central to any understanding of the mid-century revival of the Spirit. As a Pentecostal asked to represent the movement before others who were uninformed yet interested, du Plessis's journey has marked him as a kindred spirit and fellow traveller on my own journey of faith and life. That no scholarly account of his life has ever been published only further motivated me to dig deeper into the life of du Plessis and the revival he came to represent. Though his biography will by no means exhaustively describe the movement, it does provide an important means of understanding its impact. Recounting it will illuminate not only the

Charismatic Movement, but also vital facets of American religion and, in the process, a bit of Princeton Seminary's own history.

The history of David du Plessis and the Charismatic Movement, while powerful in its own right, would be woefully incomplete if sufficient attention were not paid to another important group: the traditional or “classical” Pentecostal denominations that had existed for decades prior as separate institutions committed to the twentieth century revival of the Spirit. For while du Plessis and his confreres were more than happy to walk the halls of ecumenism to share the word of the Spirit, the more staid denominational hierarchy of a group like the Assemblies of God had deep-seated suspicions about such organizations and their reputation for theological liberalism. If nothing else, they were at the very least much more cautious than someone like du Plessis. How they dealt with such ecumenical charismatics and moved from concern to fear to gradual acceptance is at least as important as tracing the more straightforward trajectory of du Plessis himself. As it is, his life's story is marked by his tortured relationship with the Assemblies—including both his ejection from their ranks in 1962 and reinstatement eighteen years later. What this reveals about these two linked movements of the Spirit will provide ample opportunity for discussion and analysis.

The goal of this project is twofold: 1) to show how the Charismatic Movement took hold and spread throughout the 1960s and 1970s vis-a-vis classical Pentecostalism and, more specifically, 2) to show how David du Plessis's tortured relationship with the Assemblies of God is illustrative not of an uncontrolled lunatic fighting with a commodified and defiant denomination, but rather two particular visions of the purpose and mission of Pentecost working themselves out in the wider world.

Chapter one focuses upon du Plessis's adopted American denomination, the Assemblies of God. It tells the story of the early twentieth-century Pentecostal revival and the budding controversies which first led to its establishment and then to a clamping down on those theological outliers and nonconformists threatening to destroy their nascent fellowship. I attempt to use these examples to show how the A/G by function of its very existence shifted its balance towards control of people and perspectives like du Plessis.

Chapter two utilizes the metaphor of expanding concentric circles to explain the growth and spiritual formation of David du Plessis. First as a simple believer and then as minister, worldwide Pentecostal, and, finally, ecumenical figure, du Plessis's mission was to spread the message of Pentecost to whoever would listen. The chapter ends on the cusp of the Charismatic Movement in 1959, the year in which he lectured at both Princeton Seminary and the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland. I analyze both lecture series in an effort to explain du Plessis's motivation and purpose and the way in which they prefigure his later work in the Charismatic Movement.

Chapter three details the long and tortuous process by which du Plessis was evicted from the Assemblies of God. It represents extensive archival work and utilizes voluminous personal and official correspondence. Along the way, I show how the controversy reflects the personality of both du Plessis and the A/G bureaucracy. The chapter concludes with a refutation of the idea that his disfellowshipping was primarily caused by undue influence from the National Association of Evangelicals, asserting rather that the decision was more in line with the Assemblies' historical preference for control and order.

Chapter four charts the progression of the Charismatic Movement and its ecumenical hopes for unity from the time it entered the popular consciousness and garnered traction in mainline Protestant churches through to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the late 1960s and beyond. The Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue is also discussed. Within the chapter, I show how du Plessis's new freedom allowed him the space to operate interdenominationally and become a ubiquitous figure in the midst of a movement he helped shepherd along. His efforts ecumenical and Charismatic remained linked in both theory and practice.

Chapter five takes place in the 1970s and early 1980s as the Assemblies of God began to warm to the Charismatic Movement. That they seemed to do so only on their own terms helps strengthen the thesis that an inner need for control rather than external influence led to their early distancing from du Plessis and his pentecostally ecumenical activities. By contrast, du Plessis's continued charismatic and ecumenical activities and his developing theological sense represents how his vision of Pentecost and the call and purpose of the Spirit never let him flag in his continuing mission and trajectory.

The concluding chapter offers a bookend to the story of David du Plessis and the Assemblies of God as it details the steps by which he was invited back into the fold. This détente between two former foes shows that though their two visions of Pentecost were dissimilar, that did not mean they could not eventually cooperate on matters of the Spirit—even if one partner took a little longer to come to the table. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the potential for Pentecostal and Charismatic memory together with the unity offered by charismatic experience in future ecumenical and even interfaith dialogue.

Lastly, I include an appendix detailing the life and travels of du Plessis with special focus upon the years in which his ecumenical and charismatic efforts were at their peak. It is based on a number of his personal records and journals made available through archival research. Though incomplete, the timeline is a helpful companion to this project and will provide readers an insightful look into du Plessis's constant worldwide movement and ministry.

It is my hope that this project represents a balanced and thorough scholarship that will come to inform, inspire, and perhaps chasten readers—no matter their stake in the debate. Though as a minister and practicing Pentecostal I write as an “insider” to this world, my goal has been to maintain the proper historical distance throughout. Above all, I hope that I have done my best to adequately represent the man David du Plessis—gregarious, insistent, inspiring, frustrating, and occasionally subject to a more than selective memory. Connected as he was to so many of the threads that occupy my research, he remains the central focus of this project. As he is our entrée into the world of the Charismatic Movement, I trust he will provide an adequate guide as we together uncover a forgotten chapter in the history of Pentecost.

CHAPTER ONE

A PRACTICAL PENTECOST

The Assemblies of God is by no means the only denominational grouping of Pentecostals within the United States, nor is it the largest. Statistically speaking, it at present is second to the largely African-American Church of God in Christ (COGIC) in number of members and adherents.¹ Like COGIC—a denomination firmly entrenched in the black church milieu by means of history, style, and demographic composition—the Assemblies of God has tended to be monolithic in its own way. Largely dominated by white Pentecostals since the very moment of its inception and broadly Reformed in its theology of sanctification, the A/G has charted a course that makes clear it is only one of a number of varieties of the American Pentecostal experience.

While it would be inaccurate to assume that the A/G can in any sense be representative of the breadth of Pentecostalism, the group does have the distinction of being one of the major players in the American branch of the movement and one that saw immense growth and gained increased influence during the middle decades of the past century. Further, as a white denomination it dealt with the issues involved in a Charismatic Movement that had little impact or sway in the world of African-American Christianity.² All of this is prefatory to the most immediate reason we focus on the

¹ The Church of God in Christ had 5,499,875 members while the Assemblies of God had 2,830,861. Dan Webster, “Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches Reports on Record Number of National Church Bodies,” *National Council of Churches*, March 5, 2007, <http://www.nccusa.org/news/070305yearbook2007.html> (accessed 2 November 2009).

² Richard Quebedeaux notes “there has not been a comparable neopentecostal movement in the historic black denominations, because black religion was already so

Assemblies for the purposes of this research, namely that the central figure in Pentecostal/Charismatic relations—David du Plessis—was an ordained minister within the denomination.

The controversy that erupted in the A/G over du Plessis’s particular calling to Pentecostal ministry in ecumenical circles, his eventual ejection from their ranks, and the long road by which both parties traveled to arrive at a rapprochement representative of a new relationship between Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement forms the bulk of this project. This chapter will therefore address the way the Assemblies of God grew out of a diverse renewal of Spirit-based religion into a denomination with a deep concern for order in Pentecost. Along the way I will show how practical matters of definition, boundaries, and theological controversies and differences of opinion early on in its history marked the group from whom du Plessis faced great resistance during the controversy of 1961-2.

Primitivism, Pragmatism, and Pentecostalism

A familiar meme within much of the associated literature assumes that the Assemblies’ actions concerning David du Plessis have to do substantially with the group’s relationship with the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). The structure of the argument is quite simple: the Assemblies of God joined the nascent NAE in the 1940s in an effort to become more respectable in the eyes of the nation. When du

expressive in worship and so open to spontaneity (including that of the Holy Spirit) that a such a spiritual “renewal” was simply unnecessary.” *The New Charismatics II: How a Christian Renewal Movement Became a Part of the Religious Mainstream*. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), 5. Whether or not this is true, the exception of the black churches represents an interesting historical development that deserves further study.

Plessis's actions vis-à-vis ecumenical leaders made the NAE nervous, the A/G immediately clamped down in order to remain on good terms with their friends of convenience. An argument not without merit, it finds its home early on in du Plessis's own reflections, the suspicions of his friends, and later in the opinions of historians in the field.³

While the NAE thesis has a certain attractiveness—as evidenced by both its staying power and pervasiveness—I am not convinced that it adequately represents the historical situation faced by du Plessis and the Assemblies of God. At worst, it is a bit simplistic in assuming simple external causes controlling a somewhat weak-willed organization unable to extricate its identity from a more powerful entity. Even at best, it cynically asserts that the Assemblies of God had abandoned some of its more ecumenical tendencies at the time of the initial Pentecostal revival in favor of new and more limiting decisions in line with their new evangelical friends. By contrast, what I ultimately hope to prove is that the decision to eject du Plessis from their midst was not motivated by external factors, but rather derives from developments within Pentecostalism broadly and

³ His own thoughts regarding the NAE are found in David J. du Plessis, interview by William Menzies, TMs (typewritten manuscript), transcript, June 28, 1967, 4, 15, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO. On page 4 he states "the NAE has become, to me, the greatest hindrance to Pentecostal advance in America because they have definitely taken the keen edge off our testimony." His contemporary J. Roswell Flower earlier noted: "It may be that our relationship to the N.A.E. and the pressures that may have come from our evangelical brethren of the N.A.E. have something to do with this feeling." J. Roswell Flower to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 11, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. Secondary reflections include those of Russell Spittler, "Du Plessis, David Johannes," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Revised and Expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 591 and Anderson, *Introduction to Pentecostalism*, 146. The latter states—suggestively—that "the AG (whose chairman Thomas Zimmerman was president of the NAE at the time) withdrew du Plessis's credentials in 1962."

the Assemblies of God in particular. It is the story, then, not of co-option and ecclesiastical peer pressure, but rather one of individuals in the midst of structure, order and chaos, and piety's attempt to coexist with pragmatism. It is for this reason that we must first understand the Assemblies of God before turning to any investigation of David du Plessis.

The denomination du Plessis joined in 1955⁴ and struggled with in the early years of the following decade had a character and personality far from static. It was a group continually affected and molded by the circumstances contributing to its initial organization and the controversies that characterized its first four decades. The rather amorphous quality of Pentecostalism combined with attempts by a group like the Assemblies to impose some measure of control of their adherents' faith established a deep-seated caution and desire for order that would come to have profound impact. Like many groups, the changes they experienced happened slowly over time and unfolded without any master plan or scheme. Even so, with each progressing decade the mechanisms which developed further solidified the notion—at least on an administrative level—that there were limits and boundaries to be respected even by those who claimed, as Pentecostals did frequently, that they simply moved as the Spirit willed.

In Grant Wacker's recent work *Heaven Below*, he parses turn-of-the-twentieth century Pentecostalism in an attempt to understand the ethos of its earliest adherents. During his research, Wacker discovers a basic yet important principle at work in the first years of the movement: a persistent primitivism in rhetoric and spiritual matters coexisted

⁴ "Ministerial Records of David J. du Plessis," n.d., Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

side by side with a decidedly pragmatic emphasis.⁵ Ultimately, it is for him these twin and sometimes mutually opposing factors that helped Pentecostalism maintain its balance and vibrance.

While clearly vital to the continuance of the spirit of Pentecost, these two notions of primitivism and pragmatism could at times be so diametrically opposed that they threatened to cause open hostility. In a pattern repeated for decades to come, a sense of newness in the Spirit and a return to the days of New Testament Christianity collided with the concerns of those who felt this newborn freedom in the Spirit was spinning off into an inchoate mess. That early Pentecostals who operated out of a pietistic and primitivistic mindset would take steps to organize themselves into a larger body such as the Assemblies of God in the first place is evidence of some of these larger fears.

The struggles the denomination would face as it sorted out its own limits and addressed the more pietistic in their midst would come to both split their fellowship and solidify the increasing importance of order. Though as sociologist Margaret Poloma notes of the Assemblies that “ambiguity is necessary for the survival of charisma...to resolve the ambiguity—and silence the dilemmas—would spell the end of Pentecostal ideology,”⁶ we see that complications from the unsteady foundation of such tension and

⁵ Grant Wacker claims the following: “The genius of the Pentecostal movement lay in its ability to hold two seemingly incompatible impulses in productive tension. I call the two impulses the primitive and the pragmatic. The nuances of each will become apparent in due course, but for now we might simply think of them as idealism versus realism, or principle versus practicality.” *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 10.

⁶ Margaret Poloma, *The Charismatic Movement: Is There a New Pentecost?* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), 240. She writes “An ability to regulate and tolerate the conflict is necessary if the Assemblies of God is to remain open to charisma while enjoying still further growth.” *Ibid.*, 232. Though what she writes represent reflections

ambiguity increasingly affected the group and begged for some kind of resolution. While over time the contest between these tendencies never disappeared, as the years went on so too the desire for control on the part of the A/G leadership and administration increased accordingly.

Problematic Pentecostal Beginnings

Before the Assemblies came into existence in 1914 the movement of which it was a part had already established itself as a vital if somewhat eccentric revival of the Spirit. Its origins remain debated—on the one hand easy to pin down to certain key moments while on the other notoriously difficult if one wants to establish the specifics of dating and precedence with any firm measure of finality. For instance, in any investigation of the origins of Pentecostalism one of the most common tropes that arises is the “Azusa Street Revival” of 1906.

Seen by many Pentecostals as the one and only flashpoint for their twentieth century revival of the Holy Spirit, Azusa Street for many decades constituted a common and well-worn trope in every discussion of their formation. Early chronicler Frank Bartleman was effusive in his recollection:

Before the Azusa outpouring, everything has settled down in concrete form, bound by man. Nothing could move for God. Dynamite—the power of the Holy Spirit—was necessary to free this mass. And this God furnished. The whole mass was set free once more. Our Year of Jubilees had come.⁷

made during the 1980s, the central tension she discusses can be seen operating throughout the group’s history.

⁷ Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, Reprint. (Northridge, CA: Voice Christian Publications, 1962), 100.

An early Assemblies of God historian wrote similarly, noting “God was giving a gracious visitation in Los Angeles and many workers came from different parts of the country...returning home witnessed to what they had seen and heard”⁸ and thus spreading the revival from that central location.

While Azusa was important as a gathering place for a number of missionaries and religious leaders who would have impact in their own region of the world, scholars have questioned its place as the *sine non qua* of world Pentecostalism. Pentecostal historian Donald Dayton, for instance, asked some important questions about the theological background and underpinnings of the movement in his 1987 work *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*.⁹ There, he made the argument that Pentecostalism did not simply emerge fully developed at Azusa but rather represented a longer historical development through Methodism and the Holiness Movement regarding the place of the Spirit, the idea of restorationism, and the order of salvation.

Only when minister Charles Parham linked Spirit baptism with tongues in 1901 Kansas did many of these precursors progress to their next logical step. Historian James Goff picks up the discussion of Charles Parham in his own discussion of Pentecostal beginnings, arguing strongly that he ought to be seen as the true progenitor of the movement because of his unique connection of tongues to Spirit baptism: “As the initial evidence, the glossolalia becomes the *sine qua non* of the experience and its importance

⁸ Stanley Frodsham, *With Signs Following*, revised. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1946), 39-40.

⁹ Donald Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Francis Asbury Press, 1987). On page 28, he follows up his introduction of the four-fold gospel (Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier/Spirit Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King) with the following: “Tracing the development and interplay of these themes enables the historical and theological genesis of Pentecostalism to be understood, perhaps for the first time.”

is hard to overestimate.”¹⁰ Others such as Hollenweger have urged a more multivariate set of beginnings to Pentecostalism, holding to numerous roots as a way of explaining the movement.¹¹ Even further afield are discussions of Pentecostal beginnings in Minnesota and the Dakotas by historian Darrin Rodgers¹² or the work others have done looking at the worldwide movement in places such as Pandita Ramabai's Mukti Mission in India in 1905.¹³

Understanding all of this, the central “myth” of Azusa does seem a bit too simplistic in its formulation, something that Joseph Creech has claimed, saying, “This mythic understanding of Azusa has not been limited to Pentecostals but has also shaped the way many historians, social scientists, and theologians have come to understand the movement’s origins.”¹⁴ Ultimately, he notes the attractiveness of a singular starting place such as Azusa was too convenient to ignore for many Pentecostals who felt they were headed back to the days of the New Testament and an Acts 2 narrative focused upon the

¹⁰ James Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 1988), 11.

¹¹ Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997). After discussing his theological view that Seymour should be lifted up as the progenitor the movement over Parham (pp. 20-25), he spends the balance of the work talking about the “black oral,” Catholic, evangelical, critical, and ecumenical roots of Pentecostalism.

¹² Darrin Rodgers, *Northern Harvest: Pentecostalism in North Dakota* (North Dakota District Council of the Assemblies of God, 2003).

¹³ See Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 37, 173-174; Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2007), 75-108 for an example of this discussion.

¹⁴ Joseph Creech, Jr., “Visions of Glory: The Place of the Azusa Street Revival in Pentecostal History,” *Church History* 65, no. 3 (September 1996): 406.

centrality of Jerusalem and the Upper Room experience. Here again the example of early Pentecostal primitivism emerges in force, a development underscored powerfully by the diversity in other “beginnings” of Pentecostalism. With such a groundswell of energy and emphasis on the Spirit and New Testament forms, it comes as little surprise that various forms of Pentecostalism would emerge, clash, and at times threaten even more disorder in the midst of revival already best described as a managed form of chaos.

The singular example of Charles Parham’s relationship with former African-American disciple William Seymour at Azusa Street does well to explain these differences. In his religious creativity Parham had not limited his theorizing to Spirit baptism, but also assumed a racialized theory of British Isro-Anglican descent that posited the fabled lost tribes of Israel were actually early ancestors of the British, Americans, and other peoples with supposedly positive racial qualities.¹⁵ This from the same man who later in 1906 visited the largely African-American Azusa Street revival and condemned it, noting, “there is jabbering here that is not tongues at all”¹⁶ and elsewhere deploring

Men and women, whites and blacks, knelt together or fell across one another; frequently, a white women, perhaps of wealth and culture, could be seen thrown

¹⁵ Charles Parham claims of “the westward flight of Israel’s race” that “during their migration they were known by different names, according to the country through which they were passing. Such terms as Isuki, Sacae, Sunae, Sacea, Suncea, Saxons, and many others, until it termination in Saxons; their land was called Saxony. Thus couple with Caeser’s title they became Anglo-Saxons! The word Saxon being a derivative of ISAAC’S SONS.” *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, Second. (Baxter Springs, KS: Apostolic Faith Bible College, 1910), 105ff.

¹⁶ Sarah Parham, *The Life of Charles F. Parham: Founder of the Apostolic Faith Movement*, Reprint. (Joplin, MO: Hunter Printing Co., 1930), 169.

back in the arms of a big “buck nigger,” and held tightly thus as she shivered and shook in freak imitation of Pentecost. Horrible, awful, shame!¹⁷

Feeling that matters were out of his control and by his response forever separating the Azusa Street revival from his own Apostolic Faith Mission in the Midwest, Parham’s racist turn was a fateful one for the new movement. When held up against the picture of Azusa as an interracial revival in which “the ‘color line’ was washed away in the blood of Christ,”¹⁸ one begins to see the multiple directions and forms the revival was able to take and the limits some would foist upon it. As it was, the Parham/Seymour split was one of the earliest ruptures in the Pentecostal revival of the earliest 1900s; the environment of religious fervor and experimentation from which it arose from guaranteed there would be more leaders, more innovators, and more controversy.

As Pentecostals developed in the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, they found themselves at the mercy of one of their key theological distinctives. Restorationist to a fault in their desire to reestablish the idyllic nature of the New Testament Church, in a single move they felt God had washed away centuries of unnatural accretions to pure Christianity. Unity in the Spirit and adherence to supposed biblical norms was simply all that was necessary. Yet at the same time they too began to face many of the same difficulties as the earliest Christians when it came to matters of doctrine, authority, and the practice of their faith. Stated simply, their desire to go back to the beginning ensured that they would have to relive the growing pains the early Church experienced as it developed over time.

¹⁷ Charles Parham, *Apostolic Faith*, December 1912, 4-5, in Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest*, 132.

¹⁸ Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, 51.

Though Pentecostals testified to a powerful experience of the Spirit that had set things in place for the Second Coming, the more time passed between the initial revival and the *eschaton* guaranteed that additional complicated questions would arise. Whether on basic matters such as the nature and mode of traditional baptism or more developed issues related to the place of denominational structures, Pentecostalism faced a host of issues that threatened to destroy it in its infancy. The tension these issues engendered would mark the movement—and the Assemblies of God in particular—for decades to come.

Born as it was out of the whirling groundswell of Pentecostal revivalism of the first decade of the twentieth century, the Assemblies of God from the time of its formation was engulfed in issues that occupied their attention, piety, and pragmatism. The first of these matters focused on the question of whether or not any kind of organization or authority structure amongst Pentecostals would be accepted in the first place. As suggested by a call that went forth to organize in 1914, there was clear need for cooperation on certain matters directly impacting their work as Christians:

This call is to all the Churches of God in Christ, to all Pentecostal or Apostolic Faith Assemblies who desire with united purpose to co-operate in love and peace to push the interests of the kingdom of God everywhere.... We come together that we may get a better understanding of what God would have us teach, that we may do away with so many divisions, both in doctrines and in the various names under which our Pentecostal people are working and incorporating. Let us come together as in Acts 13, to study the Word, and pray with and for each other—unity our chief aim.¹⁹

Yet at the same time there was a certain hesitance to go too far down the road of organizational structure. In an issue of *Word of Witness* dedicated especially to this first

¹⁹ “General Convention of Pentecostal Saints and Churches of God in Christ (Hot Springs, Arkansas, April 2 to 12 , 1914),” *Word and Witness*, January 20, 1914, 4.

General Council meeting, one notes an insistence that there had been “no new sect organized.”²⁰ If, in other words, God had done something new to bring his people out of the world of manmade religion, there was little desire on the part of the faithful for a speedy return to that place.

Having gathered to organize at Hot Springs in 1914, those in attendance decided that a modest operational structure should be established but that Scripture alone would be their stated guide in all matters: “He gave the Holy inspired Scriptures as the all-sufficient rule for faith and practice...we shall not add to or take from it.”²¹ Even the name of the group—“The Assemblies of God”—was decided upon simply because its generic tone indicated both the fellowship of which they were now a part in addition to being a broader designation open to amenable congregations of any stripe. Yet despite their best intentions, it seems in retrospect almost inevitable that they and their enthusiastic coreligionists would eventually come to differing positions on matters related to their faith.

Early Controversies

Since Pentecostalism proper had a strong background in the Holiness revivals of the late nineteenth century, it comes as no surprise that most early converts to the cause espoused an *ordo salutis* that borrowed heavily from the idea of a “second blessing” of sanctification that was subsequent to the “first blessing” of salvation. Many of its early leaders including Parham, Seymour, and others held this Wesleyan-Holiness position,

²⁰ “General Council Special,” *Word and Witness*, May 20, 1914, 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*

feeling that sanctification could be achieved in a single, definable moment. This was, in essence, one of the pieces that historian Donald Dayton highlighted in his discussion of “the gestalt of theological claims that constitutes Pentecostalism” in *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*.²² For nearly every Pentecostal believer in the revival’s earliest days, a second work of sanctification following salvation seemed axiomatic. In William Seymour’s own newsletter *The Apostolic Faith* the steps seem clear:

Praise God for a salvation that brings a witness. God gives us a witness that we are justified, the Spirit witnesses that we are sanctified, and when we receive the Holy Ghost, He witnesses through us, as recorded in Acts 2:4.²³

An article in *Pentecost* from September 1908 further reveals the extent of this idea by means of a tripartite division in the *ordo salutis*:

Justification makes men honest toward their fellow men. Sanctification makes men profoundly honest toward God. The baptism empowers such by setting fire to such honesty to that the dishonest tremble in their very presence.²⁴

Yet in the ferment of religious creativity of the times, another view known as the “Finished Work” took hold that posited that Jesus’ work on the cross had accomplished both justification and sanctification, even if the latter was something that believers grew into slowly over time.²⁵ This position was espoused with effect by William Durham of

²² Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, 106.

²³ “Notice,” *The Apostolic Faith*, October 1906, 4.

²⁴ A. S. Copley, “Sanctification,” *The Pentecost*, September 1908, 7.

²⁵ For more, see the discussion of R. M. Riss, “Finished Work Controversy,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 638-639.

Chicago.²⁶ In the midst of the debate, the Assemblies of God formed as a group specifically dedicated to the idea of progressive as opposed to instantaneous sanctification. In the same 1914 edition of the Pentecostal newsletter *Word and Witness* that discussed the results of the first meeting of the General Council, an editorial appeared that straightforwardly supported the “Finished Work” idea claiming, “This doctrine denies that it takes a second work of grace to purify the heart.”²⁷

While the simple assertion of a position on a theological matter seems *pro forma*, for any Pentecostal group to section itself off from others similarly touched by the revival and then take up a different position reveals divisions unlike what they had originally desired. Though they maintained an irenic tone in their discussions of the matter, there is nevertheless the sense that they had now solidified an official position that was to be accepted by their adherents. An article in the A/G’s own *Christian Evangel* in late 1914 shows the firmness with which they held to their claims: “We speak for that great body of sane and conservative saints with its representative leaders who believe in and advocate this truth as a correct Bible teaching.”²⁸ Feeling that such a decisive pronouncement was necessary, the Pentecostal leadership forming within the A/G was slowly but inevitably beginning to set a precedent for addressing similarly contentious or divisive issues in coming years.

²⁶ R. M. Riss, “Durham, William H.,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 594-595.

²⁷ E. N. Bell, “The Finished Work,” *Word and Witness*, April 20, 1914, 2.

²⁸ E. N. Bell, “Believers in Sanctification,” *The Christian Evangel*, September 19, 1914, 3.

Another point of tension resolved in the direction of order had to do with glossolalia. As noted earlier, it was the linkage of the experience of speaking in tongues with the so-called “baptism in the Holy Spirit” that is understood by many to be a flashpoint for the Pentecostal revival. Beginning with Charles Parham’s Bethel Bible College and the students who, when asked by him “whether they had found any Bible evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit,” noted “unanimous, ‘speaking in other tongues,’”²⁹ the revival has always held both phenomena in close proximity. For Pentecostals worldwide the association of the two is almost as obvious as to be self-evident. Yet how the Holy Spirit baptism and tongues interacted on a functional level was somewhat undetermined. Would, for instance, tongues always occur together with “the baptism,” or could the two events be separable? For that matter, were tongues always the result, or could another effect result from the same cause? After all, surely the Holy Spirit was concerned with more than glossolalia.

To address these concerns we might turn to the pre-A/G British publication *Confidence*. There, while both Pandita Ramabai and one Dr. Yoakum claim “we have not found in our experience, that the Seal of ‘Tongues,’ when from God, lessened the LOVE,” they “alike emphasize Love as being the great result of ‘Pentecost.’”³⁰ A further discussion by Agnes Ozman—otherwise known as first to speak in tongues during the Parham revival—in the *Latter Rain Evangel* reveals further diversity on the matter. She asserts

²⁹ Parham, *Life*, 59. Though questions have arisen as to whether or not the students had been prepped by Parham to deliver the answer he wanted to hear, the fact remains that it was during that pregnant period in Topeka, Kansas that the theological linkage between the two first took hold.

³⁰ “After “Pentecost” - Love,” *Confidence*, April 1908, 16.

Some time ago I tried but failed to have an article printed which I wrote calling attention to what I am sure God showed me was error. The article maintained that tongues was not the only evidence of the Spirit's Baptism. When that article was refused I was much tempted by Satan, but God again graciously showed me He had revealed it to me...³¹

William Seymour's Azusa Street newspaper *The Apostolic Faith* also addressed such concerns, claiming the "real evidence" of receiving Spirit Baptism was

Divine love, which is charity...this is the real Bible evidence in their daily walk and conversation; and the outward manifestations; speaking in tongues and the signs following; casting out devils, laying hands on the sick the and the sick being healed, and the love of God for souls increasing in their hearts.³²

William H. Piper of Chicago's "Stone Church" claimed that while tongues was one evidence of Spirit baptism, "there is another evidence to the believer...in place of anger that once ruled his life there is self-control...humility and generosity...the very glory of God fills your life."³³

While opinions about the effects of Spirit baptism were diverse, reflections on tongues and the third person of the Trinity did have the tendency to lean towards a sense of causal linkage. Not long after the official decision by the Assemblies in 1916 that "full consummation of the baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost and fire, is indicated by the initial sign of speaking in tongues, and the Spirit of God gives utterance,"³⁴ F. F.

³¹ Agnes Ozman, "Where the Latter Rain First Fell: The First One to Speak in Tongues," *The Latter Rain Evangel*, January 1909, 2.

³² "Questions Answered," *The Apostolic Faith*, October-January 1908, 2.

³³ William H. Piper, "Manifestations and 'Demonstrations of the Spirit' Scripturally, Historically, and Experimentally Considered: Evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit," *The Latter Rain Evangel*, October 1908, 19.

³⁴ "A Statement of Fundamental Truths Approved by the General Council of the Assemblies of God," *The Weekly Evangel*, December 23, 1916, 8. This represents a partial publication of the Assemblies' "Statement of Fundamental Truths" that had been voted into effect by the General Council during October of that year.

Bosworth parted company with them on the matter.³⁵ That the group would need to publish such a decision in the first place intimates the felt need for less doctrinal diversity on their part; that Bosworth left the fellowship upon announcement of its official position only underscores the reasons for the A/G's existence and its desire for control. In his own words,

[Jesus] never taught this doctrine that all Spirit-baptized believers would speak in tongues. Then why should we? Not one apostle or prophet, and not one of the world's great soul winners ever taught it. So it is clear that this doctrine is not essential to the greatest success. On the other hand, it greatly circumscribes our usefulness by shutting out those who are so well versed in the Scriptures that we can not convince them of our unscriptural theory. It will split any church wide open, separating equally devout Christians, unless we can make them all believe it.... When we, as a movement, will confine ourselves to what the Scriptures plainly teach upon this important subject of the Baptism and all the manifestations of the Spirit, and preach the great things about the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, our usefulness will be enhanced manifold.³⁶

While tongues and sanctification were fundamental issues in nascent Pentecostalism, the controversy that did more than any other to make the Assemblies take a firm stand on the side of order or pragmatism was the so-called "New Issue." Here, the problem revolved around another theological point newly opened for debate by the restorationist tendencies of the Pentecostals. Initially emerging as a biblically based critique of the traditional Trinitarian mode of water baptism, this division in the ranks raised important questions about the Trinity itself and threatened to make the Pentecostals not merely eccentric outliers in terms of religious practice but questionable heretics as well.

³⁵ R. M. Riss, "Bosworth, Fred Francis," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 439-440.

³⁶ F. F. Bosworth, *Do All Speak in Tongues?: An Open Letter to the Ministers and Saints of the Pentecostal Movement* (New York: Christian Alliance Publishing Co.), n.d.

The initial origin of the “New Issue” in Pentecostal circles is often traced to a revival meeting held at Arroyo Seco, California in 1913.³⁷ There, leaders desiring a purer mode of baptism more in line with what they felt to be the practice of the early Church began both baptizing and rebaptizing individuals in the name of Jesus only rather than the traditional tripartite formula. Emphasizing passages in the book of Acts where various individuals were baptized by that single name, they desired to repeat the practice in the present. For reasons hard to determine though likely having a great deal to do with the fact that this theological and liturgical move appeared grounded in the scriptural text—the “New Issue” had appeal both to Pentecostals broadly and the Assemblies of God in particular.³⁸

Within the context of the recently organized A/G, the theological controversy came to a head in the person of Eudorus N. Bell. As an early leader in the movement, Executive Presbyter in the nascent denomination, and Editor-in-Chief of the *Weekly Evangel*, Bell’s influence was well established inside the Assemblies of God. Thus in 1915 when he wrote in his own *Word and Witness* magazine concerning his decision to be rebaptized, matters grew tense. Though Bell insisted that he

³⁷ See David A. Reed, “Oneness Pentecostalism,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 936-944 for an extended discussion of the early controversy. For a full-length analysis, see Reed’s more recent work *In Jesus Name: The History and Beliefs of Oneness Pentecostals* (Deo Publishing, 2008).

³⁸ Reed states that when the Assemblies finally did denounce the “New Issue,” 156 of the 585 ministers were instantly barred from membership, and with then numerous congregations.” “Oneness Pentecostalism,” 938. That the theological perspective had taken root in over 25% of their credential holders speaks loudly to the attractiveness of the hyper-restorationist doctrine.

had no desire for any issue to be forced upon our people, to fight or divide over....I grant all, without strife or condemnation from me, the privilege of being baptized with any formula found in the New Testament on baptism

he claimed that

I saw that all the Scriptures on the subject represent the apostles as teaching and commanding baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus...[of others] I am not their judge. I only ask the same for myself as I grant them. They are not my judges either.³⁹

This likely did little to avoid fanning partisan flames on both sides.

At the same time this was occurring, another key leader in the Assemblies took a much more traditional position on the matter. J. Roswell Flower, influential A/G figure in his own right, offered some editorial comment in the *Weekly Evangel* in July 1915:

It is impossible for us to remain silent. It would be criminal for us to do so. We could no more be justified in remaining silent that we could remain silent were we to see a fast train approaching a crowd of people on the railroad track, who were utterly unconscious of its approach. We must warn people of their danger....Only this week the news is brought to us of further divisions over this question. A fine assembly in Illinois, prosperous and blessed of God, suddenly torn asunder by these radical teachers, who will not tolerate any interference or allow anybody to have any divine life except they are baptized by their baptism.⁴⁰

Clearly, the Pentecostal faithful who at heart desired unitary truth were faced with two opposing theological positions. Though some like E. N. Bell desired to hold to the new theological perspective while urging unity in the face of it, matters were moving beyond the potential for such accommodation. The mere existence of two different modes of baptism was rapidly creating opposing camps that threatened the young Assemblies of God fellowship.

³⁹ E. N. Bell, "There is Safety In Counsel," *The Weekly Evangel*, September 15, 1908, 1.

⁴⁰ J. Roswell Flower, "Editorial Comment on Issue," *The Weekly Evangel*, July 17, 1915, 1.

It was this theological disagreement and the division it engendered that helped lead the Assemblies to make the momentous decision of issuing a “Statement of Fundamental Truths” to guide the group. Within the proclamation, the most extensive section by far was that addressing “the essentials as to the Godhead,” with each of five subsections entitled “Terms Explained,” “Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead,” “Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,” “Identity and Co-Operation in the Godhead,” and “The Title, Lord Jesus Christ.”⁴¹ Ostensibly written to keep the theological innovators in their midst from innovating or “restoring” any further, it also had the affect of further solidifying the A/G in a denominational mold. According to Mario Hoover in his *Origin and Structural Development of the Assemblies of God*, the group “had stood the test of a major doctrinal controversy, was beginning to consolidate its organizational structure in orderly fashion, and could look more confidently to the future.”⁴² Bell himself, never the firebrand in these matters, came around to the official position of the denomination such that by 1920 he would be discussing the Trinity in the pages of *The Pentecostal Evangel* in January 1920.⁴³ This said, to assume the

⁴¹ “A Statement of Fundamental Truths Approved by the General Council of the Assemblies of God, October 2-7, 1916,” *The Weekly Evangel*, January 6, 1917, 8.

⁴² Mario G. Hoover, *Origin and Structural Development of the Assemblies of God*, 3rd ed. (Springfield, MO: self-published, 1968), 42.

⁴³ E. N. Bell stays quite close to orthodox and official A/G teaching as he states “Why put it where Jesus never put it, by saying, ‘Jesus Christ is the only God,’ or ‘Jesus Christ is the Only True God’ and such like? Even though there be some truth in it, why thus over-emphasize what is not specially said in the Word?” In doing so Bell stands aside from the Oneness position. He concludes his article as such: “One only advertises his ignorance to say he believes in only what he understands. Well, God is more worthy of credence than all men. He says there is the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and these three are One. Yes, these three Persons are one God. I don't know how, but I believe it. Hallelujah!” “The Only True God,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, January 24, 1920, 6-7.

controversy was short-lived or minor would be to ignore the severity of conflict the issue engendered and the division it caused in the ranks. Here as nowhere else, the response of the Assemblies in asserting order over theological chaos reveals the roots of its support for structure. As many denominational leaders had found, the alternative tended to be less than helpful.

Understanding the background of the A/G's growth, one begins to discern from its earliest days a deep desire for control that has little to do with external forces and everything to do with vital intrinsic matters. While those of a more cynical mindset might be tempted to consider vicious and more sinister motives, it is perhaps best to think of the situation in terms of instinct and self-preservation. Modern Pentecostal ecumenist Mel Robeck, himself critical of the Assemblies for the limiting moves they have made over the years especially with regards to speaking in tongues, still notes that much of this has occurred as "the denomination's leadership has rightly been concerned about...the preservation of certain manifestations of the Holy Spirit among its constituents."⁴⁴ The group's attempts to adequately address such issues may therefore simply be misapplied, leading not to maintenance of the *status quo* as intended but rather towards increased control and limitation over time.

Through this brief look at the early years of Pentecostalism and the beginnings of the Assemblies of the God, it seems clear that both an openness to the Spirit and a fear of enthusiasm or undesirable theological creativity persisted in various forms. Without the former, the revival would never have taken hold or endured as long as it did; without the

⁴⁴ Cecil M. Robeck, "An Emerging Magisterium? The Case of the Assemblies of God," *Pneuma* 25 (Fall 2003): 214.

latter, no mechanisms might have been established to hold together such an independent grouping of people.

As the A/G grew and by necessity developed structurally, its own encroaching pragmatism would set it on a collision course with the ambitious agenda of David du Plessis in the later 1950s and the early 1960s. It is therefore to the foundations of du Plessis's faith we will turn our attention in the following chapter. For just as an understanding of the development of the Assemblies of God has helped us to gain some insight in the decisions it would come to make, so too du Plessis's spiritual formation and developing convictions provide insight into the man who would become the flashpoint for Pentecost in the middle decades of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PATH OF PENTECOST

At the end of David du Plessis's 1977 autobiography *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*, he relates what he considers a key validating moment in his life's work and calling. In Rome in 1976 with other key members of the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue, he came face to face with then-pontiff Paul VI:

We were introduced then, one by one, to Pope Paul. As I reached him, my name was read aloud. He looked into my face and said, "So, you are Mr. Pentecost?"

"That's what they call me," I replied.¹

This small vignette as the final word on his life reveals how far he had traveled from his youth even as it makes clear what he considered his defining work within ecumenical and charismatic circles. Above all it represents an important culmination to a journey that was decades in the making.

That du Plessis's own life began in the same few years as modern Pentecostalism and that he matured in the midst of the developing movement is more than a historical fact of serendipity. As du Plessis interacted with brothers and sisters from within and without his own theological and ecclesiastical milieu both were to emerge changed by the encounter. Yet before the more contentious issues of ecumenical debate and the Charismatic Movement took hold, simpler relationships between the South African and his ecclesiastical milieu existed: that of student to mentor, servant to institution, and partner to partner. While investigating du Plessis's place in the midst of advancing Pentecostalism and his work in ecumenical circles remains the defining task of this

¹ David J. du Plessis and Bob Slosser, *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1977), 247.

project, as this theme is developed it makes sense to discover more about the man who could stand before the Pope with a name and persona representative of an entire movement.

Though du Plessis's worldwide exposure and notoriety in the midst of the massive religious realignment of the Charismatic Movement was profound, it is worth remembering that these developments did not take place until he was well into his sixth decade. Indeed, more than half his life had already been spent by the time he entered the ecumenical field—let alone the later Spirit-led renewal in the mainline. As we therefore trace the highlights of this journey from a relative global backwater to the perceived centers of ecclesiastical power, attention will be given to the ways in which his life journey prepared and qualified him for the steps he would take and how signs in his earlier writings and work helped project the course of his life's ministry as an ecumenical Pentecostal.

In this second chapter I examine du Plessis's life from his first experiences of faith through to his role as a church leader in South Africa, initiator of intra-Pentecostal dialogue and, finally, ecumenical efforts following his relocation to the United States in 1949. I will show how his lifelong spiritual emphasis on the experiential work of God in the life of the believer and deep theological convictions regarding the Spirit's work in the Church universal placed him on a path that made his charismatically ecumenical life almost inevitable. When informed by these two guiding principles his calling to be a missionary led him to operate in the midst of what he considered the greatest mission field of all—a Church that deeply needed the power of the Holy Spirit. Everything he accomplished throughout his life was a natural outgrowth of this core conviction of faith.

It was ultimately this understanding of the place of experience, his own personal calling to testify of the power of Pentecost, and an elevated view of the Spirit's work that enabled him to do so much to bring his message of revival to the larger ecclesiastical world in the years before the Charismatic Movement took hold in force.

As noted in the introduction, no scholarly biography of David du Plessis has ever been published. Though he is ubiquitous in any monograph detailing the events of the religious revival and was a well-connected figure in his own day, he has garnered relatively little academic attention, especially in the years following his death in 1987. While a personal account of his life exists in *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*² and in vignette form in other works such as *Simple and Profound*,³ these pieces were popularly written and are mostly conversational rather than scholarly in tone.

Within the academy, only three major research projects touching on du Plessis have been written in the past few decades. One of these is Martin Robinson's 1987 "To the Ends of the Earth: The Journey of an Ecumenical Pentecostal (1905-1987)." Detailing the whole of du Plessis's life under the rubric of his ecumenical efforts, Robinson's work had the unique benefit of being written while the South African was still alive. One of its stated goals was to describe "du Plessis' journey not so much as a single conversion to an ecumenical vision but more as a gradual unfolding of an ecumenical perspective."⁴ Broad in aim, it remains concerned more with du Plessis's

² du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*.

³ David J. du Plessis, *Simple and Profound* (Orleans, MA: Paraclete Press, 1986).

⁴ Martin Robinson, "To the Ends of the Earth: The Pilgrimage of an Ecumenical Pentecostal, David J. du Plessis, (1905-1987)" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Birmingham (UK), 1987), 6. Robinson also mentions the importance of the "development that takes place in du Plessis' understanding of the Smith-Wigglesworth

own development and actions rather than his relationship with larger Pentecostalism and the developments in this adjoining relationship. The latter is, of course, an important aim of this project.

A second scholarly project is an Arnold Bittlinger work discussing the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue group that du Plessis was instrumental in founding.⁵ Detailed and specific, Bittlinger's work is a treasure trove for those seeking a focused look at such relationships, but seems too microscopic for those wishing to engage the larger story of du Plessis and world Pentecostalism. In the end, it is more concerned with the relationship between the two theological groups for whom "it is not so natural... [to be] in a Dialogue with one another"⁶ than any one individual.

A final and more recent du Plessis project is Brinton Rutherford's analysis of the narratives and rhetoric du Plessis utilized to give definition and perspective to his larger work. Rutherford's "From Prosecutor to Defender: An Intellectual History of David J. du Plessis Drawn from the Stories of His Testimony" is an insightful and engaging look into the changing place of certain stories in the mind of the South African which he concludes "were not always historical, and, in some cases, were factually untrue."⁷ The work

prophecy." This prophecy, which will be discussed later, operated as a touchstone for du Plessis' discussion of his life's work.

⁵ Arnold Bittlinger, "Catholics and Pentecostals: The Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue and Its Ecumenical Relevance," TMs (photocopy), 1978, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁶ Ibid., 1.

⁷ Rutherford goes on to note, "Du Plessis used a mixture of life events, historical inaccuracies, and creative legends to successfully communicate theological truth to a diverse, ecumenical audience." While this conclusion may be a bit cynical and overdrawn, that du Plessis often unintentionally let the present color his memory of the past seems likely. "From Prosecutor to Defender: An Intellectual History of David J. du

underscores the need for a biographical look at du Plessis in a more systematic and critical fashion than his writings alone have provided. Though it remains impossible to ignore du Plessis's own recollections, the caution Rutherford offers will be important as we proceed.

Du Plessis's Formative Years

David du Plessis spent his early life—indeed, the overwhelming majority of his first four decades—in his native land of South Africa. Born near the turn of the twentieth century a few years after the conclusion of the tumultuous Boer War between English and Afrikaner settlers, du Plessis came of age in a land recently shaken by conflict where the divisions between races, ethnicities, and languages remained clear. As he related it, his own ancestry was neither Dutch nor English but rather French: “Father and Mother were direct descendants of the French Huguenots.”⁸ His father, a veteran of the Boer War and a carpenter, married his mother shortly thereafter, calling her “the only woman of God’s choice for me.”⁹ Their oldest son David Johannes was born on 7 February 1905 in Twenty-Four Rivers, a Christian commune of sorts founded by a Norwegian evangelist.¹⁰ While details of young David’s earliest years are difficult to ascertain it is important to

Plessis, Drawn from the Stories of His Testimony” (Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2000), Abstract.

⁸ David J. du Plessis, “The Life Story of David J. du Plessis,” TMs, n.d. , 1, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁹ David J. du Plessis Sr., “My Testimony,” AMs (autographed manuscript), ca 1949, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁰ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 7ff.

note that during the first years of his life his family was not outside the Christian orbit, but was part of the established Dutch Reformed Church.¹¹

In the years surrounding du Plessis's birth and childhood, developments occurring half a world away would come to have a defining impact on his life. At Azusa Street and elsewhere, a religious revival focused upon the Holy Spirit and associated giftings, signs, and wonders took powerful hold on many individuals at the same time it was attracting scores more. As chronicler Frank Bartleman wrote, "The work was getting clearer and stronger at Azusa. Missionaries were gathered there from Africa, India, and the islands of the sea. Preachers and workers had crossed the continent and come from distant lands with an irresistible drawing to Los Angeles."¹² Some, motivated by a deep sense of fervor, went out from the California meetings with a desire to share the blessings of the Spirit with the world. Others, no less impelled, stayed closer to home in their missionary efforts. Both groups were to help in the spread of what came to be called "Pentecostalism."

One individual touched by the outgrowth of this new movement was John G. Lake, who had not long before been involved in a related proto-Pentecostal group in the city of Zion City, Illinois. In the period after their prophet and leader John Alexander Dowie fell from power, Lake together with others joined the new Pentecostal movement by means of early leader Charles Parham. For his part, Lake felt impelled to missions and

¹¹ du Plessis, "My Testimony." His father's letter notes a nominal Christianity until receiving Pentecost. For more the family vis-à-vis the Dutch Reformed Church, see du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 13.

¹² Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, Reprint. (Northridge, CA: Voice Christian Publications, 1962), 50.

by 1908 had traveled to South Africa to begin missionary work.¹³ It was there he helped found the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) of South Africa together with fellow pioneer Thomas G. Hezmalhalch. As du Plessis himself recalled in 1938,

In 1908 two brethren from the United States brought the first Pentecostal message. In a few years God blessed so that it eclipsed anything that had been known before in South Africa. These two men started off in a native church in Johannesburg and out of curiosity white folk went, but they stayed and received the baptism.¹⁴

Though du Plessis was a young child at the time, each of these developments helped set in motion a series of events that would impact the rest his life. His parents, who in 1911 had moved to Ladybrand, converted to the Pentecostal faith around 1914. As du Plessis's father wrote, some Pentecostals came to visit the family around the time his own father (David's grandfather) "was suffering with dropsy, almost in the last stages."¹⁵ Young David would later recall "my grandfather was not healed, but both he [my father] and my grandfather had such deep experiences with the Lord in praying for healing that their lives were thoroughly changed."¹⁶ His father agreed with this assessment, stating "there I understood and accepted full salvation for soul and body. Until that day it was the first full gospel message with testimony of the saints that I had ever heard."¹⁷ Soon filled with the Holy Spirit in the Pentecostal sense, David's father

¹³ Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2007), 167ff. See also J. R. Zeigler, "Lake, John Graham," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Revised and Expanded. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 828.

¹⁴ du Plessis, "My Testimony."

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 12.

¹⁷ du Plessis, "My Testimony."

and family found themselves serving in the Mount Tabor area of Basutoland around 1916 where David Senior assisted in the construction of a missionary station.¹⁸ It was during this time that an eleven-year-old David du Plessis began to reflect on spirituality and faith through his observations of the native African believers—“ignorant black people”—all around him:

The singing soared louder and louder, and the people, dancing and happy, wound their way with [the sick woman who was healed] back to the shed.

Back inside the church, we had a great old-fashioned service. The Lord had done another miracle. To these people, that was the only way. That’s the way the Bible told it, and that’s the way it was.¹⁹

As he continued to ponder this state of affairs he struggled, noting

“I know the Bible,” I anguished. “I know all about Jesus. But I don’t know Him.” Why I prayed, or my parents prayed, to me it was still a recital. God was always far away in heaven, never here. But for these people, these poor black villagers, He was always near at hand.²⁰

¹⁸ David J. du Plessis, “A Brief Life Sketch of David J. du Plessis,” TMs, ca 1978, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA; du Plessis, “Life Story.”

¹⁹ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 19. Du Plessis comments that the life of miracles was an important draw for him as well. Regarding his use of the phrase “ignorant black people,” we are reminded that no matter how many boundaries he might have been willing to cross in religious circles, du Plessis was very much a person of his time. As a South African man living in the middle decades of the twentieth century, he was almost certainly subject to the same biases that led to the development of the rigid apartheid system in his homeland. While overtly race-related comments from du Plessis are almost non-existent in the sources reviewed, his silence at best indicates a grudging acceptance of the views of his peers and at worst implicates him as complicit. A deeper look into South African source material that I was sadly unable to access because of language and geographical considerations might well illuminate this and other formative factors in du Plessis’s life and worldview.

²⁰ Ibid.

A conversion thus credited to “the ministry of African (black) Christians”²¹ occurred not long after. The specifics of the incident involve a horseback trip through a violent thunderstorm wherein “he took a fright, dismounted and knelt [sic] down surrendered to the Lord,” a development his father felt gave him “a sound testimony of real salvation.”²² The familiar Pentecostal pattern of baptism with water in February 1917 and Spirit baptism in February 1918²³ followed, though not without an important detour for this latter spiritual milestone.

As he sought to receive the Holy Spirit in a new way, he found himself blocked until he could make confession of a perceived sin and seek forgiveness. As he relates the story, his efforts to receive the Pentecostal blessing were stymied until he received notice from a young woman that a matter on his conscience kept him from the breakthrough. Years before, he had lied about a small injury to his baby sister. When she died not long after, he had never revealed what had happened. Now, however, he went to his mother and father with his confession. Though forgiven by his parents, he “didn’t suddenly burst into sunshine and smiles with the confession of my childhood sin. I had expected a surge of relief. Instead, I felt unworthy. I felt different, but I sensed my own unworthiness.”²⁴

Having a vision related to Christ’s forgiveness not long after, du Plessis began to praise God, which in this case immediately preceded *glossolalia*. As he discussed his experience in *Simple and Profound*,

²¹ du Plessis, “Life Story.”

²² du Plessis, “My Testimony.” For more on du Plessis’s Luther-like conversion, see du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 22-4.

²³ See du Plessis, “Life Story,” for these dates.

²⁴ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 33.

I felt something—it seemed like something down inside of me was bubbling up and wanted to come out. I couldn't understand it with my head, but in my heart, I began to realize that, while his Spirit was in me already, He had never been released. A warm glow now spread over me, and I started laughing... I started to shout, "Hallelujah!" But the first syllable was all that came out, after that it streamed off into a language I'd never heard before.²⁵

Du Plessis's life as he recounts it from this point is heavily influenced by a seeming call to service and ministry. As he later wrote in recollection of his early years, with the baptism in the Holy Spirit "also came the call to the ministry...as a boy I began to preach the Gospel at every opportunity...it seemed the call to the ministry was in my very veins."²⁶ It therefore comes as little surprise he served as a young open-air preacher in the days following entry into the Pentecostal life.²⁷

This was soon followed around age sixteen by a desire for full-time ministry, necessitating in his mind a departure from school in order to fulfill the great need for spreading the word of the Lord to all of those who needed to hear. Just as his spiritual antecedents Lake and Hezmalhalch had felt impelled to travel the world to share the story in which they found themselves, so too did du Plessis have a deep passion for those in his orbit. During this time he also served as an apprentice in the printing office of the Apostolic Faith Mission's headquarters,²⁸ beginning a connection to denominational Pentecostalism that he would have for much of his life.

²⁵ du Plessis, *Simple*, 22.

²⁶ du Plessis, "Life Story."

²⁷ David J. du Plessis, "Testimony," TMs, ca 1980, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

²⁸ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 39-44..

Though du Plessis had left the world of formal education in the midst of his own fervor for ministry, he soon decided that to have done so was a bit premature. In his own words, he had been “called, but not sent.”²⁹ Finishing his secondary schooling, he attended Grey University College from 1923-24 and served in secular employ at the office of the railway mechanical engineer in 1925. Following a transfer to the Chief Mechanical Engineer’s Office he became associate pastor of Pretoria Assembly.³⁰ As he had by then become “the first Pentecostal in South Africa to obtain an education that high” and thus the most educated, “doors opened even more,”³¹ helping him in the process secure a position as the District Secretary of the Northern Transvaal District of the AFM in 1927.³² It is at this point that we find one of his earliest extant pieces of correspondence: a letter to Swedish Pentecostal pioneer Lewi Pethrus. Within, he writes that

There is so much organization and so little of the power of God that I even despair we are drifting back to churchianity and are fast losing all the power of Pentecost and the apostolic gifts and the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

My anxiety now causes me to seek the advice and help and prayer of God’s saints all over the world. I hope you will not be inconvenienced by my many inquiries.³³

²⁹ du Plessis, “Life Story.”

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 68.

³² du Plessis, “Life Story.”

³³ David J. du Plessis to Lewi Pethrus, AMs, November 22, 1927, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Though on the surface a simple jeremiad written to decry the encroaching “coldness” of the movement already in effect in South Africa, it also shows that du Plessis early on sought to cultivate contacts beyond his own sphere through correspondence.

As 1927 transitioned into 1928 important changes were in store for du Plessis. It was during this year that he was officially ordained in the Apostolic Faith Mission, the denomination in which he had already been ministering for some years.³⁴ While this was an important milestone in his young life, perhaps nothing was more foundational to his life’s work than his marriage to Anna Cornelia Jacobs in the same span of years. Their initial meeting was characteristic of du Plessis’s own spirituality: following a church service, he met a young lady whereupon “wholly unexpectedly and with unmistakable clarity, the Lord spoke to me at that instant, ‘That’s your wife.’”³⁵ Sure of their providential destiny as partners from their first date, David J. Plessis married Anna Cornelia Jacobs on 13 August 1927 following an eighteen-month courtship.³⁶

Over fifty years later, du Plessis recalled a conversation from the early days of their marriage that may give some indication of the tenor of their relationship:

“But Anna, tell me, are you willing to go back to the faith life—and suffer?
I’d rather suffer with a dedicated husband who’s a pauper than live with a well-to-do man I’m not sure I can trust. If God can’t trust you with your commitment to Him, than how can I trust you?”

Her moist eyes sparkled both blue and green.

“All right, dear,” I said softly, but happily, “then together we go.”³⁷

³⁴ du Plessis, “Life Story”; “Ministerial Records of David J. du Plessis,” n.d., Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

³⁵ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 50.

³⁶ du Plessis, “Life Story.”

³⁷ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 74.

A seemingly kindred soul for Mr. Pentecost, Anna du Plessis was to remain with him through the decades, traveling with the family—sometimes at great hardship—wherever the Spirit bade them go.

By 1936, du Plessis was selected as the General Secretary for the whole of the Apostolic Faith Mission, an “insider’s” post he held for the tumultuous years of the following decade.³⁸ With this position inside denominational Pentecostalism, du Plessis was able to garner insight into the workings of the classic form and shape of the movement as well as make connections with other Pentecostal leaders at home and abroad that would come to have lasting impact.³⁹

While David du Plessis was serving as General Secretary of the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa, one of the world Pentecostal leaders with whom he came into contact was the Englishman Smith Wigglesworth. At the time of their encounter in 1936, Wigglesworth was already seventy-seven and a kind of elder statesman of Pentecost. As du Plessis related their most infamous dealing, he noted:

He looked straight into my eyes. I had no choice but to stare back at him. He began to speak, and I knew he was prophesying.

“I have been sent by the Lord to tell you what He has shown me this morning,” he began. “Through the old-line denominations will come a revival that will eclipse anything we have known throughout history. No such things have happened in times past as will happen when this begins.”

Without breaking stride, he plunged ahead in his rapid-fire manner. “It will eclipse the present-day, twentieth-century Pentecostal revival that already is a marvel to the world, with its strong opposition from the established church. But this same blessing will become acceptable to the churches and they will go on with this message and this experience beyond what the Pentecostals have

³⁸ Russell Spittler, “Du Plessis, David Johannes,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Revised and Expanded. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 590.

³⁹ While in South Africa, he served as evangelist, pastor, editor of all publications and general secretary in the AFM. du Plessis, “Life Story.”

achieved...the Lord said to me that I am to give you warning that He is going to use you in this movement. You will have a prominent part."⁴⁰

Though Brinton Rutherford has gone to great lengths to show how the details of the story did alter over time to fit certain expectations and circumstances in du Plessis's life⁴¹, it goes without saying that he seems highly unlikely to have invented such a fanciful tale without it having at least some basis in reality. If nothing else, it is clear through looking at the progression of his life following this period that du Plessis's actions did increasingly take place in widening circles of geographic influence, proving Wigglesworth's words as he remembered them, to be, if not prescriptive, than at least descriptive of the mission in which he was engaged. Further, that he was in a place to have such an interaction in the first place is illustrative of the trajectory upon which his life was set.

Du Plessis's first long-distance trip on behalf of the Pentecostal movement took place in 1937. Having been invited by his counterpart J. Roswell Flower, the General Secretary of the United States based Assemblies of God, to visit their biennial General Council meeting in Memphis, Tennessee, du Plessis and an associate prepared for the

⁴⁰ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 2-3; David J. du Plessis, interview by William Menzies, TMs, June 28, 1967, 2, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁴¹ "That du Plessis was called to go to the leaders of the churches was true at a level of truth beyond the circumstances and details of the call as it was presented in the early sixties, the mid-sixties and seventies, and the eighties. As du Plessis reflected upon the events of the present, which he felt were an outgrowth of past divine communications, then the more specific the events became, which he recalled from the past. Present details became embedded in the present recall of past events." Rutherford, "From Prosecutor to Defender," 169.

trip.⁴² Garnering certification by the AFM to leave on 7 May, du Plessis embarked in the weeks following.⁴³

On 8 July 1937, du Plessis arrived in New York Harbor in the midst of “terrific heat” as he and other travelers observed the Statue of Liberty, Coney Island, and the various skyscrapers of the great city.⁴⁴ A travel journal of du Plessis’ time recounts a very active few months, with visits to not only the General Council in Memphis, but all around the United States from New England to the Midwest.⁴⁵ While at the Assemblies of God’s biennial business meeting, du Plessis spoke on the theme “Christ Our Conquering Leader,” noting:

that one who believes on the Lord Jesus and his faith in His promises will receive God's blessing. He will give such a person the spiritual revelation, the knowledge of Himself, and the calling unto a life of victory and power through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit....I am so glad Jesus is the head of the church. I am glad He is the head of the churches in America, in England, in South Africa, in Canada. Why? Because that brings a common fellowship to all the churches which have only one head.⁴⁶

⁴² du Plessis, “Testimony.”

⁴³ Pieter L. le Roux to Whom It May Concern, TMs, May 7, 1937, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA; Henry Stewart, “Travel Journal,” AMs, 1937, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA, indicates arrival in the Azores by 3 July.

⁴⁴ Stewart, “Travel Journal.”

⁴⁵ Ibid. States mentioned range from Maine to Arkansas, together with the country of Canada.

⁴⁶ David J. du Plessis, “Christ Our Conquering Leader,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, November 27, 1937, 20.

Sounding such unitive themes was an early habit of du Plessis's and, as well shall see, one that developed and matured as his own spheres of influence and exposure to the larger Christian world grew.

These latter tendencies are further accented by a sermon he delivered to a church in Springfield, Missouri during his 1937 visit that was reprinted in two issues of the A/G denominational magazine *The Pentecostal Evangel*. There he discussed what he called "The Danger of Borderland Christianity" and encouraged his Pentecostal hearers to press through to the metaphorical promised land of God's Spirit and gifts. Speaking of the dangers of spiritual coldness that seemed to him so common in the history of the Church, he said

Of course, I don't expect Pentecost to go that way, for very few of those churches had the power of the Holy Ghost as we have it. I believe God will never let this movement go that way...today it is in every country of the world, practically, and I believe God is bringing us together to have closer fellowship so that we may go forward with a united purpose; for Jesus is coming, and He wants us to be together then.⁴⁷

Du Plessis's first visit to America affected him in areas both mundane and sublime. Beyond simple exposure to a wider world than he had known before, the South African greatly increased his list of Pentecostal contacts and became well known amongst his co-religionists. In August of 1937, for instance, du Plessis appears on the list of recommended ministers published by the Assemblies.⁴⁸ A number of articles with his byline also appeared in the A/G's *Pentecostal Evangel* and other Pentecostal magazines around this time. Among these are the aforementioned transcripts of his sermons at the

⁴⁷ David J. du Plessis, "The Danger of Border Land Christianity," *The Pentecostal Evangel*, October 23, 1937, 2-3.

⁴⁸ "Visiting Ministers Recommended," *The Pentecostal Evangel*, August 28, 1937, 11.

General Council meeting and Springfield Assembly, as well as an additional piece in the A/G's youth-oriented *Christ's Ambassador's Herald* entitled "Advertising the Gospel." Derived rather directly from his experience of the American means of merchandizing, du Plessis there lauds how "the way they advertise a certain brand of tooth paste has made me feel that if I don't use it I will even lose my false teeth!"⁴⁹ Finding a spiritual lesson in this dear to his own heart, he encouraged readers to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the same enterprising vigor: "If God's people everywhere would begin to advertise...a mighty revival would sweep over every country in the world."⁵⁰

Rounding out examples of du Plessis' thought related to the American excursion is one of his sermons delivered in the well-known Pentecostal congregation at Chicago's Stone Church entitled "The Master Hath Need of You." There he reiterated a story from his childhood about his father offering him up as a donkey when the call went forward from a missionary in need. Du Plessis used the comic example as an opportunity to speak about his deep sense of call: "That day Dad surrendered his oldest boy to the Lord's work and he has never asked me to come back. He never expects me to make a name for myself in the world, but he expects me to be true to my calling."⁵¹

After du Plessis left America, he spent some of 1938 in Europe—apparently his first visit there.⁵² Following contacts with Pentecostals on the continent, he returned to

⁴⁹ David J. du Plessis, "Advertising the Gospel," *Christ's Ambassadors Herald*, February 1938, 2.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵¹ David J. du Plessis, "The Master Hath Need of You," *The Latter Rain Evangel*, February 1938, 5.

⁵² du Plessis, "Testimony"; du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 103.

South Africa. As tensions in Europe and the world rose in the face of approaching war and finally exploded from 1939 to 1945, any plans du Plessis may have had for future trips or contacts were put on indefinite hold. Even so, written contacts between him and other Pentecostals did not cease. In 1942 du Plessis again wrote for the *CA Herald* in an article billed as a “plea for personal evangelism,” there noting of “this world-wide Pentecostal revival, I have only one complaint, and that is that it is too small.”⁵³ In the same year he also provided *The Pentecostal Evangel* an optimistic update on the movement’s progress in his homeland.⁵⁴

The occasional article notwithstanding, du Plessis spent the war years focusing on the branch of the revival in which he was locally engaged—i.e. continuing his work as General Secretary of the AFM and establishing a Bible School for the training and equipping of Pentecostal ministers beginning in 1940. When the needs of the denomination demanded he relinquish his hands-on role at the school in 1944, du Plessis returned to the work of the General Secretary in a fulltime capacity. In that role he later remembered decreasing “the missionary staff, [taking] the work out of the control of Europeans, and putting it under the jurisdiction of Africans.”⁵⁵ Though he also stated that “some might say with this move I unwittingly contributed to apartheid in South Africa,” he claims that it was never his intention to do so.⁵⁶

⁵³ David J. du Plessis, “Let Us Go: A Plea for Personal Evangelism,” *Christ's Ambassadors Herald*, June 1942, 2.

⁵⁴ David J. du Plessis, “South African Pentecostal Work Grows,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, January 24, 1942, 4.

⁵⁵ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 112.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* Once again the matter of du Plessis and race presents itself as an intriguing line of inquiry. Yet for the reasons previously mentioned and, perhaps, most

Worldwide Pentecostal Dialogue

As the war ended and international travel became a reality once more, Pentecostals around the globe made moves to come together for a meeting of the Spirit-filled. Called the Pentecostal World Conference (PWC), it met in Zurich in 1947.⁵⁷ While there du Plessis delivered an address entitled “Gather the Wheat, Burn the Chaff” within which he shared the problem of spiritual enthusiasm and spiritual maturity:

It is nothing unusual, in these days, to hear preachers declare from many Pentecostal platforms that many manifestations in some meetings are due to fanaticism if not wildfire....In the beginning [of the movement] we were very fond of considering enthusiastic young converts just filled with the Holy Spirit and full of shout and song as being “on fire.” Such on-fire-believers of today look upon the older and experienced Pentecostals as having become lukewarm and cold because they do not demonstrate reactions such as they had when they first came into the Pentecostal experience.⁵⁸

In response to this state of affairs, du Plessis said

In our Pentecostal churches today, there seem to be two extremes. The Apostle has a word of warning for both. To those who object so fervently against the noise and disorder he says” “Quench not the Spirit” (I Thess. 5:19). To those who want nothing but these disorderly manifestations he says: “Despise not prophesyings” (I Thess. 5:20). If you refuse to have seemingly needless manifestations, chaff as you may think, you will never have gifts of prophecy. If you refuse to let the Lord fan the needless demonstrations from your life and will cling to the initial reactions only, you will never have the ripened fruit of the gifts of the Spirit.⁵⁹

importantly, the direction and purpose of this research, related matters will go unanswered for the time being. Hopefully these and other unanswered questions will goad further investigations into race, Pentecostalism, and the Charismatic Movement.

⁵⁷ du Plessis, “Life Story.”

⁵⁸ David J. du Plessis, “Gather the Wheat-Burn the Chaff,” TMs, sermon preached at the opening of the First Pentecostal World Conference (Zurich, Switzerland, January 1947).

⁵⁹ Ibid.

His irenic approach and above all openness to the new things of the Spirit would have great import in the coming years.

In the midst of these developments and during a trip to America in 1947, du Plessis resigned from his position in the AFM. In the process he left behind a denominational post for work and ministry in intra-Pentecostal circles.⁶⁰ Moving to Switzerland with his wife and family in 1948, they began “trusting the Lord for our support.”⁶¹ During this time du Plessis became an organizing secretary for the PWC, telling its leader Leonard Steiner “You just tell me what to do and I’ll do it. I’ll take over the work of the office on the condition that you are the chief and I’m working for you.”⁶² At the May 1949 meeting of the group, he compiled a “Manifesto and Declaration” approved by the group which recognized among other things the need “to demonstrate to the world the essential unity of Spirit-baptized believers fulfilling the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ: ‘that all may be one’ John 17:21.”⁶³

From 1947-1949 du Plessis traveled extensively throughout Europe and America, visiting Denmark, Italy, Germany, England, and both coasts of the United States.⁶⁴

During a trip to America he spoke at the 1948 Church of God (Cleveland, TN) General

⁶⁰ Leonard Steiner, “Basel Office Now Functioning,” *Pentecost*, December 1947, 18. During this time du Plessis served with “the Pentecostal Church in Basel [which] was appointed to act as a clearing-house for the purpose of European Relief and Evangelism in connection with the Pentecostal Revival.”

⁶¹ du Plessis, “Testimony.”

⁶² du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 141.

⁶³ World Pentecostal Conference, “Manifesto and Declaration,” TMs (Paris, May 21, 1949), David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁶⁴ David J. du Plessis, “Travel Journal,” AMs, 1947-1949, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Assembly and discussed the idea that “the Pentecostal movement is headed for the churches,” ostensibly referring to a revival of sorts to those mainline denominations devoid of the Spirit-filled life. His words were simple: “they are cold and need warmth.”⁶⁵ These germinal thoughts are highly evocative of the steps he would soon take on the ecumenical stage.

Before any ecumenical work was to be done, du Plessis relocated to the place where the rest of his life would unfold and which would serve as the new base of his ministry: the United States. While visiting there in the latter half of 1948, he moved throughout the country and journeyed to numerous places as he conducted the work of the gospel and the PWC. This until 8 October when he and associate Paul Walker were severely injured in a car accident in West Virginia. During his long convalescence he made the decision to move himself and his family to this new land.⁶⁶ Thanks to various offerings received, Anna and the family were able to travel to Quebec by boat whereupon they made their way to West Virginia in time to celebrate their “first American Thanksgiving dinner together...hospitals, bandages, and traction devices notwithstanding.”⁶⁷

Du Plessis’s later reflections on this episode are replete with meaning. As detailed in the narrative analysis of Brinton Rutherford, the accident had come by the 1960s to function as an explanatory moment for his call to the churches, replacing other

⁶⁵ Church of God (Cleveland, TN), “Minutes of the 42nd General Assembly of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee),” August 1948, 20-21.

⁶⁶ du Plessis, “Life Story.”

⁶⁷ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 156.

stories that had heretofore held the same position.⁶⁸ Whatever the facts of the matter, that the near-death episode represented a key juncture in his life and impacted him both emotionally and spiritually seems probable: “none of these conclusions eliminates the possibility, perhaps even the likelihood, that the accident was a key and significant turning point in du Plessis’s life.”⁶⁹ The force and direction of his extra-Pentecostal activities only a few years later underscores this reality well.

After du Plessis and his family came to the United States as permanent residents he took up a teaching position at Lee College in Tennessee. While there he continued his work with the PWC and engagement with issues represented in American Pentecostalism. In a 1949 letter to his British Pentecostal friend and fellow ecumenical thinker Donald Gee,⁷⁰ du Plessis wrote concerning the upcoming Paris conference of the PWC as well as a new and controversial move of the Spirit called the “New Order of the Latter Rain”

⁶⁸ Rutherford writes: “in the early sixties, Du Plessis clearly viewed an event other than the accident as the key transforming encounter in his life up that point in time. . . . In contrast to the “First Encounter” and “Seabury House” versions from the early sixties, the popular version of “The Accident” from 1967 onward laid claim to both the “Divine Call” and the transformation of attitudes.” “From Prosecutor to Defender: An Intellectual History of David J. du Plessis, Drawn From the Stories of His Testimony,” 98.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Peter Hocken notes how the two became acquainted: “Du Plessis had been responsible for inviting Gee to speak in South Africa, where he had then acted as Gee’s interpreter into Afrikaans. It was at this time that a spiritual bond was first formed between these two men, almost a generation apart.” *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain* (Great Britain: The Paternoster Press, 1986), 19. For a helpful discussion of the correspondence (the written record of which begins in 1947 concerning their work together with the Pentecostal World Conference), see Walter Hollenweger, “Two Extraordinary Pentecostal Ecumenists: The Letters of Donald Gee and David du Plessis,” *The Ecumenical Review* 52, (July 2000): 391-402.

(NOLR).⁷¹ Of the second matter he felt “the so called ‘Latter Rain’ revival in the United States and Canada is in my opinion receding...just lots of error and...novices trying to correct some of the error and then [causing] greater error.”⁷²

Du Plessis during this new American phase of life also engaged the salvation-healing revival then gaining ground, writing on healing evangelists such as Jack Coe and William Branham in articles in *Pentecost* and *The Pentecostal Testimony*.⁷³ So too he offered his thoughts to Donald Gee on the Assembly of God’s recent connection with the National Association of Evangelicals:

The Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals was very good and there was surely the sound of abundant spiritual rain...there were so many of the leaders of Pentecost and they had so many pentecostal committee meetings that I often forgot the whole thing was not Pentecostal....[Baron von Blomberg] feels that it will be fatal if we begin to compromise to obtain and hold the friendship of evangelicals. He considers that if the Pentecostals of the world stand together they will be much stronger than the evangelicals in numbers and

⁷¹ For more information on this mid-century revival, see Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 203-211; R. M. Riss, “Latter Rain Movement,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 830-833; Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 212-213.

⁷² David J. du Plessis to Donald Gee, TMs, November 31, 1949, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷³ In 1951, du Plessis wrote: “I went to Kansas City, Kansas to attend the Divine Healing Conference sponsored by the Voice of Healing Fellowship....Love and fellowship were key-notes. Grace and humility were the characteristics of all speakers.” David J. du Plessis, “Divine Healing Evangelists Confer in Kansas City,” *Pentecost*, March 1951, 10. The next year he reported on a Branham healing campaign: “Mighty healing [sic] were taking place in almost every service. The power of the Lord was evident in the ministry of all the brethren. All the Pentecostal Movements as well as some non-Pentecostal societies are participating in the campaign. There is a wonderful spirit of unity and fellowship among the multitudes.” “Report from the Branham Campaign in South Africa,” *The Pentecostal Testimony*, January 15, 1952, 16.

in spiritual force...why not stand on our own feet rather than be called “a necessary evil in the evangelical camp?”⁷⁴

Du Plessis’s Pentecostal curiosity and desire to connect with moves of the Spirit around the globe therefore goaded him not only to engage in the examination and experience of worldwide Pentecostalism, but the general religious milieu of the land that was his new home.

Du Plessis Meets the Ecumenical Movement

In 1951 the various connections he had made within Pentecostalism and his desire to build up the body of Christ through what he saw as the work of the Holy Spirit culminated in a meeting with the World Council of Churches. Pastoring a church in Stamford, Connecticut at the time, du Plessis felt the call to share the Pentecostal message with ecumenical world leaders. He traveled one morning to New York City to meet with them unannounced. As he recounted in his book *The Spirit Bade Me Go*:

In 1951 the Lord spoke to me and clearly told me to go and witness to the leaders of the World Council of Churches...When the offices opened on Fifth Avenue I was there. I announced myself and made sure there was no mistake about who and what I was—a Pentecostal, and one of the worst, actually the world secretary. In the train on my way I had decided to make things so hot that those I spoke to would have no trouble in knowing what I had to say, and I expected them to object and reject. But the hotter I made it the better my friends seemed to like it...He took me back to the office and invited others in and made me repeat a whole lot of these things that I thought they did not want to hear. I was kept busy until closing time that afternoon. That was my first encounter with the WCC [World Council of Churches].⁷⁵

⁷⁴ David J. du Plessis to Donald Gee, TMs, May 5, 1950, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷⁵ David J. du Plessis, *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), 13-4.

While certainly his role as an intra-denominational Pentecostal leader was important, the steps he took to connect with WCC leaders represents a further widening of his sphere of attention and, perhaps, his view of where the Spirit would move. While on the one hand his decision for this kind of engagement seems to have arisen somewhat suddenly, looking back at the South African's continued desire to push farther and look further for the work of the Spirit fits quite well with the newest development. That there seemed to be great interest in what he had to say only served to encourage him further as his missionary instincts and drive—present from his conversion and ministry as a teenage street preacher—suddenly found a whole new field in which to labor.

If the attitude of some at the WCC gave a lift to du Plessis's initial forays as an ecumenical Pentecostal missionary, the response of John Mackay sent him soaring. Mackay, then serving as president of Princeton Theological Seminary, had both ecumenical connections and an appreciation for Pentecostalism. Donald Gee, having quoted Mackay's elevation of "the Pentecostals, all of whom are doing an amazing work in many parts of the world...according to the clear evidence of spiritual results," had the following reflections to share with the readers of *Pentecost*:

The supreme value of Dr. Mackay's words lies in their counsel regarding our attitudes towards whatever movements appear at first glance to be fanatical in certain features. Directly any revival develops denominational machinery...[and] there arises a tendency to resent the dislocation and challenge produced by renewed outbursts of zeal...we all need to be careful not to quench the manifestation of the Spirit, lest we despise something the Holy Ghost is endeavoring to reveal and restore, however imperfect and marred the channels.⁷⁶

It seems little wonder, then, that du Plessis himself was powerfully drawn to such a figure full of clout, stature, influence, and—most importantly—sympathy.

⁷⁶ Donald Gee, "Sympathy and Statesmanship," *Pentecost*, June 1951, 17.

Within a year of his first contact with world ecumenical figures, du Plessis began a relationship with the Presbyterian leader that would last for decades. Having—like Gee—become aware of Mackay’s comments about Pentecostals, the South African’s curiosity was naturally piqued. Following a positive phone call, Mackay invited du Plessis to Princeton, where they discussed the experience of the former as a missionary in South America. Du Plessis later recalled his associate’s comment regarding Pentecostalism: “‘That,’ said Dr. Mackay, ‘was when I came to the conclusion that I would rather put up with the uncouth life of the Pentecostal, than be bound by the ascetic death of the formal churches.’”⁷⁷ Not content to let the conversation end, Mackay insisted that he connect with other ecumenical leaders “because you can bring them alive,”⁷⁸ and soon invited the South African to attend the next meeting of the International Missionary Council (IMC) in Willingen, Germany in 1952.

There, du Plessis noted a very positive reception at the hands of ecumenicals who seemed deeply interested in hearing from a representative of the Pentecostal world. While in this instance we have only du Plessis’s later memory upon which to base the details of the story—a memory that, according to Brinton Rutherford’s work, could be somewhat “creative”—the fact that he attended the meeting and began around that time to engage in matters ecumenical is not up for debate. Regarding Mackay’s role in this set of affairs, even if du Plessis was rather optimistic in his memories of their initial meeting, extant correspondence from as early as 1959 shows the Princeton Seminary president both inviting du Plessis to the campus for an extended visit and eagerly anticipating the

⁷⁷ du Plessis, *Simple*, 155-6.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 156.

opportunity to further involve him in ecumenical affairs.⁷⁹ Seen in this light du Plessis's recollection of being introduced to assembled leaders by John Mackay as "his great Pentecostal friend"⁸⁰ seems eminently plausible.

While at Willingen, du Plessis recalls speaking to the group about his view of the power of the Holy Spirit and in the end "had interviews, by their request, with 110 of 210 delegates...[which] placed me in touch with many of the ecumenical leaders of officers of the World Council of Churches."⁸¹ Though officially only an observer at the meeting, he seems to have done somewhat more than sit in silence, in the process getting a taste of the interdenominational life outside Pentecostalism for the first time.

Du Plessis maintained strong ties to his Pentecostal theological home at the same time his interactions with the ecumenical world grew. It is thus no surprise that he corresponded with Donald Gee about his new experiences in the latter field:

Last month I attended a Conference of the Foreign Missions Department of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States....This was

⁷⁹ Mackay wrote "how much I am looking forward to your visit to the Seminary in April" before sharing his desire that du Plessis attend the next meeting of the World Presbyterian Alliance. He was "most eager to introduce you to some of our Presbyterian leaders from all over the world and to give them the privilege of meeting you," and noted "there will be so much to talk over together." John Mackay to David du Plessis, TMs, February 25, 1959, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. A few months later, he wrote the following: "I have been most interested and thrilled to hear the news of your recent meetings, especially in Los Angeles. I feel that God has raised you up to play a very special role in the ecumenical movement of our time." John Mackay to David du Plessis, TMs, April 17, 1959, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁸⁰ du Plessis, *The Spirit*, 14.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 14-5. Mackay's enthusiasm does not seem to have been misinterpreted by du Plessis, as the seminary president's farewell address to the graduating class of 1952 included reference to "the Holy Spirit as a living presence...the common inspirer of ardor and order." "Make Sure You Believe in the Holy Ghost," *Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 46, (1952): 11-12.

supposed to be a gathering where liberals and modernists are strongly represented. I found it quite different....I was deeply stirred by the hunger in the hearts of old and young ministers that I met at this meeting. There were some that are considered world leaders in the Council of Churches. These men were most cordial in their conversations with us and wanted to know the secret of the success of the Pentecostal Revival throughout the world.⁸²

Though in 1952 he felt led to step away from his position as secretary of the PWC, he assured to Donald Gee and many others that “his interest in the Pentecostal testimony will not cease” after leaving the post and remaining in America but that he would continue on in the service of the gospel.⁸³ His continued involvement with the American salvation/healing evangelists showed an important connection to this fundamental component of the Spirit-filled life. Not only did he write about a 1952 Branham campaign in *The Pentecostal Testimony*, but his travel journal for 1954 shows he was in attendance to hear Branham, Jack Coe, and Oral Roberts in June of that year.⁸⁴ Further involvement in the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA) during 1954 showed a continued desire to work in intra-Pentecostal circles, as did his discussion there of “The Purpose of Pentecost.”⁸⁵ The movement was his theological and spiritual home, one that despite all his ecumenical work and the associated controversies he would never think of leaving behind.

It goes without saying that David du Plessis was a man ever in motion. As early as 1948, an article in *Pentecost* refers to “his constant journeys to many European

⁸² David J. du Plessis to Donald Gee, TMs, January 22, 1952, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁸³ Donald Gee, “David J. du Plessis: A Well-Deserved Tribute,” *Pentecost*, September 1952, 12.

⁸⁴ du Plessis, “Travel Journal,” 1954.

⁸⁵ Ibid. While unclear if this is the exact message he delivered, it seems likely.

countries to foster the vital cause of increasing unity and mutual understanding among all the Pentecostal groups.”⁸⁶ By the mid-1950s, du Plessis’s peripatetic lifestyle not only continued in force but broadened ecumenically.

Beginning 1954 in South Africa, by March and April du Plessis’s personal records reveal attendance at a Billy Graham meeting, a visit with the Baptist Women’s Society, and Calvary Baptist Church. In July he once again attended the IMC Conference, this time on Staten Island. That same month he was at Princeton for the 17th meeting of the Presbyterian and Reformed World Alliances, likely at the invitation of the seminary’s president John Mackay.⁸⁷ In August he was able to attend the second conference of the WCC in Evanston, Illinois where, as he reported a few months later, “the most important thing was...the atmosphere of Christian fellowship and unity in which the delegates met and worked.”⁸⁸ To round out the year, du Plessis was at an October PFNA meeting in Springfield, Missouri to deliver an address to gathered delegates.

His activities in 1954 alone show an important acceleration in his ecumenical efforts as he continually sought to broaden his horizons from his base within Pentecostalism. This desire seems to have been established as least as early as 1953, when in a coup likely unequaled at the time or since, he as a Pentecostal minister received three letters of reference: one from the fundamentalist Bob Jones University

⁸⁶ Donald Gee, “My Visit to the Basel Office,” *Pentecost*, September 1948, 18.

⁸⁷ du Plessis, “Life Story.”

⁸⁸ David J. du Plessis, “The World Council of Churches,” *Pentecost*, December 1954, 10.

noting “he is a man of good judgment,”⁸⁹ a second from the ecumenically-minded International Missionary Council which lauded his ability to “eschew sectarianism and present a positive Christian message,”⁹⁰ and a third from the conservative National Association of Evangelicals that stated “Mr. du Plessis is known to us as a Christian gentleman of integrity, tact, and great leadership ability.”⁹¹ That du Plessis maintained contacts with all three and was able to garner their vote of confidence speaks loudly to his ability to bridge ecclesiastical and theological divides.

As the 1950s pressed on, David du Plessis’ work in the seemingly disparate fields to which he had been called continued. Some of this involved not a little internal discussion with the movement that he called home. In February 1956, he once again wrote to Donald Gee to share his fears as well as those of fellow Pentecostals who “hope Pentecostal leaders will not ‘miss the bus’ when there is such a wide invitation from the Church to get together for discussions.”⁹² He also wrote of the great revival that Pentecostalism represented in his piece entitled “World-Wide Pentecostal Revival: 1906-1956”:

⁸⁹ Bob Jones, Jr. to Whom It May Concern, TMs, September 10, 1953, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁹⁰ Charles Ranson to Whom It May Concern, TMs, July 16, 1953, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁹¹ Rutherford L. Decker to Whom It May Concern, TMs, October 30, 1953, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁹² Continuing, du Plessis wrote: “I am certainly keeping my eyes and ears open to see how the Lord moves.” Earlier in the letter he referenced healing evangelist Tommy Hicks, who seemed to have issue with Pentecostals there unwilling to even meet together with other groups of their own persuasion: “they seem to be too ‘denominational’ to be able to enjoy UNION meetings of Pentecostals.” David J. du Plessis to Donald Gee, TMs, February 16, 1956.

It is becoming more and more evident in these days that the “baptism in the Holy Spirit” is no longer the exclusive experience of those within the Pentecostal Movement, but slowly and surely it is being recognized as the normal blessing and the Scriptural promise for every true Christian, no matter what their church affiliation.⁹³

Continued contacts with Mackay and the community of Princeton Seminary solidified his role as guest Pentecostal there, evidenced by an extended visit to the New Jersey school in April 1956.⁹⁴ During that year, however, the most important meeting for du Plessis was one initiated by an ecumenical group that invited him to meet at a place called the Seabury House in Connecticut. In a letter of invitation from June 1956, J. W. Decker wrote to du Plessis of a group

composed of prominent mission board secretaries, N.C.C.C. officials, W.C.C. folk, men from nearby major theological seminaries, and others. It is a thoroughly ecumenically minded group, very keen and up to date on missionary issues and the general affairs of the Christian Church.⁹⁵

An unofficial group that functioned within the IMC structure, Decker noted that all proceedings at their meetings were done “off the record.” Their hope was for du Plessis to teach them

of the relationships between the forces of what might be described as the Ecumenical Movement, and the forces, with special reference to foreign missions, of the so-called “independents,” the Pentecostals and others who are so often outside the cooperative movement of the more “conventional” (shall I say) Churches. You will see that in your present relationship to the Pentecostals, of whom I understand you are again the international secretary, and with your experience at Willingen and Evanston, you are in a unique position to make the presentation we want.⁹⁶

⁹³ David J. du Plessis, “World-Wide Pentecostal Revival 1906-1956,” *Elim Pentecostal Herald*, May 1956, 12.

⁹⁴ du Plessis, “Travel Journal.”

⁹⁵ J. W. Decker to David J. du Plessis, TMs, June 12, 1956, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁹⁶ Decker to du Plessis.

Du Plessis, feeling deeply the missionary fires, appears to have been only too happy to oblige this request. While there, he met with Protestant leaders interested in learning not only the technical issues represented in their invitation, but more about the Pentecostal movement and related experience as well.⁹⁷

In du Plessis's recollection, the Seabury House experience functions as a pivotal moment in the development of his calling, a time he held to be "one of my greatest experiences in this ministry."⁹⁸ In many ways, the simple fact that he was invited represented for him the real beginning of the kind of shift that would come to be known as the Charismatic Movement. Asked about differences between Pentecostals and those outside the movement, du Plessis's passion for the things of the Spirit and the group's instructions to be "devastatingly frank"⁹⁹ led him to the following: "Gentlemen, comparisons are odious, and I do not wish to injure anyone's feelings or hurt your pride.

⁹⁷ Here du Plessis's memory of the invitation years later somewhat hazy, revolving in his mind as it did around "the truth of the Pentecostal experience and the Pentecostal movement." du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 181. At the same time, his extended discussion of the episode, including his recollection of the following question, lends some credence to the idea that the assembled individuals were interested in more than their letter let on: "Please tell us, what is the difference between you and us. We quote the same Scriptures you do, and yet when you say those words they sound so different. We say the same things you do, but there seems to be a deeper implication in what you say. You have said nothing with which we want to differ and yet there seems to be a distinct difference somewhere." *Ibid.*, 182.

⁹⁸ du Plessis, *The Spirit*, 16.

⁹⁹ Decker to du Plessis. While we may again question how well and clearly du Plessis recalled the episode later in life in *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*, the group's own invitation insisted that "everything said in it is strictly 'off the record,' i.e. e. it affords an opportunity to speak one's mind without regard to organizational or other complications or prejudices." From there to the plea they give for a presentation that is "reasonable, but...also devastatingly frank" is suggestive of the kind of content du Plessis claims in the absence of an official transcript of their discussions.

But the truth as I see it is this: You have the truth on *ice*, and I have it on *fire*.”¹⁰⁰ He then recalled saying, ““My friends...if you will take the great truths of the Gospel out of your theological deep freezers and get them on the fire of the Holy Spirit, your churches will yet turn the world upside-down.”¹⁰¹

By seeking out du Plessis not merely for simple dialogue as one voice amongst many but by taking the time to focus on his words in a retreat-style setting, those gathered seemed to be taking a more involved approach to matters of the Spirit than before. So too the rise of the non-denominational Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship International (FGBMFI)¹⁰²—whose meetings du Plessis was known to attend—also represented an important step towards connecting those outside Pentecostalism with the things of the Spirit. With reference to a 1957 meeting of the FGBMFI he wrote

Glorious testimonies of Pentecostal blessings came from the lips of Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Mennonites, Baptists, and many other Protestant churches, as well as from Full Gospel believers... The platform always submitted to the guidance of the Spirit and thus no one could ever doubt whether the meetings were really Pentecostal.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ du Plessis, *The Spirit*, 17.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 18. There is good reason, as per Rutherford, to imagine that the meeting hardly transpired in the same way du Plessis recalls years later. Conceding this should not, however, overshadow the fact that the invitation and desire to hear on the part of those gathered took place at all. Du Plessis’s possible rhetorical and charismatic heroism aside, this new interest represented a growing sea change in the extra-Pentecostal world.

¹⁰² For more information see Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith*, 223-4; J. R. Zeigler, “Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship International,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 653-654.

¹⁰³ David du Plessis, “Full Gospel Businessmen’s Convention,” *Pentecost*, December 1957, 7. While the Charismatic Movement proper is often seen as beginning with Dennis Bennett’s California congregation in 1960, du Plessis here shows how charismatic phenomena and experience were in existence in the mainline before the revival had a name. For a further discussion of pre-1960 charismatic stirrings, see P. D. Hocken, “Charismatic Movement,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal*

Even as du Plessis was faced with these tantalizing prospects all around him he continued to tend his own field, whether through his connections to the healing evangelists who were themselves stretching the bounds of Pentecost or organizations such as the PFNA or PWC that sought to bring Pentecostals together in common cause. Indeed, du Plessis found himself continually interacting with important figures in Pentecostalism at the same time he was moving in “liberal” circles few Pentecostals would ever dare go.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps it is for this reason he was able to write in 1958 of a “world awakening” that would affect both Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal alike:

Outside the association of any Pentecostal Movements, there are now thousands of ministers and members in the Protestant denominations of the world who are Pentecostal because of a personal experience according to Acts 2:4. These precious saints do far more for God and the Truth right inside the church than those who have “come out from among them” to “contend against them” [classical Pentecostals]....I am persuaded that the Lord is doing a work about which very little is known as yet.¹⁰⁵

1959: A Year of Hope and Promise

Before the 1950s came to a close du Plessis’s star was to rise higher than ever before. His exposure during this time reached new levels just as Protestant ecumenical interest in the world of the Spirit escalated. It was a unique and important year for du

and Charismatic Movements, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 477-519.

¹⁰⁴ See Appendix. Du Plessis’s own records reveal contacts with healing evangelist William Branham, Pentecostal figure Howard Carter, denominational leader A. J. Tomlinson, as well as Methodist scholar Albert Outler and others. This is not to mention the many other ecumenical relationships he developed throughout his life. Few other Pentecostals of the time made connections as diverse.

¹⁰⁵ David J. du Plessis, “World Awakening,” *Pentecost*, June 1958, 2.

Plessis and all those with whom he was connected, both for the events that transpired and the way in which they helped set the stage for developments in the 1960s and beyond. Whereas du Plessis only a decade before had not yet taken his first steps outside the Pentecostal world, by 1959 he found himself at the very heart of Protestant ecumenism and higher education. His presence in both settings spoke to a great curiosity on behalf of said groups as much as it did of du Plessis's own sense of calling to spread the message of the Spirit. By year's end, two important lecture series delivered to diverse audiences helped solidify him as the voice of Pentecostalism to the wider world even as they implicitly revealed his own self-understanding of the work at hand and operational plans going forward.

1959 was a special year for du Plessis: "this is the first year in my life that I was able to divide my time between Pentecostal movements and churches and what we generally speak of as Protestant churches. I have ministered just about as much in the one group as in the other group."¹⁰⁶ He reveled in the time God provided him in Protestant circles, for it had been his "delightful privilege to discover again and again that the Holy Spirit was at work in the most unexpected places."¹⁰⁷ As early as January, he anticipated an upcoming trip to Princeton and wrote to the Assemblies' New Jersey

¹⁰⁶ David J. du Plessis, "Ecumenical Institute Lectures," TMs (lectures delivered at Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland, 16 November-4 December 1959), David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. This single statement is important, for it helps to show 1959 as a kind of pivot. Whereas before he had been more associated with Pentecostals proper, he from this point onward was at the very least splitting his time between the two groups, if not favoring the charismatics over the classical denominational Pentecostals.

¹⁰⁷ David J. du Plessis to "Beloved Friends," TMs, circular letter, November 1959, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

District Superintendent of his plans. Ever the missionary, he included in his correspondence the desire to coordinate a series of church services while he was a guest of the school. In the letter, he mentioned his wish “to have prayer warriors near me. I feel that there should be a powerful Revival Meeting...so that I can take faculty and students there of the real Pentecostal power.”¹⁰⁸

Before his April visit to New Jersey, du Plessis continued the frenetic pace of his travels, visiting locales as diverse as Riverside Church in New York City and the Pentecostal Angelus Temple in California for a William Branham meeting.¹⁰⁹ Finally arriving at Princeton on 29 April after corresponding back and forth with Mackay, du Plessis settled in for a few weeks just as the campus was ending its school year and bidding farewell to its retiring president. While there with his Presbyterian friend, he also interacted with students and faculty.¹¹⁰ On 30 April du Plessis’s travel journal notes an evening at Mackay’s home as well as meeting famous theologians Marcus Barth and Thomas Torrance. During his time on campus, he also attended a retreat with Mackay and twenty-five students at the nearby Liebenzell conference center.¹¹¹ Though the details of said conference remain unknown, it is not beyond imagining that du Plessis shared at least a bit of his Pentecostal testimony during this time.

¹⁰⁸ David J. du Plessis to Richard Bergstrom, TMs, January 22, 1959, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁰⁹ du Plessis, “Travel Journal,” 1959.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*; Around this time he claims “I enjoyed three weeks of excellent fellowship with faculty and students in the Princeton Presbyterian Theological Seminary in New Jersey.” du Plessis to “Beloved Friends,” November 1959.

¹¹¹ du Plessis, “Travel Journal.”

Through his friendship with John Mackay du Plessis garnered an invitation from the seminary to be the speaker at the 1959 Students' Missions Lectures in November. These lectures came after du Plessis, once again probably through connections with Mackay, attended the eighteenth meeting of the Presbyterian and Reformed World Alliances during August in Sao Paulo, Brazil.¹¹² Some months later, Princeton's *The Seminarian* discussed du Plessis in advance of the lectures he had been chosen to deliver. On 30 October it shared the topics upon which he had been slated to speak and indicated he was "widely traveled" and "has shown marked interest in the ecumenical movement as it affects the Pentecostal groups."¹¹³ Du Plessis's plan was to speak before students and faculty on three topics near and dear to his Pentecostal heart: "The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Individual," "The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church," and "The Holy Spirit in the Mission of the Church." Given over three days, these lectures would come to represent an important milestone for du Plessis concerning his acceptance in non-Pentecostal settings as well as his ability to speak into such contexts.

In the first of his lectures the South African focused on the Holy Spirit's influence on the personal level. Du Plessis lauded the experience of the Spirit as foundational and highlighted the concept not merely in the abstract but also shared related testimony from his experience:

I have known this life, I have known the power of the Holy Spirit for the past forty years. I was no less a sinner than the little African boys that I played with

¹¹² du Plessis, "Life Story." He notes: "August found me in Sao Paul, Brazil, as Fraternal Pentecostal Delegate to the 18th General Council of the Presbyterian and Reformed World Alliance, with 400 delegates and observers from 53 countries of the world, representing 45-million Calvinists in the world. Thus Calvinism became the first Ecumenical Protestant Confession to recognize the Pentecostal Revival at the world level." du Plessis to "Beloved Friends," November 1959.

¹¹³ "Mission Lectures Start Monday," *The Seminarian*, October 30, 1959, 1.

back there in 1916, than they were, but it was the power of the Holy Spirit as I saw him in the lives of Africans that had been heathen, pagan, and vile, but a tremendous change came about them when it could be truly said “old things have passed away, and all things have become new.” When I saw that, I knew it was not be merely hearing a story, but that something marvelous, something supernatural had taken place in their lives and that is what changed them.¹¹⁴

As he proceeded, du Plessis also discussed the importance of the Holy Spirit’s agency in the life of the believer as opposed to our own will and desires. For him, “the energy of God that came at Pentecost is quite different from the efforts of good Christians to do their very best.”¹¹⁵ If his hearers wanted to seek after the Spirit they had to realize they must wait for God’s leading as well. Since for du Plessis the latter day revival of Pentecostalism derived from the hand of God, only God could lead the individual—and the Church—into the deeper things of the Spirit. As he spoke to the gathered group of professors and future Presbyterian ministers this was a key concept upon which he focused, not merely in abstract terms but also by means of his own story:

Now, allow me to tell a little of my own experience. I had prayed much that Lord would fill my life with his Spirit because I realized not so much because of the influence of my father and mother and other things around me, but for myself in studying the word of God, in reading the word of God, and particularly in seeing what had happened in the mission field...when I saw the work of the Holy Spirit in reaching the pagan, the illiterate, the heathen, steeped in his customs I then wanted so much of that power that I might by the Grace of God be used of Him, be an instrument in His hand, be a channel for Him through whom he could reach others.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ David J. du Plessis, “The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Individual,” TMs (lecture given as a part of the Missions Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ, November 2, 1959), 2-3, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 6.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 8.

Seeing himself and his trip to Princeton Seminary in the midst of the biblical reference to being witnesses in the widening circles of Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:4), du Plessis interpreted his travels in the year 1959 along these lines. He felt that he too had been sent out from his comfortable home to places far removed, all for the purposes of being a witness to Christ and His Spirit: “I am still witnessing, and that has been the real adventure in my life.”¹¹⁷

In the next lecture, which he entitled “The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church,” du Plessis began with humor, sharing a brief anecdote from his meeting with Marcus Barth:

he said, “Are you still a Pentecostal?” I said, “Yes, worse than ever.” “What are you doing here?” “Well,” I said, “I am here at the invitation of Dr. McCord [Mackay’s successor at Princeton Seminary].” He said, “You mean Dr. McCord actually invited you, a Pentecostal leader and let you free on the campus here?” I said, “Yes.” “Well, that’s wonderful.” I said, “Do you think so?” “Yes, if you will do one thing.” “Well,” I said, “tell me. I need advice.” He said, “Do not acquire or employ the high, dry theological terminology that they use in these institutions, but” he says, “continue to speak the humble, simple, warm language of the Holy Spirit that reaches the hearts of men.”¹¹⁸

In some ways to be taken as paradigmatic of his approach—and likely his view of the Holy Spirit’s—this brief vignette set the stage for what du Plessis saw to be the work of God needed within the churches.

During this discussion of the Church he highlighted the need for the body of Christ to be built up, and done so transdenominationally by God’s Spirit. Speaking of God’s giftings, du Plessis held these up as vital to the community when he said, “to me

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 8-9.

¹¹⁸ David J. du Plessis, “The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church,” TMs (lecture given as a part of the Missions Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ, November 3, 1959), David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

the ministry in the church is of tremendous importance.”¹¹⁹ Much later during the lecture, he further stated, “everything must be for the edification of the Church. And the Spirit forever seeks to edify the Church.”¹²⁰ How great it was, then, as du Plessis notes in middle of his lecture that:

it is no longer necessary for Presbyterians to go to Pentecostal churches to see the Holy Ghost in action, at least not here in America. There are Presbyterian churches where the same manifestations are in evidence now. Not too far from here either. It is not necessary for the Episcopalians to go to Pentecostal meetings to see the power of God in action...therefore I am greatly encouraged because the Holy Spirit is finding recognition and its rightful place in the established historic churches.¹²¹

As he shared these reflections du Plessis insisted he was done with the “come-outers,” those who in previous years had tasted of the Spirit’s blessings and left their home denominations. Now the call was to stay within one’s particular denominational group and see it renewed from within.¹²² Along these lines du Plessis shared a story that was to become a set piece of his—simply that “God has no grandsons.” Recalling a time he heard the voice of God speaking that very phrase to him, du Plessis concluded that an experience of God—especially at a moment of crisis such as conversion—was of paramount importance. As du Plessis phrased it, one must “of necessity have an encounter with Christ.”¹²³ The process of becoming a child of God was something that could only happen in the interaction of God and a person, and as such could not be taught

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 17.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 12.

¹²¹ Ibid., 9.

¹²² Ibid., 2. Du Plessis said, “There is only one thing we need to do that is come out of the world insofar as being part of the world.”

¹²³ Ibid., 16.

one to another. Since this experience of faith could not be passed down, God had no grandchildren: “the Holy Spirit must be recognized in every generation...if every generation had been regenerated and if every generation had received the Holy Spirit as they did in the time of the apostles, this world would have had a different history.”¹²⁴ Just as Marcus Barth encouraged him, du Plessis shared this in the midst of a seminary of a historic Protestant denomination. In so doing he challenged and encouraged a rethinking of a purely historical and intellectual understanding of the faith by means of the renewal the Holy Spirit had to offer. By remaining open to God’s Spirit, du Plessis felt there was space for each church and its members to be renewed and thus avoid less than favored status as “grandchildren.”

In his third and final lecture at Princeton Seminary, du Plessis broadened his scope somewhat as he focused on the Spirit’s work and the larger program of the Church. Here he gave attention to some of the specifics of Pentecostal success in the mission field, noting the importance of passion in the Christian mission:

I am so happy that there are those now in ecumenical circles that realize to expect a very orderly, desirable move of the Spirit according to faith and order with ardor, is no longer possible....Dr. Mackay has repeatedly warned me never to exchange my ardor for order.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Ibid., 17.

¹²⁵ David J. du Plessis, “The Holy Spirit in the Mission of the Church,” TMs (lecture given as a part of the Missions Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ, November 4, 1959), 1, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. With reference to “ardor” and “order,” one is reminded of Mackay’s own words in “Make Sure You Believe in the Holy Ghost,” 11-12.

The Spirit for du Plessis remained vitally necessary in the work of missions and constituted the “motivating power” of the Church. Even seeming divisions into various church or denominational groups need not be fatal:

I found that in every town I went through, there are three Pentecostal churches. If there was only one movement, there would only be one church. I wonder whether sometimes it isn't divide and grow...a wonderful orchard of fruitbearing trees all the way around. Oh, we can put a fence around it, but if you want to make one tree out of it, well—cut them down, tie them together and what you? [sic] Just one big old bush—no more fruit even.¹²⁶

In the Princeton lectures du Plessis referred to what might be considered the beginnings of the Charismatic Movement as a sign of spreading fervor.¹²⁷ He also outlined what he felt to be the key characteristics of the Holy Spirit at work in the world through the lives of believers: a sense of new life and power, worship with presence, a preparation of Christians for persecution, helping make all of Scripture glow with light and beauty, and a centering of the affections upon the Lord Jesus Christ.¹²⁸ Together they existed for du Plessis as both results of the Church's mission and motivators going forward. It was ultimately these characteristics and this energy he wished to convey to his gathered hearers in the final lecture. In his own words, “until the membership of the church is revived, they will accomplish little. We need another Pentecost.”¹²⁹

¹²⁶ du Plessis, “The Holy Spirit in the Mission of the Church,” 11.

¹²⁷ He claimed “no longer are the missionaries from Protestant societies looking longingly at the work of the Pentecostals and desiring to have a similar, or hoping that the Lord might help them too. They have now in recent years begun to experience the very same blessing.” *Ibid.*, 14.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹²⁹ Charles G. West to David J. du Plessis, TMs, April 27, 1959, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Du Plessis's ecumenical work involved much more than Princeton Seminary, for immediately before his lectures there du Plessis had again spent time with ecumenical leaders discussing related issues at the Seabury House.¹³⁰ Further, less than two weeks after the lectures the South African continued his one man Pentecostal embassy—this time to the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland. In April, du Plessis had received a letter from Charles West of the WCC indicating their interest in having them speak with them on topics related to Pentecostalism. As invited, he would spend “three weeks...to give a series of lectures on the Pentecostal churches, their theology and peculiar witness” before an ecumenical audience.¹³¹ Never one to shy away from such an opportunity, Du Plessis happily obliged this request and seven months later found himself before the ecumenical group.

Though du Plessis seems to have been contracted to deliver eight lectures during his time at Bossey, the extant transcripts of these lectures and the associated question and response period that follows seems somewhat incomplete. Even so, enough of his words remain so that we can gain an adequate picture of what he was attempting to get across to his hearers. One of the important emphases that appears from the outset is—as it was in the Princeton lectures—the issue of calling. As he spoke, he told hearers a bit of his story:

I do not want you to feel that I condemn the churches. I did that long enough. I did that until the Holy Ghost challenged me about it, and I repented of it and asked God to forgive me, and so I condemn nobody at all, and I'm not here because I wanted to be—to finish my testimony I want to say that I'm here because that Holy Spirit challenged me to go into the ranks of the ecumenical movement, the World Council of Churches, liberal churches, call them anything

¹³⁰ du Plessis to "Beloved Friends", November 1959.

¹³¹ West to du Plessis, April 27, 1959.

you like, but to go there and humbly and simply give my testimony and then the Lord will do the rest.¹³²

Receptivity to the voice of God and the Spirit's call was for du Plessis a non-negotiable part of the Pentecostal—and Christian—life.

In a related way, the theme of experience comes to the fore in the midst of his lectures. Specific Pentecostal experience, while certainly highlighted, is also described by du Plessis as being of the crisis variety. In response to a question about the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit, he claimed, “the first crisis was my lack of an experience of the knowledge of salvation. The second crisis was my lack of power—my lack of the power that the scriptures speak about.”¹³³ As Pentecostalism had an answer to the crisis in his life, by implication it was a prime candidate for bringing renewal elsewhere.

During times of dialogue at Bossey, du Plessis was asked numerous questions about his thoughts on Pentecostalism and related topics. One of his interlocutors focused on the so-called manifestations of the Holy Spirit. His answer may have been surprising to some of his hearers, for he spoke from a position of realism and experience: “receiving the Holy Spirit is no guarantee of holiness or sanctity. The fruit of the Spirit is something different from the manifestation of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit is most important, and yet frequently in Pentecostal circles—the Pentecostal people have forgotten and overlooked.”¹³⁴

¹³² du Plessis, “Ecumenical Institute Lectures.”

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid. Du Plessis's comments here speak to a balanced understanding of enthusiasm and order. In addition, within the context of the lectures he was not downplaying the importance of manifestations, but rather urging what he felt were biblical injunctions for them to be utilized in love and the associated fruit of the Spirit.

Apologetically speaking, du Plessis's lectures also helped to explain more about Pentecostalism to an audience that desired to know more. To this end he emphasized against any detractors that Pentecostals themselves did not believe any new doctrine beyond that which had been traditionally taught throughout the history of the Church:

You will find as you go through the world and meet with them that have come out of Lutheran background and are strongly influenced by Lutheran doctrine, and they did not have to discard all that they had been taught there. They had only to put into practice what they had been taught. The same applies to those who come from Methodist background and from the Episcopalians or Anglican background, whichever they come from.¹³⁵

Continuing his discussion, he also offered his thoughts on the understanding of the invisible as opposed to visible Church. The Holy Spirit, he stated, was and could be at work far and wide, for the same God was at work in all:

I find the members of what perhaps some have called the "Invisible Church"...I find members of that church wherever I have gone....Today, Pentecostals goodly acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is the only one that has the prerogative to decide who is in the church and who is not in the church. It is not the prerogative of man or of an organization, or any society of any church.¹³⁶

The building blocks of renewal were present and the Spirit was available—all that was necessary in du Plessis's mind was a kind of remembering about the genesis, purpose, and trajectory of the Body of Christ.

Echoing some of his lectures at Princeton, du Plessis also discussed the topic of missions vis-à-vis Pentecostalism. In a particular lecture detailed with a host of numerical figures representing Pentecostalism around the world, du Plessis made the

¹³⁵ Ibid. Du Plessis goes on to note "the only group that really had difficulty...come [*sic*] out of Roman Catholicism," words that take on some irony considering the great extent of the Charismatic Renewal in the next two decades. It is, perhaps, some indication here of the persistence of certain Pentecostal biases even in one as open-minded and ecumenical as du Plessis.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

point to his hearers that it “has spread in the most unexpected way,” with churches that “sprung up like mushrooms,” thereby necessitating them “to consider the reason for all the great varieties of Pentecostal groups.”¹³⁷

So too he urged in another talk that despite the great multiplicity of Pentecostal groups, their diversity should not be taken as a sign of splintering weakness. Rather, they might represent the deep drive towards forming churches that comes from missions-mindedness, a moment wherein “divisions cannot really be called divisions because it was not the splintering of a central movement, it was rather the case of everyone coming in and starting his own brand.”¹³⁸ While seemingly disorganized, the fire that lay at the base of their actions deserved attention. Further, while some of the splintered effects were admittedly caused by human foibles, du Plessis also left room open for a defense, noting that many revivals had led to divisions throughout the history of the Church.¹³⁹ Here as in so many other places during these wide-ranging lectures du Plessis drew attention to Pentecostalism not for curiosity’s sake but rather as a means of speaking of something of much great importance for the larger Christian world.

When considering du Plessis’s life thus far, it should be remembered that many of the themes that developed over time and would come to resonate in the 1960s and beyond came together powerfully in the years immediately preceding 1959 and, specifically, the two lecture series he delivered in the latter half of that year. Within them, one finds a

¹³⁷ David J. du Plessis, “Lecture VII,” TMs (lecture delivered at Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland, 16 November-4 December 1959), 1-2.

¹³⁸ David J. du Plessis, “Lecture VIII,” TMs (lecture delivered at Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland, 16 November-4 December 1959), 2, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 6. As I will show in subsequent chapters, this does not detract from du Plessis’s great conviction that the Holy Spirit desires unity in the Church.

type of Pentecostal missionary and ambassador-at-large that spoke about the Spirit-filled life only insofar as he was convinced it spoke to the whole of the Christian life regardless of denominational bounds. Deriving this in many ways from his own sense of calling to the life of Christian service and mission, he powerfully stressed the agency of the Holy Spirit in the leading and guiding of a Church that had gone cold and was in need of new fire. Time and again in the lectures, he was to seek common understanding on topics such as the need for an experience of God, a shared Christian history, and the person and work of Jesus Christ. If he could point to the way that Pentecostalism illuminated these things and then spoke into the present, he seems not to have hesitated.

In the lectures delivered at Bossey and Princeton, du Plessis consciously rejected the tactic of supercession, or the notion that Pentecostals had reclaimed all truth and that all should become like them. He favored instead renewal—i.e. that Pentecostals had rediscovered a facet of the Christian life to be shared by all and sought to bring that joyous news to everyone. By so doing he seems to have been able to offer the general correctives he felt necessary while avoiding specific denominational or theological critiques. If anything, his was a critique of practical theology or lived experience. Indeed, that he was at one point during the Bossey Lectures willing to step away from a more doctrinaire Pentecostal view of tongues-speaking and baptism in the Holy Spirit only underscores the fact that his concern was with matters of spiritual life and action more than anything else.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ Du Plessis sort of sidesteps the question of whether or not a person who has not yet spoken in tongues is full of the Holy Spirit by referring to Pentecostals as “they” instead of “we” and noting the relative paucity of Scripture upon which the teaching was based in addition to a few places it is only inferred. Such an instance of damning with faint praise from a man who had no lack of words on other topics remains suspect here. Elsewhere he answers the question a bit more directly, indicating “On the day of

While this project is broadly focused on developments in classical Pentecostalism as it began to confront ecumenical interest and the linked Charismatic Movement through the life of David du Plessis and the Assemblies of God, it is hoped that this chapter has shown the importance of the earlier decades of du Plessis's life and the way in which his own faith journey led to a place where he was as deeply entrenched in Pentecost as he was in matters of the whole *oikomene*.

The struggles and triumphs inherent in these twin connections will be the work of following chapters. For now, it seems safe to say that the first fifty plus years of du Plessis's life reveal a man who felt both touched by God's Spirit and impelled by the same for ministry and mission. Peripatetic almost to a fault, he traveled widely in an attempt to make connections and further spread news of the reviving fire of the Spirit. At first these efforts were undertaken in his home country of South Africa, yet as the spheres of his exposure and influence widened he turned his attention to working for common cause amongst all Pentecostals and, ultimately, towards the witnessing of the Spirit to Christians in ecumenical circles.

Du Plessis's open-minded and connective approach towards dealing with those outside his theological purview was always one of dialogue, and in many ways can be read as any easy extension of his call to ministry. That his eyes would sometimes refuse to see boundaries others would erect allowed him the ability to speak in those circles and be taken seriously by his listeners. At the same time, this openness was just as easily

Pentecost they all spake with tongues, and so we understand it in the house of Cornelius, we say therefore that whoever receives the fullness of the Spirit should expect such a manifestation first." du Plessis, "Ecumenical Institute Lectures." Even so, the idea of expectation is somewhat different than asserting that it will definitely happen, leaving at least some room for openness in the midst of his hearers. To say as much of a key doctrine of the movement was therefore a somewhat bold move for the South African.

criticized by those of his coreligionists who had a greater sense of caution in such matters outside their control.

It will be the focus of the rest of this project to detail the ways in which du Plessis's understanding of his mission and the style in which it was undertaken interacted with the leadership of classical Pentecostalism. For now, though, it is enough to observe the organic development of du Plessis from his youth in South Africa to the centers of ecclesial and ecumenical influence by the age of fifty-four. Realizing that this was only the beginning of his notoriety and fame helps underscore the importance of knowing what went before in the life of this "Mr. Pentecost."

CHAPTER THREE

IRRECONCILABLE PENTECOSTS

By the late 1950s, David du Plessis was in the early years of his fifth decade. He had traveled from the backcountry of South Africa to the major power centers of Europe and America, in the process forcing his family to relocate to new and distant countries not once but twice. His role thus far in the history of Pentecostalism—though comparatively modest—had nevertheless been one of no small import: leadership in the Apostolic Faith Mission of South Africa, work in the founding of the Pentecostal World Fellowship, ministry in the United States-based Assemblies of God, and connections with both the National and World Council of Churches. Du Plessis never tired of pushing the boundaries of his experience and ministry into ever widening circles, and as he did so in the years after his important engagements in 1959 at Princeton Theological Seminary and the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey tensions between his ministry and the goals and aims of his American denomination began to reach a fever pitch.

The idea that du Plessis constituted an unstable element in the ecclesiastically maturing Assemblies of God began to cause consternation for their leadership, and as these concerns gained more ground du Plessis' actions, motivations, and the implications of the same became subject to new and increased scrutiny. While there had been some issues with him in the past—notably the leadership's concerns over his involvement with International Broadcasting Association in the mid-1950s¹—these concerns, though

¹ The International Broadcasting Association (IBRA) was an international radio concern started amongst the Swedish Pentecostals in the 1950s. Connected with leader Lewi Pethrus, it represented an attempt to evangelize listeners. Contractual issues with the IBRA led to a distancing of the American denomination from the station.

mounting, never reached the level they did in the first years of the 1960s. It was then that increased apprehension over du Plessis's ecumenical actions and, often, third-party accusations brought matters to a head and resulted in official inquiries into his actions and attitudes.

Numerous letters written between the leadership of the Assemblies of God and du Plessis from 1961-1962 help illustrate the conflict. At times one followed quickly upon the heels of the other, while during other periods correspondence would be long in coming—mostly a result of du Plessis' own quiescence in the face of both unclear direction and his own defensive posture. All the while, meetings of the Executive Presbytery (EP) both with and without du Plessis present continued to discuss the matter and all its iterations. By the end of a series of tortured and sometimes redundant conversations which eventually involved not only the principal players in the denominational drama but various ministers, district officials, and not a few of the laity, the A/G determined that the South African be removed from their ministerial rolls—effectively propelling him into the state he was to exist for each of the succeeding eighteen years.

A recounting of how this situation came to be and the various twists and turns that affected its resolution remains essential for understanding du Plessis's perspective as well

“Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” February 14, 1956, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO. Another possibility, according to Swedish Pentecostal historian Joel Halldorf, has to do with competition over missions between the A/G and Swedish Pentecostal Movement. As evidence he cited an earlier conflict over work in Brazil in the 1930s and 1940s. Joel Halldorf, e-mail with Joshua Ziefle, “Re: IBRA,” January 7, 2009. In any case, since du Plessis was involved in both fundraising and promotion for the IBRA, the Assemblies' Minutes reflect he should “refrain from solicitation of funds by correspondence or personal visitation to our churches” and that no articles written by him in the denominational magazine *The Pentecostal Evangel* ought to be published because of “misunderstanding that might be created among our people.” “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” February 14, 1956.

as the place of Pentecostalism vis-à-vis not only the older ecumenical movement, but also the connected and rapidly burgeoning “Charismatic Movement” of the 1960s. This chapter therefore recounts the way in which two different perspectives on the meaning of Pentecost caused the split between du Plessis and the A/G. As the more proscribed denominational view came into contact with “Mr. Pentecost’s” expansive vision, the Spirit, it seemed, became divided. In detailing the steps that led there I give special focus to the ways in which the challenges of growth and doctrine in the Assemblies’ own history, rather than outside forces like the NAE, affected this division in important ways. It is to this investigation we now turn our attention.

The Challenges of Pentecostal Growth

As previously discussed, the Assemblies of God had weathered a number of theological distractions in its early days and in the process began to work out its own methods of control and authority. By mid-century, the group had begun to solidify its place in the American religious landscape amongst various other expressions of the Christian faith. To ask further questions about this stabilization is to inquire about the growth of the denomination as such. For this reason, a brief look at its rise according to the various metrics of AG growth and expansion of its first five decades will prove illustrative.

Out of the “between two and three hundred ministers and laymen [who] attended the [1914] Constitutional Convention of the Assemblies of God,” there were “sixty-eight evangelists and pastors of established churches (then independent) registered as

delegates.”² Around ten years later, the General Council reported “1155 ministers having Council endorsement.”³ By the end of WWII, the denomination consisted of a reported 5,311 churches, 241,782 members, and 8422 ministers.⁴ Around the time of the du Plessis controversy, there were a recorded 8,129 churches, 14,604 ministers, and 503,632 members.⁵ Both numerically and geographically the A/G expanded rapidly during these years.⁶ Whether or not the group—with its history of anti-denominational and restorationist claims—was entirely willing to abide bureaucratic additions to its administration and supervisory structure, changes were needed for basic management of the burgeoning behemoth that was their denomination. As Mario Hoover writes, “growth has transformed the once simple fellowship into a highly developed organization...the greater the growth the tighter the organization has become, and the more pressure there is for conformity.”⁷

Tellingly and despite its initial protestations in the direction of freedom, the Assemblies only lasted thirteen years without setting up its first system of constitutional order. Hoover in particular lifts up the 1927 General Council and its decision to establish

² J. Roswell Flower, “Historic Record of the Growth of the Assemblies of God,” TMs (photocopy), n.d., Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

³ General Council of the Assemblies of God, “General Council Minutes,” 1925, 42, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁴ General Council of the Assemblies of God, “General Council Minutes,” 1945, 46, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁵ Assemblies of God Public Relations Department, “Official Statistics of the Assemblies of God,” April 1960, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁷ Mario G. Hoover, *Origin and Structural Development of the Assemblies of God*, 3rd ed. (Springfield, MO: self-published, 1968), 182.

a constitution as revealing in this respect.⁸ During discussions at the meeting, debate arose over matters related to the group's name and whether or not it indicated unwanted organization:

It has been said that we are not a denomination. But we are, whether we admit it or not. When did we become a denomination? When we denominated ourselves as the Assemblies of God, and we have been a denomination ever since. Why, we consented this morning that we were a denomination when we all agreed that the people entitled to the privileges of the floor should sit within these ropes...

Don't be afraid that we shall become sectarian if we adopt this name. I think I ought to say we are a sect as well as a denomination whether we will admit it or not.⁹

Other constitutional matters at the meeting included the clarifying and establishing of national leaders—a task given special emphasis here concerning the name given to the group's leader as a “superintendent” rather than the more hierarchical sounding “bishop.”¹⁰ The choice between terms took on great import because it was seen to reflect the kind of control and authority that might then exist in a fellowship that had originally established itself as anything but hierarchical.

It became increasingly clear that growth, development, and the need for order in the midst of continuing changes as well as the ever-present danger of theological outliers all contributed to the denomination's need for additional structural apparatus.

Assemblies of God minister and historian Carl Brumback said as much himself in 1961 in *Suddenly...From Heaven* as he detailed the rather unfortunate characteristics of early

⁸ *Ibid.*, 72-8.

⁹ The words of one Brother Gortner, in “The Twelfth General Council Meeting,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, October 8, 1927, 6.

¹⁰ “The Twelfth General Council Meeting,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, October 15, 1927, 2. “Superintendent” was eventually decided upon even though “president” and the aforementioned “bishop” had been discussed.

Pentecostalism: “impermanence,” “doctrinal tangents,” “fanaticism,” “immoral persons,” “superiority complex,” and “proselytizing tactics.”¹¹ In response he noted a lack of

a reasonable amount of material security, and, more important, a definite system of beliefs, practices, and discipline which would insure soundness and permanence. But how was this stability to be achieved without organization, and how were these fiercely independent Pentecostals ever to be made to submit to the mildest forms of central government?¹²

Such rhetoric and apologetics were not limited to the 1960s and the decades that followed but are rather the same themes that had helped buttress the pattern of development in the A/G following the establishment of its own constitutional order.

The process of structural growth and by extension increased organizational development the Assemblies of God underwent during its first decades can be seen everywhere, from the increase in the number of geographic and ethnic districts,¹³ further expansion of its denominational magazine,¹⁴ and development of numerous official ministries and departments. A single issue of *The Pentecostal Evangel* from May 1959 helps illustrate the point by providing important evidence of the group’s growing denominationalism. The issue—dedicated to the importance of Assemblies of God colleges—begins with an article encouraging readers to “do everything in our power to

¹¹ Carl Brumback, *Suddenly...From Heaven: A History of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), 107-115.

¹² *Ibid.*, 147.

¹³ Immediately prior to 1960 the Assemblies had expanded to 49 separate districts across the United States--with more to follow. See Glenn Gohr, “District Chronology,” TMs, internal document, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

¹⁴ An internal denominational report includes a graph that details the growth in circulation numbers for the *Pentecostal Evangel*: around 15,000 in 1920, 70,000 in 1940, and 170,000 by 1960. Lee Shultz, *Special Report*, TMs, internal memorandum, August 8, 1973, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

promote our Assemblies of God colleges and to help our young people (financially) to attend.”¹⁵ A full-page ad with denominational support sought funds for one of their schools¹⁶ and elsewhere lauded Southern California Christian College for being in existence forty years.¹⁷ A non-academic advertisement from the denominational “Department of Benevolences” urged giving money towards aged ministers,¹⁸ and elsewhere the Foreign Missions Department provided a detailed list of monies received and disbursed for missionaries.¹⁹ Taken separately, these are but indications of practical or—to borrow a word—pragmatic decisions made and directions taken by those seeking to administer the larger group. Yet at the same time, they represent an important turn towards organization and away from the restorationist and apocalyptic mindset of most early Pentecostals.

Additional indications of this are found in certain decisions made at the business sessions of the denomination’s biennial General Council meetings. For our purposes, three telling moments from the 1950s will suffice. The first, from 1953, focuses on the decidedly non-restorationist matter of Social Security:

It was moved, seconded, and carried that the General Council of the Assemblies of God should go on record as favoring the inclusion of ministers in the Social Security Act, that it prefers that individual ministers be allowed to make application

¹⁵ Ada Trissel, “I Took the Wrong Road,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, May 3, 1959, 8.

¹⁶ “Double D-Day Advertisement,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, May 3, 1959, 9.

¹⁷ “Southern California Christian College Enters Fortieth Year of Service,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, May 3, 1959, 11.

¹⁸ “These Hands Advertisement,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, May 3, 1959, 16.

¹⁹ “Monthly Report, Foreign Missions Department, February, 1959,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, May 3, 1959, 21.

for inclusion, and that proper representation be made to the Congress to this effect.²⁰

A similar step from primitivism to pragmatism took place a few years later at the 1957 meeting, when “the Council voted that the Gospel Publishing House should produce a new monthly or bimonthly magazine specifically for ministers.”²¹ A move ostensibly undertaken to assist and benefit pastors and Christian workers in the denomination, it would have the additional effect of further centralizing the dissemination of information and teaching from the national headquarters. Though a 1959 General Council motion to pressure “ordained and licensed ministers to make regular financial contributions to the General Council as well as the District Councils” failed, in the same meeting a suggestion that “in order to safeguard doctrinal integrity, all ordained and licensed ministers be required to answer certain doctrinal questions when they fill out the annual questionnaire for renewal of ministerial certificates” did pass muster with the assembled delegates, thus ensuring increased denominational power and control over the specific beliefs of its ministers.²²

Another way to observe how officials of the increasingly denominational denomination maintained order and ensured standard belief and practice is through analysis of the monthly “Ministers’ Letters” mailed to all pastors, evangelists, and missionaries on their records. Within its few pages biblical exhortations, mundane greetings, and various announcements often coexisted with discussions of theological controversies and warnings about unscrupulous or doctrinally suspect evangelists in the fold. Though not as expansive as the minutes of official discussions and meetings held

²⁰ Robert C. Cunningham, “General Council Digest,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, September 27, 1953, 8.

²¹ “General Council Chronicle,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, October 6, 1957, 24.

²² “General Council Chronicle,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, October 18, 1959, 6.

amongst district or national leaders, the Ministers' Letters reveal an immediacy and sense of directness not always present in the *Pentecostal Evangel* and other publications meant for broad public consumption.

From the 1940s into the 1950s, the Ministers' Letters are an immense help in understanding a growing denomination that remained open to the spontaneity of the Spirit yet desired order. An important example of this is the list of changes made to ministerial rolls that appeared in each issue from the later 1940s onward. By providing the names of those added—and dropped—from the fellowship and airing them publicly, the national headquarters gave clear indication concerning those ministers they considered acceptable.

²³ Denominational officials also disseminated other news and information beyond matters of ministerial integrity. In 1943, for instance, the letter told of how the Assemblies had decided to join with the nascent National Association of Evangelicals and described itself in explicitly denominational terms: “it was understood clearly by all that uniting with the Association shall in no wise compromise our distinctive testimony, nor shall we be yielding up one principle of denominational sovereignty.”²⁴ Another letter explicitly endorsed Pentecostal and specifically denominational colleges, encouraging attendance because: “all Christian colleges are not favorable to Pentecost and already there is the danger of alienating our young people from the faith of their

²³ Additional announcements warning “pastors not to accept the services of native Colombians or non-Assemblies missionaries from Columbia unless they have a valid up-to-date recommendation from the Colombian Assemblies of God, signed by officials of that organization” further placed all advisory and information power in the hands of those at the center. General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Ministers' Letter,” September 20, 1960, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

²⁴ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Ministers' Letter,” November 10, 1943, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

parents.”²⁵ In perhaps the most fascinating example of the kind of group the Assemblies was becoming, a 1949 letter actually discussed the development of a ministerial pension plan.²⁶ While such developments make sense from the perspective of a group that was concerned with increasingly organizational and structural matters, the difference between the hopes of its millennialist and primitivist founders and the now studied plan for future work was stark.

Another Ministers’ Letter from October 1949 commented on an important controversy in the denomination that harkened back to its freewheeling early days and raised important questions about the steps it had taken towards a more rigid state of organization: the New Order of the Latter Rain. Originating amongst Canadian Pentecostals, historian Edith Blumhofer refers to the movement by noting its “reports of new dimensions of worship, gifts of healing, slayings in the Spirit, and calls to a ‘deeper’ life [that] struck responsive chords in the hearts of thousands...like their Pentecostal forbears, some dreaded ‘missing God.’”²⁷ In many ways, the NOLR represented an attempted re-Pentecostalization of Pentecostalism. As with other developments that the leadership felt were threatening to spiral out of control, an official public response was

²⁵ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Ministers’ Letter,” July 1, 1946, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

²⁶ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Ministers’ Letter,” October 1, 1949, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO. Though defeated, the letter mentioned that ministers might plan for the future by using their savings account available through the “Ministers’ Benefit Association.”

²⁷ Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 206.

deemed appropriate.²⁸ Decisions made in the midst of this controversy further solidified the deep desire on the part of denominational leadership for some kind of control or order over what appeared to be rather chaotic developments or regression to more amorphous forms of the revival.

As structure demanded new levels of administrative authority and the Assemblies' own history of Pentecostal theological multiplicity seemed to require additional standards and norms, the stage was set by the 1960s for the kind of drama that would come to envelop David du Plessis. Yet before turning to this discussion, one additional facet of the A/G's development must be detailed—the rise of the man who would lead it with spirit and caution from the late 1950s through into the 1980s: Thomas F. Zimmerman.

Born in 1912 in Indianapolis, Zimmerman belonged to what might be described the second generation of American Pentecostals. During his early years in the ministry, he pastored a number of churches in the American Midwest.²⁹ By 1946 he led Central Assembly of God in Springfield, Missouri, after which he left his position there to take on a role at the radio department of the denomination.³⁰ One year later he enterprisingly

²⁸ The prepared A/G response to the NOLR appeared in 1949. General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, "Ministers' Letter," October 1, 1949, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO. The following year, readers were told about positive moves for "a basic unity of Spirit-baptized believers" and that the NOLR was the shadow side of this development, because "there is always a counterpart for every move of God and along about the time the desire for fellowship began to be expressed by the leaders of the various Pentecostal organizations, a new movement came into existence." General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, "Ministers' Letter," June 1, 1950, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

²⁹ S. M. Burgess, "Zimmerman, Thomas Fletcher," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 1225-26.

³⁰ E. S. Williams, "Brother Zimmerman Resigns Church to Direct Radio Department," *The Pentecostal Evangel*, December 21, 1946, 10. Williams wrote, "This

wrote in the *Pentecostal Evangel* that “‘Sermons in Song’ is now reaching a minimum potential listening audience of ten million persons per week, at the surprisingly low cost of 25 cents per thousand persons per program.”³¹ This move into the realm of denominational leadership proved fruitful for him as he was additionally elected as assistant superintendent at the 1953 General Council meeting.³² By 1954 he was elected head of the National Religious Broadcasters, a position within evangelical circles that both revealed the level of acceptance of Pentecostals in the larger fold and the willingness of the Spirit-filled to move beyond their borders if they felt comfortable with their immediate neighbors.³³

In 1956 Zimmerman wrote an article in the *Pentecostal Evangel* entitled “Perpetuating Pentecost.” Within, he detailed the characteristics he felt were important for the growth of the movement. Among other things, he wrote in effusive terms about the needed work of God:

I believe we need a flood tide of God's Spirit. Let it come and sweep over all bounds! Let it just break up our forms and our concepts. Let it sweep over all our little puny limitations that we want to put on God. Just let the river of God's blessing come in flood tide, until it sweeps us all out of ourselves and into God's blessings, sweeps us out of complacency, indifference, smugness, into a place of

is a big step as Central Assembly is one of the larger churches in our fellowship and there has been excellent unity and progress during the ministry of our brother.”

³¹ Thomas F. Zimmerman, “One Year Old,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, January 11, 1947, 11.

³² Cunningham, “General Council Digest,” 16-17.

³³ “The National Religious Broadcasters is an affiliate of the National Association of Evangelicals. Some of the best-known members are ‘The Lutheran Hour,’ the Nazarene program called ‘Showers of Blessing,’ the Free Methodist ‘Light and Life Hour,’ Billy Graham's ‘Hour of Decision,’ and the Assemblies of God ‘Revivaltime’ broadcast. “Thos. F. Zimmerman Chosen Head of National Religious Broadcasters,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, August 8, 1954, 9.

intense service for God.³⁴

While indicating he never wished to circumscribe the work of God, he did outline four helpful signs of the advance of the Spirit. Among these were not, as one might expect from his introduction, unchecked enthusiasm or pious primitivism but rather “stability and strength. Any child can pluck a lily, but a storm cannot uproot a Lebanon. We'll grow like the lily, pure and clean and holy, but we'll develop roots like Lebanon.”³⁵ A few years after writing those words he was elected to the position of General Superintendent of the in the Assemblies of God, a title he would hold for almost three decades. In 1960 he had the additional honor of becoming the president of the National Association of Evangelicals, “the first time a man of Pentecostal persuasion has headed the interchurch group.”³⁶ The Assemblies’ membership in the group and their now not insignificant place within it thus underscored their desire to convey stability and order, in this case by means of association.

Early in his presidency of the NAE, Zimmerman wrote another article for the *Pentecostal Evangel* entitled “What is the Assemblies of God?” that offers insight into his mind during his evangelically ecumenical days. He began by rehearsing his traditionally Pentecostal and expected perspective on the need for revival at the time the movement arose:

Toward the latter part of the nineteenth century, and early in the twentieth, a deep spiritual hunger was engendered in the hearts of many Evangelical

³⁴ Thomas F. Zimmerman, “Perpetuating Pentecost,” *The Pentecostal Testimony*, January 8, 1956, 29.

³⁵ Ibid. The three other characteristics include holiness, fruitfulness, and beauty.

³⁶ “Assemblies Superintendent Named NAE Head,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, July 10, 1960, 14.

believers. Prayer bands met in various areas of the United States and of other countries. Bible conferences were held. In books and periodicals much was written about the condition of the church. With the awakened consciousness of the spiritual lack [*sic*], cries ascended for revival.³⁷

Clearly meant to be an explanatory effort intended for those either on the outside or who were new to the movement, the article asks and answers basic public relations questions such as “How does the Assemblies of God regard the Bible?,” “What is the organizational structure of the Assemblies of God?,” and “What ordinances does the Assemblies of God practice?” while lauding denominational educational institutions, numerical growth, and its significant publishing endeavors as markers of success and efficiency.³⁸ Yet even here it is telling that he refused to compromise on the Pentecostal distinctives of his group, claiming glossolalia as

only what is believed to be the standard for Christian experience for all time—the baptism in the Holy Ghost, accompanied by the sign of speaking in a language never learned. The Assemblies of God believes this dynamic vital experience was lost to the Church through unbelief, but that it is now restored to all who realize their privilege and who will receive it.

Zimmerman’s steadfastness in holding the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the notion of tongues up as an important standard for Christians everywhere helps show just a bit of his purpose within the NAE. For inasmuch as membership and visibility in the group may have provided Pentecostals a certain respectability, it also afforded them a platform from which to share their perspectives. In this way the question of which group desired to influence the other more remains open, for just as the larger group of evangelicals may themselves have wanted to calm the rougher edges of Pentecost, we see Zimmerman here intimating what may be a veiled desire to see evangelicals embrace the Spirit as he had.

³⁷ Thomas F. Zimmerman, “What is the Assemblies of God?,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, September 11, 1960, 6.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 6, 13.

Thus while in Zimmerman's leadership a longing for order and—perhaps—acceptance is clear, the fires of Pentecost that sought to set the heart aflame and spread beyond their current bounds seemed alive all the same. Even at this late date, an echo of the same primitivism and pragmatism remained amongst classical Pentecostals—tendencies that would continue to sort themselves out vis-à-vis evangelicals and others during the years that followed.

The Assemblies of God Dismisses du Plessis

While by no means a “mainline” group like the Presbyterian, Methodist and Episcopalian churches that had long held wide influence upon and a deep sense of congruence with the traditional American religious landscape³⁹, the National Association of Evangelicals' other constituent members were historically and ecclesiastically closer than the A/G to the denominations that found themselves at the center of the postwar Eisenhower revival. Though more mainstream than their new Pentecostal friends, a deep

³⁹ For an extended discussion of the idea of a Protestant “establishment” arranged around such churches, see both Robert Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984) as well as the former dean of American religious history, Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972). Though both contain discussion of the coming disestablishment during the 1960s we must remember that this development came later during the decade. If anything, the peak of the so-called Eisenhower revival occurred in the later 1950s and into the 1960s. As Handy notes, “The membership of churches and synagogues increased from an estimated fifty per cent in 1940 to almost seventy per cent in 1960. Attendance at religious services reached a peak in 1955 when it was estimated that just under half of the population was involved in a typical week.” Handy, 187. Thus even if the beginnings of the decline in broader American mainline attendance was underway in 1961, these trends were likely masked by the great progress that had taken place in the two decades before. In any case, the moniker of “mainline” was one that seemed to solidify around the historic churches of the American establishment, representing a kind of categorization that continues in even the present.

theological conservatism yet reigned amongst the not-quite-Fundamentalist members of the NAE, replete with a growing literature base and intellectual foundation as well as suspicion of more “progressive” tendencies such as ecumenism.

One of the flagships of their thought and reporting was the magazine *Christianity Today*, an evangelical periodical that sought to answer, in some sense, the more liberal tendencies of journals such as *The Christian Century*⁴⁰ and its openness to bogies like ecumenism and higher criticism. While not chronologically first in the story of David du Plessis’s dismissal from the Assemblies of God, a brief discussion initiated by the magazine concerning David du Plessis, the ecumenical movement, and the place of Pentecostalism therein will serve as illustrative of the larger developing situation. Its 22 May 1961 issue chronicled the recent Sixth Pentecostal World Conference held in Jerusalem and discussed how “in recent years Protestant ecumenical forces have made a bid for Pentecostal affiliation, and set up exploratory talks on the edge of the Jerusalem sessions with the Rev. David J. DuPlessis as liaison.”⁴¹ Though the author noted the A/G’s distance from these discussions and their own General Superintendent’s sincere identification with evangelicalism, the fact that they were the body that ordained him did not go without mention. For his part, du Plessis responded in a letter to the editor of *Christianity Today* denying that ecumenical forces were attempting to bring Pentecostals into the fold:

⁴⁰ See George Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995), 157ff.

⁴¹ Carl F. H. Henry, “Pentecostal Meeting Makes Holy Land History,” *Christianity Today*, May 22, 1961, 25.

...there are some points that are definitely “slanted”, and I can only conclude that wishes are “father to the thoughts”...ONLY ONCE⁴² has the question of “Pentecostal affiliation” been asked, and rejected. On every other occasion the motive for the discussion was the question of the “experience of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit”, and the consequences of this “experience” within Pentecostal circles. There was no attempt to “woo or to win” Pentecostal Movements into the WCC.⁴³

Du Plessis’s protest notwithstanding, the damage was done, on this point casting the Assemblies in a light other than that which they wanted and, ultimately, in a fashion rather out of their control.⁴⁴ Especially when considering the eventual case built against du Plessis arose in part because of the large amount of bad publicity for the denomination, the issue’s broad airing and circulation around the country no doubt caused consternation amongst the Assemblies’ leadership.

It has been often suggested that it was the denomination’s identification with a conservative group suspicious of the larger ecumenical movement that gave impetus in the first place to du Plessis’s censure and dismissal. Whether this thesis should be maintained is part of the work of this project, for it is certainly given credence when combined with other print discussions of the situation such as that in *United Evangelical Action* which raised concern about for whom this South African Pentecostal spoke and what effects this had on his denomination. Calling him “a Pentecostal apologist for the Word Council of Churches” and making sure to include statements of rejection by

⁴² Where they appear throughout the dissertation, I will be retaining the authors’ original emphatic use of capital letters.

⁴³ David J. du Plessis, “Letter to the Editor,” *Christianity Today*, July 17, 1961, 38.

⁴⁴ It did not help matters that ecumenical endeavors had long been viewed with a highly eschatological skepticism: a 1927 *Pentecostal Evangel* claimed, for instance, that “since the Church of the Antichrist is to be universal, the call for religious union is full of tremendous significance.” “The Coming World Church Union: A Stepping Stone for Antichrist,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, February 5, 1927, 7.

various Pentecostal leaders, the article closed with a “sharp reaction...by Thomas Zimmerman” who among other things noted that “no individual has been authorized by the General Council of the Assemblies of God to speak in favor of or to support the ecumenical movement...we have been commanded to ‘come ye out’...this is our calling and God’s answer to compromise, modernism, and liberalism.”⁴⁵ Reporting as much as provoking, such an article made clear the host of issues that remained in play with regards to David du Plessis and Pentecostalism at large. Yet before delving deeper into the larger issues of denominational politics and theological matters, it will serve us best to detail the structural steps that led to du Plessis’s dismissal by the A/G leadership.

The Executive Presbytery of the Assemblies of God consists of a handful of the denomination’s most important leaders and functions organizationally as the body that makes most of the major decisions regarding the pressing matters of the fellowship. While each of the members of the committee are themselves denominational officials with their own specific and proscribed set of responsibilities for making day-to-day decisions, when matters of great importance arise that transcend their own authority to adjudicate, they come together to discuss them jointly.⁴⁶ Among these are matters

⁴⁵ W. Stanley Mooneyham, “Pentecostals and the WCC,” *United Evangelical Action*, June 1961, 28-29.

⁴⁶ “Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth General Council of the Assemblies of God,” General Council of the Assemblies of God, August 23, 1961, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO. Included in the printed version of the minutes was the denomination’s then-current version of their constitution and bylaws. The Constitution notes “The Executive Presbytery shall consist of the General Superintendent, the Assistant General Superintendents, General Secretary, General Treasurer, and the Executive Director of Foreign Missions, together with such other brethren to be chosen from the active fellowship to bring the number of executives to sixteen.” *Ibid.*, 97. The Bylaws state “the Executive Presbyters shall serve as trustees of the General Council. They shall be empowered to supervise and have general oversight of all departments.

dealing with ministerial credentialing: “Both the officary of the District Council and the Executive Presbytery of the General Council shall be recognized as having the right of initiative in the trial of members.”⁴⁷ It was with this group of individuals that David du Plessis found himself at odds during 1961-62 and from whom we have the largest amount of related correspondence.

The first letter addressing the situation comes from May 1961. At their earlier February meeting, denominational leaders had discussed the problems posed by du Plessis who was then “evidently enjoying acceptance and wide activity in the World Ecumenical Movement.”⁴⁸ Director of A/G Foreign Missions J. Philip Hogan spoke of some confusion on the mission field concerning the relationship of the denomination to the larger ecumenical movement. Seeking clarification regarding the A/G position on ecumenism, it was agreed “a committee be appointed to take the matter under study and draft a statement to be reported back to the executives during this session.”⁴⁹

While the minutes of the February meeting did pass a motion that “the implementation procedure for the recalling of his [du Plessis’s] credentials be worked out,”⁵⁰ it seems no further action was taken. The issue of du Plessis was thus left until the Executive Presbytery meeting of 8-12 April 1961, whereupon they decided he should

They shall be authorized to act for the corporation in all matters that affect its interest while the General Council is not in session.” Ibid., 105.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 115.

⁴⁸ “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” February 22, 1961, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

meet with the General Council Credentials Committee: “It was moved, seconded and carried, that David Du Plessis be requested to meet with the General Council Credentials Committee to discuss the matter of his relationships and activities with other groups, and that the General Secretary be instructed to withhold renewal of his credentials until such time as he shall meet with the Credentials Committee”⁵¹ Assemblies of God General Secretary communicated this decision to du Plessis in a letter dated 5 May 1961, the preamble of which claimed “strong protests are being received from our brethren in both the homeland as well as the mission fields,” and that “newspaper clippings were also received which purported to quote you and to ally the Assemblies of God with the National Council of Churches [NCC],” the effect of which being “these things now become rather embarrassing for us.”⁵²

Following this initial request for a meeting du Plessis responded promptly, noting in a letter of 9 May 1961 that while unable to meet when requested because “during June I shall be in Great Britain and Holland all the month,”⁵³ he would indeed join EP for their August meeting. In the time between these letters and the meeting, both the denomination and du Plessis seemed not to have discussed the matter publicly but rather carried on with business as usual. According to du Plessis’ travel journals, he continued

⁵¹ “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” April 18, 1961, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁵² Bartlett Peterson to David J. du Plessis, TMs, May 5, 1961, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁵³ David J. du Plessis to Bartlett Peterson, TMs, May 9, 1961, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

in his usual peripatetic fashion, logging time in not only Great Britain and Holland but Jerusalem, Portugal, Florida, Peru, and California as well.⁵⁴

Publicly the A/G commented only briefly on related matters and even there referred only to the new Charismatic Movement taking place in mainline churches rather than ecumenism proper. In its earlier Ministers' Letter of 17 March 1961 the denomination indicated support for this happening "in most momentous days," noting that "in many denominational circles today, among Episcopalians, Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists, and Presbyterians, the power of Pentecost has fallen and hundreds have received a full Pentecostal experience."⁵⁵ Using this new development as a means of goading its own flock into the deeper life, it encouraged readers to be "freshly challenged to prayer and seeking the Lord and revival will come!" Later that July the same circular letter proudly noted how "much of the Pentecostal revival which has touched many denominations has come through initial contacts with our own Assemblies of God churches and ministers."⁵⁶ Apparently not connecting this new occurrence in more "liberal" churches with any awareness of its ecumenical aspect as, we shall see, David du Plessis would come to do, the A/G simply stated that others were coming around to their own experience of Pentecost.

⁵⁴ David J. du Plessis, "Travel Journal," AMs, 1961, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁵⁵ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, "Assemblies of God Minister," March 17, 1961.

⁵⁶ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, "Assemblies of God Minister," July 17, 1961, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

Prior to David du Plessis's meeting with the Executive Presbytery, they were sent an anonymous letter in support of his ministry. Its author denied that du Plessis spoke for any movement or organization during his conversations with the historic churches, simply stating "he made it very clear that he was not seeking recognition of the Pentecostal movement, but rather of the work of the Holy Spirit in and through the Movement in the world."⁵⁷ While it remains unclear who sent this letter, du Plessis's situation was not unknown amongst those who supported him, making it quite possible—even though the aforementioned author claimed "pastor Du Plessis has asked none of us to do so"⁵⁸—that he was attempting to garner support or at the very least gain advice from those who might help his case.

The Executive Presbytery was unswayed by this glowing piece of anonymous correspondence, for during their meeting with du Plessis on 17-18 August 1961 they spoke quite strongly of their concerns about compromise with the NCC and WCC. General Superintendent Thomas Zimmerman "stated that we do not in any way condemn anyone for carrying our testimony to other groups but it is a question of permitting our influence and name to be used as tools for compromise by allowing our identification with the NCC and WCC."⁵⁹ During the same meeting, the EP referenced various letters and clippings detailing third-party accounts of du Plessis's words and actions. Du Plessis

⁵⁷ Unknown to Executive Presbytery of the Assemblies of God, TMs, August 3, 1961, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ "Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes," August 17-18, 1961, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

“spoke at length regarding his work and testimony among members of the NCC and the WCC and also emphasized his faithfulness to the Assemblies of God.”⁶⁰

Ultimately, the Executive Presbytery made three requests that were to become a focal point for the discussions of the next year. Taken together, these demands represent both the perceived errors of the ecumenically minded du Plessis as well as the concerns and fears of the Assemblies of God itself. First, the EP requested that “He [du Plessis] would not, in association with the W.C.C. make discouraging remarks or reflect upon the position of the Assemblies of God;” second, that “he [du Plessis] would not pose, officially or unofficially, as a spokesman for the Assemblies of God;” and third, that “he [du Plessis] would not use his influence to invite others to participate in or to attend meetings of the W.C.C. or N.C.C.”⁶¹ Reiterated to du Plessis in a letter dated 15 November 1961, the EP noted that they soon desired a response to these demands: “it would be a pleasure to hear from you soon...they will undoubtedly be inquiring if we have any further communication from you.”⁶²

Du Plessis’s immediate response to the reiterated demands of 15 November was nonexistent; he simply chose not to reply. In the interim the Executive Presbytery again took up the matter, noting they had “waited in vain for a letter from him in keeping with

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid. The minutes close with the following: “Brother DuPlessis promised that he would do his best not to cause embarrassment to the Assemblies of God in any manner. It was suggested that Brother DuPlessis be requested to seriously and prayerfully reflect on these things and to state his position later.” The tone of the discussion thus far and hereafter seem to leave little doubt concerning what they felt the end result of those prayers ought to be.

⁶² Bartlett Peterson to David J. du Plessis, TMs, November 15, 1961, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

agreements reached in Portland in August, 1961, and that a letter under date of November 15, 1961, from the General Secretary has gone unanswered.”⁶³ At the same January meeting they discussed more newspaper reports and clippings, in particular an episode from du Plessis’ recent visit to Detroit. On 1 January 1962 in a *Detroit Free Press* article entitled “Cleric Says Pentecostals Can Help in Unity Talks,” one could read how “Roman Catholic and Protestant conversations on unity are going to be helped by Pentecostals who speak in tongues, a leading Assemblies of God minister said Sunday,” as well as how this same minister claimed that ““Pentecostals even have much in common with Roman Catholics!””⁶⁴ Though du Plessis believed the whole situation was a misunderstanding⁶⁵, the EP was very concerned, likely because of the perception that these statements represented a seismic shift in Pentecostal theology and practice.

⁶³ “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” January 9, 1962, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁶⁴ “Cleric Says Pentecostals Can Help in Unity Talks,” *Detroit Free Press*, January 1, 1962.

⁶⁵ David J. du Plessis, interview by William Menzies, TMs, transcript, June 28, 1967, 14, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO. In the transcript of the interview, we read the following:

Du Plessis: “so later came an issue: I preaching in St. Paul’s and”

Menzies: “Bishop Weaver?”

Du Plessis: “Yes, John Weaver. Well, then, of course, he dressed me up in a bishop’s robe, vestment, and I got in the newspaper and this caused a lot...so the brethren called us to Springfield.”

Menzies: “This would be 1959 or 1960?”

Du Plessis: This is 1960s. I came to Springfield and I explained once again....So they decided to give me thirty days to finally decide whether I would resign or cease my ecumenical activities.”

The existing record suggests that du Plessis here misremembers the dates in question—specifically the ultimatum given by the denomination, which seems based on the extant record far too early. So too the newspaper article in question containing a picture of him in the requisite attire seems to be the same *Detroit Free Press* article from 1962.

Tellingly, the minutes of the 9 January 1962 EP meeting note that if “statements attributed to him are correct, he should realize that his status as an ordained minister of the Assemblies of God is in jeopardy” all the while demanding “that proper explanation or clarification must be forth-coming.”⁶⁶ General Secretary Bartlett Peterson shared many of these sentiments with du Plessis in a 23 January 1962 letter written on behalf of the Executive Presbytery. Within, the leadership team “requested a proper explanation or clarification be forthcoming no later than February 1, 1962,” enclosing a copy of the Detroit article for him to review and warning him of the jeopardy in which he now found himself.

Du Plessis’s response dated 29 January 1962 offered the following:

Cordial Christian greetings and best wishes for 1962...

I learned from my wife over the telephone of your most recent letter requesting a reply to yours of November 15 which reached me while I was at the World Council of Churches in India.⁶⁷

The kindness and understanding of my brethren in the meeting at Portland overwhelmed me. At that time I could have easily promised almost any pledge that might have been required of me for the sake of fellowship and unity with the Assemblies of God. However, after prayer and very careful consideration of the matter, I felt that I would grieve the Holy Spirit if I entered into a contract with brethren in regard to a ministry that the LORD had given me. So I delayed my letter which the Executive Presbytery asked me to write.⁶⁸

With regard to their requests he denied ever having done the first or second, questioning how he should “promise NOT to do two things of which I have never been guilty” and

⁶⁶ “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” January 9, 1962.

⁶⁷ Interestingly, this was the very meeting the EP had requested he and Donald Gee not attend. “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” June 1, 1961, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO. Among other things, this may indicate a certain amount of recalcitrance on the part of du Plessis even in the midst of developing discussions regarding the wisdom of his involvement with said groups.

⁶⁸ David J. du Plessis to Bartlett Peterson, TMs, January 29, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

noted that it was impossible for him to avoid the third when he saw “a great need for reliable, experienced and spiritual men to present the message of Pentecost in meetings of the N.C.C and the W.C.C. without compromise.”⁶⁹ Du Plessis stated emphatically that he did not like being “called to the carpet” and that if he “did not enjoy the confidence of my brethren in a most unusual ministry...I fail to see how I can be happy in the relationship of a voluntary fellowship.”⁷⁰ Of the Detroit situation, he only indicated that the entire matter would take some time to explain, and requested a meeting with the EP to discuss associated matters at length: “I feel it warrants the sacrifice of a day or two in conference with one another.”⁷¹

The Executive Presbytery’s response to this rather forceful letter was not positive. During their meeting of 5-7 March 1962 they implicitly reiterated their position on the matter, responding to du Plessis’s most recent communiqué as follows: “It was moved that Brother DuPlessis be advised that upon reviewing his reply to the conditions decided upon in the Portland meeting with him that he be advised that he has an opportunity to withdraw and that this decision be communicated to the North Texas District for their advice prior to notifying Brother DuPlessis.”⁷² In a letter addressed to him dated 23 March 1962, Bartlett Peterson informed him of the same, noting, “the Executive

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” March 5-7, 1962, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

Presbytery carefully deliberated over your position as expressed in the letter.”⁷³ He further stated that the General Council of the Assemblies of God was in an awkward position vis-à-vis the WCC as letters from the faithful were “arriving from all parts of the United States and from some mission fields” referring to his “relationship with these organizations...very strong objections have been offered by many and it becomes necessary for the Executive Presbyters to answer these.”⁷⁴ This remained difficult, Peterson wrote, because “we do not share your viewpoints, nor do we find ourselves able to make the same statements as you do with respect to this organization.”⁷⁵ As he closed the letter, Peterson asked for du Plessis’s consideration of the matter and a response to their request following his own deliberation and prayer.

As before, du Plessis once again failed to respond in a timely fashion, later offering the convenient excuse that he was rarely home. Whatever the case, no response to the EP’s letter was received for months. They sent a follow-up letter on 4 June 1962 noting no answer to the early March correspondence. Within, Peterson wrote that “in the meeting of the Executive Presbytery, it was observed that the problems which we have discussed with you previously are becoming more acute” and that “in its next meeting which will be June 19-21 it will be necessary to take an action relative to your credentials since the situation has now reached a stage sufficiently critical so that action must be

⁷³ Bartlett Peterson to David J. du Plessis, TMs, March 23, 1962, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

taken.”⁷⁶ By means of closing, the Executive Presbytery extended an invitation to du Plessis should he desire to dialogue with them during their upcoming meeting.

Whatever the reason for his earlier delay, the South African now wasted no time in responding and wrote back to the EP on 8 June 1962. In addition to apologizing for his tardy response and the awkward position in which he placed the leadership, he emphatically stated “I DO NOT WANT TO WITHDRAW FROM THE ASSEMBLIES.” He agreed to meet with the leadership and discuss the situation, but here as earlier could not help but offer some defense of his actions, here focused upon the issue so-called spiritual fruit:

The Lord is blessing in an amazing manner. Almost weekly ministers from many denominations are receiving the BAPTISM. Those who receive soon lead their brethren into the same experience. Sometimes it appears as if the Pentecostal Revival INSIDE the Churches is snowballing. However, very few Fundamentalists or Evangelicals are seeking or RECEIVING. The blessing seems to be falling upon the major Denominations everywhere.⁷⁷

Though du Plessis’s presence at the meeting was delayed by a day,⁷⁸ he attended on 21 June 1962. The available records of the meeting are somewhat sparse, but what we do know is that “Brother Zimmerman introduced the problem areas briefly and requested Brother DuPlessis to state his present position with regard to his relationship to us in the

⁷⁶ Bartlett Peterson to David J. du Plessis, TMs, June 4, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷⁷ David J. du Plessis to Bartlett Peterson, TMs, June 8, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷⁸ The Executive Presbytery noted that he “had been unable to meet with the Presbytery at the time established due to a plane cancellation. He arrived at 11 a. m. and the order of business was set aside to enable the conference with Brother DuPlessis to convene.” “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” June 21, 1962, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

light of his relationship with the World Council of Churches.”⁷⁹ David du Plessis responded by stating that while he had initially been in favor of writing a retraction letter as per the Executive Presbytery’s demands, he later had a change of heart. As the minutes read,

he had a change of mind and said "Why should I write such a letter?" He stated his favor for the W. C. C. and at the same time spoke of it as evil.

He stated that to continue his present ministry it appeared that he would have no choice but to withdraw from the Assemblies of God but that he was very reluctant to do this. Brother DuPlessis stated that he was convinced that God has laid upon his heart his present ministry and that he plans to continue this.⁸⁰

Apparently having agreed to withdraw his credentials “since he felt he must choose the ministry which he feels God has given him”⁸¹ the Executive Presbytery informed him that they desired the letter of withdrawal by 1 August 1962.

Having come somewhat grudgingly towards an acceptance of his ecclesiastical fate during the June 1962 meeting, du Plessis nevertheless reconsidered his decision following his conversation with members of the EP. So it was that a mere eight days after he concluded he would be forced to resign, he composed a circular letter to dozens of Pentecostal ministers and leaders seeking their advice on how to proceed in his

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid. Regarding du Plessis’s characterization of the WCC as “evil,” little is known beyond the comment recorded here. Such a sentiment is unknown in the rest of his written corpus and therefore seems out of place here. Considering the secondhand and indirect nature of this quotation, I can only surmise that it might perhaps represent part of a larger discussion in which du Plessis referred to its drawbacks or shadow-side. Alternately, it may be indicative of his uncertain state of mind in the midst of the momentous decisions he had to make. In any case, such a stark and negative characterization of any facet of the ecumenical movement is at best an outlier in du Plessis’s thought and is much more likely a misrepresentation of his words during the meeting.

⁸¹ Ibid.

situation. While it is unclear exactly how many individuals received this correspondence, nearly twenty responded offering their advice. Further, through the use of a mimeograph machine numerous others were able to read the letter for themselves—a development that may have helped du Plessis in some quarters but in other cases seems to have placed his case in the hands of those who had little sympathy. The correspondence itself was a simple two-page affair that presumed some familiarity with du Plessis’s situation and asked for advice on the pressing question of withdrawal. The letter began with heartfelt emotions of sorrow, frustration, and fear before detailing the conversation he recently had with the EP and their demands upon him:

You are one of my friends in whom I have great confidence. I now need the sympathetic interest and advice of my true friends and brethren in Christ. Kindly read this letter carefully and prayerfully.

Just a week ago, June 21, in Springfield, Mo., I appeared before the brethren of the Ex. Presbytery of the Assemblies of God. I came away from the meeting with mixed emotions of sorrow, frustration and fear. After 90 minutes of friendly discussion it was clear that the brethren could offer me just ONE alternative. EITHER I stop ministering in the Churches and Institutions of the National Council and World Council of Churches as I have been doing for the past 10 years, OR I MUST “withdraw” from the Assemblies of God, before August 1. I ask you...WHAT SHALL I DO?⁸²

Following this initial entreaty, he related his understanding of the chronology of events leading up to this June meeting. Du Plessis suggested somewhat sarcastically that the NAE and its influence constituted the real reason for the events taking place. He wondered aloud whether they desired to dampen the gifts of Pentecost at the same time so many were receiving.⁸³ Feeling trapped between what he saw as his calling and his

⁸² David J. du Plessis, “Personal and Confidential,” TMs, June 29, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁸³ Ibid.:

ecclesiastical home, he wondered if and how he would be able to withdraw from the work to which he was called, for this is what he felt would be the end result of acceding to the A/G's demands:

My brother, I assure you I have not compromised at any time, anywhere. During the past 12 months I have seen about 150 ministers receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. In Episcopal Cathedrals, Lutheran Churches, Presbyterian Churches, Methodist Churches, in fact in all kinds of the major Protestant Churches I have had the privilege to preach and teach. Ministers and people have received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, and these in turn, have led their colleagues and members into the Pentecostal Experience. Sometimes it seems the PENTECOSTAL REVIVAL inside the churches of the NCC and WCC is snowballing. HOW CAN I "withdraw" from this ministry in ecumenical circles? It seems I shall have to choose to withdraw from the Assemblies of God. What do you say?⁸⁴

In closing, he asked each of his intended recipients for their opinions and advice on his next step with the denomination. Though he desired the opinions of others before taking that momentous step, he felt he would have to leave the Assemblies of God before long.

Ever since I received the first letter early in 1961 regarding the matter from the Gen. Secretary, when he wrote: "Your ecumenical activities is causing us great embarrassment," I have felt that it is because the Assemblies of God are members of the National Association of Evangelicals, that my activities in the N.C.C. and the W.C.C. is embarrassing. Surely none of my Pentecostal Brethren could be embarrassed because the Lord is NOW baptizing Ministers in churches of the NCC and WCC into the Holy Spirit.

Around the world I reckon there are at least 500 ministers and missionaries that have received the Baptism in the Spirit during the past five years. BUT the trouble is that almost without exception these ministers belong to churches that are in the NCC and WCC. How can I oppose and fight and denounce the NCC and the WCC when they invite me to give my PENTECOSTAL WITNESS without compromise, and allow their ministers to enjoy the very same BAPTISM in the Spirit which we have known for the last 60 years? How many ministers are getting the BAPTISM in the National Association of Evangelicals and the W. E. F. [World Evangelical Fellowship] where most of the major American Pentecostal Movements belong? After 20 years of association with the NAE the testimony of the Pentecostal Movements seems to have had little or no effect on our Evangelical friends. To me it seems our PENTECOSTAL WITNESS has been blunted.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

As one might expect, the answers to this circular letter were varied, and the matter of such correspondence is further complicated by the fact that we are unsure about the identities of his recipients.⁸⁵ Without a list of those who received the letters to compare with those who responded, we are unable to comment on those who chose not to respond. Further, we are limited by the fact that the only responses referenced here are those found within the collection of du Plessis himself. It remains unknown whether or not he retained every response to his query and by extension whether or not this collection represents a representative sample of opinions. While this presents a continuing problem to which the existence of further letters would no doubt add greatly to our understanding of this particular episode, the fact that almost twenty responses to his question remain and that they represent a wide range of individuals and viewpoints gives some hope that, while not entirely representative or exhaustive, du Plessis did not retain only those answers he agreed with, but rather the majority of the responses he received.

Of the letters at our disposal, the advice given can largely be divided into three categories: 1) those generally supportive of the Assemblies of God leadership, 2) those wishing to place the onus on the Assemblies of God for David du Plessis's dismissal, 3) and more neutral approach which included urging resolution of the matter through official denominational channels as well as a broader "wait and see" perspective. In the first category, Assemblies of God minister Carl Brumback—author of the 1959 denominational history *Suddenly...From Heaven*—responded on 7 July 1962. Taking a

⁸⁵ David J. du Plessis to Bartlett Peterson, TMs, August 4, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. All that is known is that he "decided to consult with many of my closest friends...I mailed the enclosed letter to about 100 such men."

direct approach, he encouraged du Plessis to simply agree to the first two demands of the EP and avoid needless controversy over unimportant principles. In his words,

Guilty or not guilty of transgression in the past is not the chief point. You know that you do not intend to make discouraging remarks or reflect upon the position of the AG or to pose as a spokesman of the AG. Then why not say so? Some idealists who were not Commies refused to sign a loyalty oath or to state whether or not they had ever been members of the Party—but do you have to follow such a course?⁸⁶

Regarding the third demand Brumback wondered whether du Plessis might just agree to have other Pentecostals only share the message of Pentecost with the WCC and NCC so that “the ecumenical aspect...[could be] avoided or kept at a minimal [*sic*].”⁸⁷ Clearly cautious and unwilling to transgress the boundaries set in place by the EP⁸⁸, Brumback nevertheless stated that du Plessis would “always be welcome in my pulpit and home. I love you and respect you for the great work that God is doing through you”⁸⁹—a clear assertion of friendship and ministry that transcended the bounds of this particular controversy.

Somewhat less personal in nature is the response of William E. McAllister, who wrote to du Plessis on 10 July 1962 as General Superintendent of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. Within, he identified with the embarrassment felt by the Assemblies of God in this matter and as such would not comment on the issue at hand.

⁸⁶ Carl Brumback to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 7, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid., Brumback also seems to be more conservative on this matter, noting, “what none of us AG men is interested in is union with the NCC or WCC---or in dialogue that would lead to that.”

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Having said this, he did however seem to take a comparatively dim view of du Plessis's actions, telling him

...while you have held credentials with the Assemblies of God, you have not been actively engaged in their work, particularly as they have given you no endorsement in taking part in W.C.C. Conferences, etc. and have been actually opposed to it. In view of this, for you to surrender those credentials, and to carry credentials of a neutral or more independent character, might be more consistent...in view of the fact, that most of your work seems to be with W.C.C. connections, or F.G.B.M. rallies, or Independent churches, it might be better for you all around, to carry Independent credentials.⁹⁰

Asserting his basic understanding that the Assemblies of God was not opposed to the WCC or NCC receiving Pentecost—just “opposed to the W.C.C. as such”⁹¹—McAlister offers what may be considered an official line on the matter.

Rounding out the trio of letters that remain supportive of the Assemblies of God leadership and by extension critical of du Plessis is a letter from a source only identified as “E.M.” Written on 11 July 1962, little is known about the author of the letter other than that s/he was a layperson not on du Plessis's original list of intended recipients. Forwarded the letter by a friend, E.M. remained throughout his/her response very critical of du Plessis's association with various parts of the ecumenical movement and the subsequent debate within Pentecostalism. Referring to the A/G, the author begged du Plessis “please don't let the devil use you to bring division to an organization that has done so much for the kingdom of God around the world. They are called of the Lord to do a job—and they are doing what they feel is right in this matter.”⁹² Unloading a salvo

⁹⁰ Walter E. McAlister to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 10, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² E. M. to David J. du Plessis, July 11, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

of sarcasm and disapproval, the author attacks him for what is termed criticism of the National Association of Evangelicals. Urging du Plessis to act not as a child but rather a gentleman, E.M. concludes that he ought simply to resign and join the National Council of Churches:

The thing for you to do—is to quietly—and without fanfare, and telling the world how you are being persecuted—just resign from the Assemblies and join the National Council of Churches—your oral and written reports have carried nothing but the highest praise for what they are doing and I am sure that they would welcome you with open arms. And they would be willing to support you—so that you would not have to depend on your full gospel affiliation for that matter⁹³

While representing the harshest of written responses to du Plessis on this issue, its force is mediated somewhat by its anonymous nature and the fact that it is an opinion unsought by du Plessis himself. Even so, if this type of feeling and opinion represented, as it may well have, a large enough minority within the Pentecostal movement broadly—and the Assemblies of God specifically—we can understand through reading it some of the emotion behind those opposed to du Plessis’s program as well as the kind of pressure placed upon the Executive Presbytery by those who spoke the loudest.

Diametrically opposed to these first responses, some saved their approbation not for David du Plessis, but for the Executive Presbytery and/or the Assemblies of God.

The largest of the three groups of responses, the authors of these letters seem to have at

⁹³ Ibid. The “full gospel” tag within Pentecostalism holds great importance and signifies, amongst other things, the assumed sense of completeness their movement has over against other less complete brands of the faith. As Grant Wacker writes, early “Pentecostals repeatedly employed metaphors heralding the completeness of their message. That notion bore the connotation of spiritual fullness, to be sure, but it also suggested that they alone possessed the entire truth....Zealots commonly called their meeting houses Full Gospel Assemblies or Full Gospel Tabernacles. The title was intentionally insidious: they preached the *full* gospel, while other traditions only preached a partial one.” *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 76-77. For du Plessis, the implications of giving up his “full gospel” title would have been much more than a simple change in name or credentials.

best suspicion of Executive Presbytery leadership and at worst a deep sense of anger for their actions. In sum they encouraged du Plessis to avoid the pitfall of resigning and urged him to make the denomination take action and thus officially go on record as opposing du Plessis and his ministry.

Representative of this perspective is one William Pickthorn, an Assemblies of God pastor from California who felt disturbed by the chain of events and determined to stick by du Plessis. In the end, he urged him to force the EP to explain themselves: “But why withdraw? Would it not be better to force them to drop you, and then appeal the situation? This would give many of us time to express ourselves to the headquarters brethren.”⁹⁴ John Carter, General Secretary of the Assemblies of Great Britain, echoed this by saying the onus should be on the A/G in this matter. For him the crisis was of an importance equal to that of the Council of Jerusalem in the Book of Acts, where early believers first decided that Christian missions to Gentiles was acceptable. There, Peter’s brethren “learned how God had led him to the Gentiles and how the Lord had given them the like gift as at the beginning, then they were big enough to lay aside their prejudices and glorify God.”⁹⁵ Carter apparently hoped for a similar resolution to this matter.

Norman Woodford took a more militant tone against the Assemblies of God leadership. Having himself left the structure of denominational life, he noted, “it is good and free and healthy out here.”⁹⁶ For him this was especially true considering the recent

⁹⁴ William E. Pickthorn to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 10, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁹⁵ John Carter to David J. du Plessis, TMs, n.d., David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁹⁶ Norman Woodford to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 9, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

actions of Du Plessis's denomination: "I really am surprised at the letter you have sent which contains an account of the unbelievable attitude of the A of God big men. That they should do this to you who have so laboriously built up their work can only be an indication of utter blindness or some other equally crazy thing."⁹⁷ J. Stewart Brinsfield, pastor of one Trinity Evangelical Church, echoed this sentiment. In his own response to du Plessis's plea, he likened the situation to that of Luther's before the Diet of Worms: "when one is convinced he is right... 'HERE I STAND' may be your position and the next move will be up to the POWERS THAT BE. For you to take the initiative even at their suggestion to resign would be tantamount to admission of misconduct on your part."⁹⁸

Fellow Pentecostal Gordon Lindsay simply noted the "shame the way this thing is developing, but that is the unfortunate thing about a machine. It becomes bigger than individuals."⁹⁹ Lastly, charismatic Episcopalian Dennis Bennett stood firm with those who urged du Plessis not to resign from the denomination and took a rather dim view of A/G's intransigence on related matters.¹⁰⁰ As with others, he pointed to the influence of the National Association of Evangelicals as causal before asking how denominational Pentecostalism could turn its back on those with whom it shared so much of the Spirit.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ J. Stewart Brinsfield to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 10, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁹⁹ Gordon Lindsay to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 23, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁰⁰ Dennis Bennett to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 14, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Some remained more neutral in tone, offering a middle way between the harshness and anger often expressed by those on either side of the issue. Among these was Ralph Salzman, an Assemblies of God pastor from California:

My advice to you would be to write a letter to the executive presbytery of the Assemblies of God. In this letter express your desire to remain in fellowship with them and the organization and that if you were to withdraw or be dropped it would be a great blow to many outside our organization who highly regard our testimony. To sever fellowship now would hurt the Pentecostal testimony far and near. State that you want to appear before them again and seek their advice and help in a more perfect solution to your call among others outside the Pentecostal churches. Humble yourself in any way God tells you. You do not have to compromise.¹⁰¹

While perhaps a bit naïve in the face of all that had gone forward, his advice appears less inflamed by passions than that of the other respondents. Another example of this was the decidedly neutral and politically “safe” response of former A/G General Superintendent Ernest S. Williams on 10 July 1962.¹⁰² Apparently having neither desire nor interest in becoming involved in the situation he simply stated his ignorance of the matter, offered a possible response within the polity and left matters as they were. While supremely unhelpful in terms of David du Plessis’s initial query, Williams’ response nevertheless showed a marked difference from two others with close ties to the Pentecostal denominationalism: Carl Brumback and William McAllister. Seen in this light, the subtle hint he gives concerning appeal to the General Presbytery may not have been as unhelpful as it appears.

¹⁰¹ Ralph Salzman to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 10, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁰² E. S. Williams to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 10, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. Along with others, Williams did raise the possibility of appeal, that “where controversies arise a minister might appeal from a decision of the Executives to the General Presbytery, who will meet in Springfield late in August.”

Of all the possible responses to du Plessis's circular letter, one last "neutral" letter stands out, both for its content, length, and author. J. Roswell Flower, early leader in the Pentecostal and Assemblies of God movements and recently retired General Secretary of the American denomination, offered two densely typewritten single-spaced pages. Remaining supportive of du Plessis without succumbing to the temptation to attack the A/G, Flower attempted to offer a somewhat dispassionate analysis of the situation:

And now you are being asked to accept the opportunity to withdraw as a minister of the Assemblies of God. I presume that the easy way would be to simply comply with the request and humbly and quietly withdraw. However, there may be issues involved which should be met, and if that be so, then it is my duty to advise you what to do, if you feel it may be worth while.¹⁰³

Like du Plessis and others, he suggested the National Association of Evangelicals might be playing an important if somewhat hidden role in the controversy:

I do know that there is strong antipathy on the part of some of the members of the Presbytery to any of us having any contact with any persons or branches of the N.C.C.C. [*sic*] or the W.C.C. There seems to be fear that if we have such contacts we hurt our evangelical witness. It may be that our relationship to the N.A.E. and the pressures that may have come from our evangelical brethren of the N.A.E. has something to do with this feeling. I question whether all of the members of the Presbytery have given serious consideration to the issues involved, but may be carried along by the feelings of other members.¹⁰⁴

Though clearly in support of David du Plessis and his work, the letter never purports to be anything like a public defense of the man. Even so, it is hard to underestimate the impact such a letter may have had upon the embattled du Plessis, indicating as it did support in circles where he now faced increased scrutiny and approbation.¹⁰⁵ Flower, it

¹⁰³ J. Roswell Flower to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 11, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.* Within, Flower noted "I am surprised that they should have gone so far as to request that you take the step of withdrawing from the Assemblies of God because

seems, prescribed precisely the course he ought to take and outlined the constitutional ways in which he ought to proceed. Du Plessis had only to hold firm, for in Flower's eyes, "there have been no charges which would justify dropping your name from the ministerial list."¹⁰⁶

With scores of du Plessis letters circulating amongst the faithful and evidence in at least one case that a mimeograph had been made for an unintended reader, it comes as little surprise that the leadership of the Assemblies of God soon had their own copies of the circular at their disposal. In some cases, du Plessis' intended recipients chose not to adhere to his "personal and confidential" instructions but rather upon receipt of his communication simply forwarded it on to A/G Headquarters in Springfield, Missouri. One district superintendent, concerned about the issues raised, wrote urgently to the leadership asking for further clarification. The minutes of an Executive Presbytery meeting dated 12 July 1962 indicate the state of affairs with Brother Wigfield of the Potomac District as well as their quick response:

Brother Wigfield had reported...that a minister who had received a mimeographed letter from David DuPlessis had presented a resolution before the District Council. The recommendation requested the District Council to endorse Brother DuPlessis and to request the Executive Presbytery to set aside its action.....Upon motion duly carried the following was authorized to be sent as a night letter to Brother Wigfield:

"DuPlessis was not requested to cease ministry in denominational churches. He has been asked not to pose officially, or unofficially, as a spokesman for the Assemblies of God. We regret that after many months of sincere effort it appears impossible to resolve this situation. DuPlessis' home district concurs in

of your activities with members of the ecumenical movement. Personally, I have been glad that you have had contacts with these brethren and God has blessed your testimony to many of them." He also claimed to have spoken with former Director of Foreign Missions Noel Perkin, a man who also harbored no antipathy towards du Plessis' relations with the broader ecumenical movement.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

the decision of the Executive Presbytery. In the absence of full knowledge of all facts involved, we urge that no action be taken now in this matter.”¹⁰⁷

Records indicate that this was a “special meeting” of the group, perhaps called solely for dealing with the brushfires forming around this issue. By the next official Executive Presbytery meeting, the summarized the situation as follows:

A report indicated that Brother David DuPlessis has circulated numerous ministers seeking aid in his present position with the Executive Presbytery. This had resulted in letters to headquarters and an attempt to aid him by a District Council. Other letters and calls had been received.

It was moved that the DuPlessis case be referred to the General Presbytery. The motion was seconded and carried.¹⁰⁸

As per the Executive Presbytery’s orders the case was forwarded onward to the General Presbytery, ostensibly for beginning the discussion of credentialing.¹⁰⁹ In a confidential brief containing the details of du Plessis’s case denominational leaders raised numerous issues revolving around the following issue:

Throughout the last two years, correspondence from missionaries, ministers, and laymen, both at home and abroad has complained to this office that the present ministry of Brother David J. du Plessis has created for them difficult and embarrassing situations. It should be made clear at the outset that there have been no complaints relative to his testimony for Pentecost, but considerable protest has been voiced against the manner in which he is alleged to have

¹⁰⁷ “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” July 12, 1962, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

¹⁰⁸ “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” July 17, 1962, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

¹⁰⁹ Found in du Plessis’s official ministerial records, this file is curiously dated 21 November 1962, which would seem to place it a few months later than the actual time of decision-making on the matter. However, since it is called “a brief re: The Case of David du Plessis” and notes that it contains “only enough material to clearly set forth the reasons for the position of the of the EP and GP [General Presbytery] as representative of the A/G” we may assume that this represents a secondary document compiling much of the information discussed during actual Executive and General Presbytery deliberations. “David J. du Plessis Ministerial File,” Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

represented the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. Complaints have specifically charged that he is an advocate for the Ecumenical Movement.¹¹⁰

As the brief proceeded, a series of questions were posed indicating the charges against du Plessis before recitation of the assumed evidence of his transgressions. The first of the questions asked, “Does David Du Plessis support the Ecumenical Movement and the World Council of Churches?” and is answered in the affirmative through “a composite of newspaper clippings circulated by Mr. DuPlessis.”¹¹¹ Though one may legitimately wonder whether such second-hand accounts may be in any way considered authoritative, the statement of the brief that “Mr. Du Plessis made no effort to refute the statements accorded to him in these newspaper stories”¹¹² reveals the denomination’s perspective on the matter. The second question posed in the brief asked whether “David Du Plessis caused concern in Europe and Great Britain among other Pentecostal groups?” Here again secondhand reports of his activities and words helped the leadership to determine that “this has indeed been true.”¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid., One of these is the aforementioned Detroit Free Press article entitled “Cleric Says Pentecostals Can Help In Unity Talks.” Another is an advertisement “from the El Paso Ministerial Association, 1962-1963 Program Calendar, under the caption ‘The Holy Spirit and the Ecumenical Movement,’” for an event that features him promoted together with, strangely enough, evangelical stalwart Billy Graham!

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid. An English Elim representative commented that “he [du Plessis] was announced as The Voice of the Pentecostal churches, and yet in a meeting he told the folk that the Pentecostal movements were against him. He certainly did not help the Pentecostal movement because after that meeting there were people who said we ought to be ashamed of ourselves for the way we treat him.”

A third question raised by the brief inquired whether du Plessis had “endeavored to influence missionaries to join the Ecumenical Movement and the WCC?”¹¹⁴ Like before, the evidence provided here—mostly related to du Plessis’s interaction with the ecumenical movement and his encouragement of fellow Pentecostals towards increased interaction with this work—seems somewhat incomplete. Even so, it did lead denominational leadership to the conclusion that “Mr. Du Plessis has endeavored to influence our missionaries to join the Ecumenical Movement and the WCC.”¹¹⁵ Another of the brief’s questions revolves around whether du Plessis “reflected upon or made disparaging remarks upon the position of the Assemblies of God?”¹¹⁶ The brief provides relatively little evidence save testimonials du Plessis included on the back of one of his tract booklets. Among these is a comment from a Presbyterian source in Brazil that noted, “I congratulate you for your wonderful job, trying to persuade our Pentecostal Brethren to abandon their attitude of isolation and prejudice.”¹¹⁷ Ultimately, all of the questions within the brief led to a final query about what the Executive Presbytery had

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. The evidence under this heading that seems most troubling for du Plessis was his comments regarding two Pentecostal Churches who had joined the WCC: “They were welcomed with such acclamation that I felt they were receiving the HONOR that the entire PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT would have received IF THEY HAD COME.” While this statement might be interpreted as a call to the rest of the Pentecostal churches to the WCC, in context it seems more likely a wistful commentary on larger Pentecostalism’s refusal to even begin conversations with what would be a welcoming ecumenical movement.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid. Clearly not the damning pieces of evidence they desired, this and other similar statements seemed enough to warrant questioning du Plessis, if not indicting him for the worst offenses: in their words, “Mr. Du Plessis has left the impression the Pentecostals, excluding himself, are somewhat lacking in Christian graces.”

asked du Plessis to do concerning the controversy. Tracing the development of their discussions, the brief concludes that

If Mr. Du Plessis had been willing to restrict his activities in with the WCC to a simple witness of the Pentecostal experience, his brethren at the headquarters would have rejoiced with him and all would have been well. On the other hand, as the Leaders of the Assemblies of God, it was unthinkable to allow the weight of evidence and protests to accumulate here, without making a serious effort to counsel and restrain Mr. Du Plessis in his apparent attempts to bring Pentecostals into the Ecumenical Movement.¹¹⁸

As related discussions went forward at the highest levels of A/G leadership, a letter from a supportive Pentecostal Californian pastor arrived on 1 August 1962 that argued strongly for du Plessis, noting his great influence with mainline Christians and the prestige he was able to bring the denomination with outsiders. Especially in light of the new Charismatic movement, the author wrote, there was little basis by which the denomination should have sought to limit this powerful ambassador. For this pastor, “it has been a real help...to be able to say, ‘The Reverend duPlessis is an Assemblies of God minister as I am, and a friend of mine.’”¹¹⁹

After the epistolary silence that existed between the Executive Presbytery and David du Plessis from 21 June 1962 onward, the man in question finally responded in a letter dated 4 August 1962. He begged the leadership for time:

I feel convinced that no good can come to the Assemblies of God, or to the Kingdom of God, or to myself, if I should withdraw. I still desire to continue to minister under the auspices of the Assemblies of God, as a Pentecostal preacher

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Unknown to Thomas F. Zimmerman, TMs, August 1, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. It remains unknown whether the General Presbytery answered this letter as no such response was found in either the Flower Archives or Du Plessis Center. What remains important here is that such a letter reveals some public support for the man amongst even A/G ministers.

to ALL MEN, everywhere. Therefore I plead with my Brethren to have a little more patience with me.¹²⁰

In straightforward fashion, he admitted writing to about one hundred men for their opinions and advice since he could not ask headquarters directly. Though he noted some had taken unsought action with their copies, the majority advised him not to withdraw. As he received these answers and mulled through his options and opinions vis-à-vis the controversy, he did come to some conclusion regarding the three demands to which the Assemblies had previously asked him to acquiesce. In his words,

I wish to point out again that: (1) I am not guilty of making derogatory or discouraging remarks that reflect upon the Assemblies of God, AND I DO NOT intend to make myself guilty of this. The Assemblies of God in particular is the Pentecostal body which I trust will be used of God to bridge much of the divisions that exist among those with the Pentecostal experience. (2) I have never, AND DO NOT intend ever, to pose as spokesman for the Assemblies of God, officially or unofficially, I cannot help it when newspapers give that impression. (3) I have never, and DO NOT intend to encourage members or ministers to join any ecclesiastical society, but I have encouraged them strongly to accept any opportunity to bear a faithful witness to the Pentecostal experience and the Full Gospel Message.¹²¹

Having made each of these claims, he then simply stated he had obeyed the Spirit in all of these matters. Somewhat resignedly, he finally admitted quite simply that “a TRIAL as prescribed in the By-laws of the General Council of the Assemblies of God”¹²² might be the only way forward.

¹²⁰ du Plessis to Peterson, August 4, 1962.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid. No record of an actual trial exists; it seems rather that, as we shall see, the body that would have adjudicated the matter—the General Presbytery—was at the urging of denominational officials encouraged to preemptively make their opinion on the matter known. The effect of such a move was to render the need for a trial moot—and against du Plessis.

The Assemblies of God's initial response to du Plessis's final defense and explanation simply indicated reception of this letter together with many other copies of his earlier advice-seeking correspondence.¹²³ One gets the impression from the curt communiqué that matters were not resolved by du Plessis's three responses to the A/G's concerns. In the letter, the EP said it would again take up the matter during its August meeting, something they apparently did before forwarding the matter on to the General Presbytery's authority.

During the General Presbytery's meeting of 29-31 August they reviewed the entire matter, with this larger administrative group deciding that du Plessis had failed to respond to the demands placed upon him. They then passed a resolution that read:

RESOLVED, That the General Presbytery now in session go on record as opposed to ecumenicity based on organic or organizational unity, and the combination of many denominations into a World Super Church, which probably will culminate in the Scarlet Woman or Religious Babylon of Revelation, be it further

RESOLVED, That we recommend that none of our Assemblies of God ministers or churches participate in such a manner as to promote the Ecumenical Movement in any of the modern ecumenical organizations of this order on a local, national, or international level.

This is not to be interpreted to mean a limitation be imposed on any of our Assemblies of God ministers regarding his Pentecostal witness or participation on a local level with interdenominational activities.¹²⁴

¹²³ Bartlett Peterson to David J. du Plessis, TMs, August 10, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. Peterson noted, perhaps pointedly, that "we had also previously received copies of this which had been supplied to us by ministers of the Assemblies."

¹²⁴ General Presbytery of the Assemblies of God, "Resolution on Ecumenicity," TMs (photocopy), August 31, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. The motion as originally made by Frank Lindquist needed refining as per the General Presbytery's concerns. As such, "here was a substitute motion offered to refer the entire matter to a committee who would seek to refine the language and bring it back to the presbytery for action." The following individuals constituted the committee: Frank Lindquist, R. J. Carlson, Oliver Collier,

Whatever hope Plessis had for official support was now gone.

Following the decision of the General Presbytery, it was only the briefest of moves for the EP to terminate Plessis's ordination during its 14 September 1962 meeting:

INASMUCH as Brother David Du Plessis has declined to supply a signed statement in compliance with the three points of requirements as agreed upon, by and with him, in the Portland, Oregon conference, and in view of the action taken by the General Presbytery in sustaining the Executive Presbytery's action, it is the decision of the Executive Presbytery that his relationship with the Assemblies of God as an ordained minister is now terminated.¹²⁵

Why, in the face of du Plessis's three pledges of 4 August they would feel the need to do so remains somewhat unclear, especially considering the personal avowals he made of his own position and promises for the future. It is quite possible that by August 1962 the wheels of denominational action had simply been moving for too long on this issue, and there was little anyone could say to prevent what had already been decided. This combined with a not insignificant amount of skepticism concerning du Plessis's claims, likely made these late concessions fall on deaf ears. Perhaps his actions over the summer of 1962 constituted what the leadership considered too dangerous or controversial, and as such no simple words would have the power to overturn them.

As with the "Resolution on Ecumenicity," a similar and connected "Statement Regarding the Ministry of David J. du Plessis" emerged from the leadership. Within a litany of claims was made against the ecumenical enthusiast: complaints received from faithful A/G parishioners, the denomination's own feelings regarding the NCC and WCC,

Eugene Bell and T. H. Spence. "Assemblies of God General Presbytery Minutes," August 29-31, 1962, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

¹²⁵ "Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes," September 14, 1962, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

and the continued assertion that he was seeking to force organizational unity. The statement repeated the three requirements for ministry the Executive Presbytery had laid at the feet of du Plessis and stated—somewhat quizzically considering du Plessis’s letter of 4 August 1962—that he had chosen not to comply with these demands. By means of defense, the leadership asserted

It has never been suggested or intimated that he should in any way curtail his Pentecostal testimony anywhere the Lord opens a door. The essential question was centered around his attempt to influence others, particularly Pentecostals, to affiliate or work with the World Council of Churches and the Ecumenical Movement.¹²⁶

Ultimately, it was this perception and du Plessis’s seeming intransigence that led to his dismissal, at least in the eyes of the denominational leadership. For reasons political or otherwise, they claimed not to have removed him from fellowship, but rather “regret that Brother du Plessis has chosen to reject the requests...thus of his own volition removing himself from the fellowship of the Assemblies of God.”¹²⁷

In a letter to du Plessis written the day his credentials were voided, General Secretary Bartlett Peterson spoke for the Executive Presbytery, noting among other things that his letter of 4 August and other defenses offered “no solution” to the situation at hand.¹²⁸ Once again Peterson asserted that it was not the Pentecostal testimony as such but rather issues with the NCC and WCC that presented problems. He was not more specific. Ultimately, General and Executive Presbytery resolutions made it clear that

¹²⁶ “Statement Regarding the Ministry of David J. du Plessis,” TMs, n.d., David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Bartlett Peterson to David J. du Plessis, TMs, September 14, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

neither du Plessis nor the ecumenical movement were welcome in connection with the Assemblies of God. In closing, Peterson noted that

It had been the hope of the entire Executive Presbytery that we might have been able to successfully work out the area of controversy which relates to your ministry. We would have been exceedingly happy if this could have been more happily resolved.¹²⁹

Despite these wistful words one wonders whether this was in fact a realistic option, especially when considering the entirety of the situation and the severity with which matters were prosecuted.

Du Plessis in the Aftermath

David du Plessis's reaction to the Assemblies of God's decision to remove him from the ministry was neither immediate nor long in coming. Writing to them a few weeks after the 14 September letter, he offered "cordial Christian greetings" before noting the shock with which he received the decision of the denomination: "I NEVER expected such action from my brethren under these circumstances. From the depth of my heart I pray: Father forgive them for they know not what they do."¹³⁰ As before, he offered a defense of the path his life had taken by claiming it was the Lord that led him this way. Once again lifting up the spectre of the NAE in the midst of these complicated machinations involving his ministry in various ecumenical organizations, he noted the largest issue seemed not to be his ministry, but rather the field in which that ministry operated. Ironically he felt "that the Pentecostal revival OUTSIDE the Churches is the

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ David J. du Plessis to Bartlett Peterson, TMs, October 7, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

same as, and partly because of, the Pentecostal revival now INSIDE the Churches.”¹³¹

Ultimately and perhaps defiantly he informed the Executive Presbytery that he would be continuing to work with his brethren in the Assemblies and the broader Pentecostal movement, claiming that he was in the midst of God’s will: “The will of God is UNITY IN THE SPIRIT, and that is a far great UNITY than General Council, World Council, or any Council.”¹³²

A more public awareness of the struggles between David du Plessis and the Assemblies of God leadership came to light a few weeks later in the denomination’s regular “Ministers’ Letter.” Amidst devotional thoughts, announcements, advice, and encouragement, the General Presbytery posted its new position on all matters related to the ecumenical movement. The statement was followed by the names of three ministers under the heading “credentials terminations.”¹³³ The three were well known to the Pentecostal readership, and each had their own set of varied yet related issues with the Assemblies of God leadership: Lester Sumrall, Gordon Lindsay, and David J. du Plessis. Mostly revolving around their own “extracurricular” activities outside the purview of denominational oversight, all three were removed from the rolls in a swift act of housecleaning by an organization wishing to close ranks. For his part, Sumrall’s use of so-called independent corporations on the mission field had created some discomfort

¹³¹ Ibid. Once again, du Plessis bolsters the defense of his actions with a results-based analysis: Pentecost is on the move, he claims—should we not celebrate and encourage it wherever it may be found?

¹³² Ibid. Here we see a precursor to du Plessis’s later linking of Pentecostalism and the ecumenical movement.

¹³³ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Assemblies of God Minister,” October 15, 1962, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

amongst a leadership unsure how they were being represented. While the explanation for Gordon Lindsay simply states that his membership card was returned following his inability to meet certain criteria, one can be sure that his own activities vis-à-vis many of the individuals involved in the salvation-healing revival had given the Assemblies some reason for pause.¹³⁴

Seen in the light of Lindsay and Sumrall, du Plessis's own termination for potential compromise with the NCC and WCC makes some sense. Attempting, perhaps, to limit a public relations situation the likes of which it faced in the salvation-healing revival and the not-so-distant days of NOLR, the A/G as a denomination foreclosed around what they felt to be a controllable set of variables. Whether their association with the National Association of Evangelicals was—as many of du Plessis's contemporaries and later historians have suggested—the main driving force in this move remains to be seen. That du Plessis's fate is representative of a denomination's attempt to gain of measure of uniformity is clear.

As we have already seen, many of those who wrote to du Plessis in response to his June circular had similar opinions. One Charles Inscombe wrote in the fall of 1962,

¹³⁴ Interestingly, historian David Bundy writes that Lindsay had attempted in his own way “to coordinate the activities of the evangelists, prevent misunderstandings, and avoid conflict with the established Pentecostal churches.” “Lindsay, Gordon and Freda Theresa,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 841-842. Further, David Harrell maintains “no one worked harder to forestall an open breach between the revivalists and the pentecostal churches than Gordon Lindsay...but while Lindsay repeatedly attacked free-lancers within the movement, he also condemned those who opposed the healing meetings.” *All Things Are Possible: The Healing & Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975). Perhaps for the Assemblies it was this latter move in addition to his continued efforts at organizing the revivalists within a para-church organization outside of the structure of denominational oversight was more than the Assemblies could bear.

mentioning that he himself underwent the same process only nine months prior, encouraging du Plessis to enjoy what he called “the larger liberty,” and asserting the Lord had plans for him as he went forward.¹³⁵ L.B. Lewis’s November letter to A/G General Superintendent Thomas Zimmerman was also supportive of du Plessis, noting great regret at the turn of events that led to the dismissal. Along with others, Lewis implied that the Assemblies of God’s relationship with the NAE was the main cause behind their efforts to smooth over rough edges. Regarding the Charismatic Movement then taking shape, he offered the following as a buttress to the work of the South African pioneer:

Inasmuch as members of the Council of Churches are actually receiving the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues certainly indicates that at least those particular ones are saved people. How can we feel that Brother du Plessis is doing wrong? God seems to be confirming the fact that it is his will that those people have this message.¹³⁶

Ultimately, it was British Pentecostal ecumenist Donald Gee’s sentiments of 14 November 1962 that brought many of these concerns to a head. A friend of du Plessis and leader in the Pentecostal movement since its inception, he offered his own thoughts about the unfortunate situation. While his years and position gave him some understanding of the place in which such a major Pentecostal group might find itself, he nevertheless stated that it was only fear that motivated their decision. Bringing together the themes of denominational order and evangelical influence, Gee noted, “the decision of the Executive Presbytery of the A.O.G. regarding yourself grieves me very much, and it seems to have grieved all over here to whom I have mentioned it. The ground for it is

¹³⁵ Charles Inscombe to David J. du Plessis, TMs, ca. Fall 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹³⁶ L. B. Lewis to Thomas F. Zimmerman, TMs, November 13, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

obvious—it is naked denominationalism.”¹³⁷ Seeing the connections to “fighting fundamentalism” quite strongly here, he simply noted that this might simply be a case where, over time, du Plessis could emerge stronger. For now, he concluded, it might simply be a matter of “losing to win.”¹³⁸

As the endgame of his credentials termination had taken place and the fallout was being felt, two additional letters between him and the Executive Presbytery set the stage for the next few decades. Bartlett Peterson wrote the first of these a little more than a week after the public announcement of du Plessis’s termination appeared in the official Ministers’ Letter. A response of sorts to du Plessis’s own acknowledgement of the Assemblies’ action, Peterson noted on behalf of the EP that the decision they reached was not an easy one. Despite suspicions to the contrary, he assured du Plessis “that the brethren made the decision in the fear of God and totally impartially.”¹³⁹ In spite of the result, he wanted to thank du Plessis for his kindness in responding as he did. A later letter from the Executive Presbytery echoed this tone and served as a final reply to du Plessis’ letter of 7 October 1962. Once again, they noted regret at his refusal—in their words—to adhere to their three demands, even though at different points he had given

¹³⁷ Donald Gee to David J. du Plessis, TMs, November 14, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. The latter reference to “naked denominationalism” would have been particularly stinging for a first-generation Pentecostal like Gee. Early Pentecostals of all kinds were themselves the victims of what they considered rampant denominational authority in the early years of the movement as they were often excluded from the Holiness churches in which many of them had initially worshipped. For modern-day Pentecostals to exclude fellow Pentecostals on the basis of denominational authority thus seemed highly suspect and bitterly ironic.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Bartlett Peterson to David J. du Plessis, TMs, October 24, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

indication he would be willing to do this. Taking a more irenic tone now that the controversy had subsided and the matter settled, Peterson once again reaffirmed

It is completely true, as stated in your letter of October 7, 1962, that “we have nothing against your ministry,” and are grateful for any contacts for Pentecost which you are making with the friends in other denominations. We recognize that there are individuals who are members of the WCC and NCC who are devoted, dedicated people, who have a hunger for God, and we are happy that you are having a spiritual ministry among them and others.¹⁴⁰

Yet even this apparent truce over terms could not persist past the closing lines of the letter, where Peterson emphatically stated, “we also sense that the trends of the Ecumenical Movement point in a direction that all of us recognize could lead to conditions in the religious world which would be comparable to the dark ages.”¹⁴¹

Ejected from the denomination he had called home for seventeen years, du Plessis found himself in continual “unofficial status,” a place that he would remain for nearly two decades. While the story of those decades will be the work of the following chapter, it would do well to offer some interpretive comment concerning the events that transpired between David du Plessis and the Assemblies of God during 1961-1962.

The details are at this point well known from the correspondence we have been analyzing, but the reasons for what transpired demand continued reflection. It seems clear from the words of those directly involved in the affair as well as those who advised and critiqued du Plessis that a number of factors were at play. Clearly the ecumenical movement made many within the denomination nervous, and du Plessis’ actions and involvement did nothing to quell their concerns. For some, these fears derived somewhat

¹⁴⁰ Bartlett Peterson to David J. du Plessis, TMs, December 13, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. Peterson’s irenic tone could, it seems, only extend so far towards an organization and movement the A/G had decided could very well be anti-Christ.

directly from Assemblies' involvement with the National Association of Evangelicals. A more militantly conservative organization than the Assemblies had been, many felt the NAE was making the denomination more cautious in matters of theology. Du Plessis himself echoed this sentiment many times during related discussions, including a 1967 interview he had with William Menzies. There, responding to the interviewer's questions he said

The NAE has become, to me, the greatest hindrance to the Pentecostal advance in America because they have definitely taken the keen edge off our testimony. Every meeting I went to, we always—I heard Brother Zimmerman, I heard Ward, I heard one after the other, and none of them were ever able to preach a full, frank, Pentecostal message. They always had to be careful not to disturb the fellowship.¹⁴²

He later went on to note:

Yes, yes. Well, now, I still maintain that the brethren in Springfield were not embarrassed, it was the NAE that was embarrassed, for Stanley Mooneyham—he came out with a front page article in *United Action* and to this day Stan Mooneyham has never talked to me.¹⁴³

While this interpretation of events seems to have no small amount of evidence to commend it and individuals as connected to the center of denominational power as J. Roswell Flower were in partial agreement, it is also possible that the simpler need for denominational order may lie at the root of du Plessis's censure. As we have seen, a

¹⁴² du Plessis, Menzies interview, 4.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 15. This implication is echoed elsewhere, both in the thought of David du Plessis and many of those who were in contact with him. The denomination's rather skittish behavior concerning the ecumenical movement is underlined in a Ministers' Letter: "It becomes necessary for us to repeat the position of the Assemblies of God with respect to these organizations [NCC and WCC] as some magazines have recently given out erroneous information alleging that we are 'Secret Cooperating Members' and that we are on 'The NCC's Non-member Approved List.'" General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, "Ministers' Letter," May 15, 1969, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

definite drift towards pragmatism and control occurred over the broad sweep of the Pentecostal revival and the developmental steps of the A/G. One is reminded here of the A/G response to the “New Order of the Latter Rain” that swept through the denomination during the later 1940s and urged a return to seemingly older and more spontaneous forms of Pentecostalism. At the time, a position paper much like the later pronouncement on ecumenism was issued noting, “we disapprove of those extreme teachings and practices...be it hereby known that this 23rd General Council disapproves of the so-called ‘New Order of the Latter Rain.’”¹⁴⁴ Just like its later issues with the ecumenical movement, a kind of mainstream Pentecostalism asserted itself on behalf of order while a significant minority continued to feel otherwise.¹⁴⁵

When the more freewheeling passions of the NOLR migrated to the Salvation-Healing Revival of the 1950s, the Assemblies again had to address questions of Pentecostal image as numerous evangelists with denominational credentials began establishing para-church ministries outside A/G control yet which were inadvertently understood to speak for the Pentecostal group. According to historian David Harrell, the Assemblies had decisions to make about the direction in which it wanted to take the movement. As a consequence, many often idiosyncratic and sometimes questionable healing evangelists found themselves on the wrong side of a historical moment:

¹⁴⁴ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Ministers’ Letter,” October 1, 1949.

¹⁴⁵ Here again a movement like NOLR “revealed the dimensions of a large segment of Pentecostalism that had opted historically for nonorganization...[and] highlighted ambiguities about independence and organization as well as the considerable gap between leadership and constituency.” Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 219.

The financial needs of the independent ministers ultimately led to direct confrontations with the pentecostal denominations...among the many other causes of the rupture between the evangelists and the churches were denominational pride, doctrinal clashes, and financial jealousy...from the beginning, church leaders tried to keep the healing meetings in proper perspective....Assemblies of God officials felt that the independent revivalists had blown out of proportion the Bible doctrine on healing¹⁴⁶

Assuming a causal link between an increasing desire for NAE-like denominational respectability and the Assemblies' actions against the salvation-healing evangelists remains tempting, especially in light of the later du Plessis fiasco. At the same time, much of what is going on here has more to do with an intra-Pentecostal debate over who would control public perception of its core doctrine and praxis. Though the Assemblies of God had reasons for its participation in the NAE—likely including respect from and proselytization of evangelicals—it remains highly doubtful they would so consciously hand over their will or purpose to any outside group, no matter the level of acclaim it would provide them.

The Assemblies of God had always identified closely with the core doctrines of fundamentalism,¹⁴⁷ so it should come as no surprise that they and the mid-century evangelicals would share common cause on issues related to modernism and ecumenism without one party unduly interfering in the affairs of another. It is thus possible and even

¹⁴⁶ Harrell, *All Things*, 107. The author goes on to note on 108ff how “the Assemblies of God moved against the revivalists with increasing force in the early 1950s” eventually leading to great conflict with minister Jack Coe, who felt among other reasons that he was singled out because of a lack of faith in the miraculous.

¹⁴⁷ Stanley Frodsham, “Dear Evangel Reader,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, April 5, 1924, 15. He writes, “I do not know of a Pentecostal person anywhere who questions the inerrancy of the Scriptures, or one who doubts the virgin birth, the miracles, the physical resurrection, the Deity, or the efficacy of the blood atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, no one who has the slightest sympathy for the unproved theories of the evolutionists that are being propounded everywhere by the ‘learned ignoramuses’ of the earth today.”

likely that du Plessis's dismissal was a purely Pentecostal affair. In this, the expulsion of other independent-minded individuals like Lindsay and Sumrall together with du Plessis is suggestive of the way in which the denomination operated. A further look at du Plessis's continued ministry and the development of the Assemblies in the midst of the new Charismatic Movement will hopefully provide increased insight into this issue.

For David du Plessis, the larger machinations of the Assemblies of God served mostly as an antagonistic presence in the midst of his ministry and work. Their treatment of him echoed some of the ways they treated the denizens of the NOLR, many of the healing evangelists, and the scores of outliers and divergent theological opinions they had already excluded from their fellowship. That the removal from the denomination of two such evangelists was announced in the same Ministers' Letter that declared his own termination only underscores this fact.

Whether the influence of more independent minded friends like Gordon Lindsay or William Branham—with whom he ministered earlier in his career—had an influence upon him in this direction is an open question, but that each fits within a certain matrix of independence and authority seems clear. Du Plessis for his part retained great affection for the A/G, yet at the same time maintained a stand that placed him at odds with their leadership. Rather than deal with the issue politically, he was somewhat stumbling and passive-aggressive in his long train of responses and vacillations to the demands of the denomination. Indeed, it appears at times that he had no real plan for how to deal with the situation but rather chose to remain firm on a few key principles while unclear on the demands of action.

The heart of both du Plessis's weaving back and forth and the lack of strategy inherent in his approach to the controversy surrounding him may be best understood according to his words the early 1980s:

The Charismatic Movement has become the most truly Ecumenical Movement. In it we already have millions of Catholics, millions of Protestants and millions of Pentecostals, not by "organization," but by a spontaneous 'recognition' of one another as Christians, indeed, members of his body. The one spiritual body of which Jesus Christ is the head. During the seventies the "denominations" have been deeply moved. Now I expect during the eighties the "nations" will be moved. Already I see signs of this appearing. My prayer is: O Lord, make us one that the world may be won.¹⁴⁸

As we shall see in coming chapters, du Plessis saw powerful links between ecumenism and the "spontaneous" work of the Spirit—explicit as he moved into the 1970s and beyond and implicit, it seems, from the moment he began his intra-Pentecostal, ecumenical, and charismatic work from the 1940s through the 1960s. While these linkages became increasingly obvious in his eyes, he was often surprised and dumbfounded that others would not appreciate the situation in the same light. His work was simply the work of the Spirit, and the ecumenical efforts in which he was involved were simply God's way of blessing the whole Christian world with that which the Pentecostals had enjoyed for decades. As linked as two sides of one coin, it was ultimately impossible to remove one without erasing the other. The demand to cease ecumenical activities thus represented for him a call to limit the Spirit's work.

At the same time, the Assemblies of God—who tended to appreciate matters in a much different fashion—believed the Spirit could move amongst all without the need for

¹⁴⁸ David J. du Plessis, "The Last Word: Details of Prophecy Literally Fulfilled," TMs, draft chapter for a newer edition of "A Man Called Mr. Pentecost", post 1980, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. While no publication date is given, within he refers to his reinstatement in the A/G, indicated a post September 1980 composition.

ecumenical issues to intrude. Rather than two faces of a single coin, the denomination saw the movements as separable. For them, it would have been possible for du Plessis to cease his efforts in one area without harming the other. In many ways, this simple difference made the two parties incompatible as they attempted to come to terms in the early years of the 1960s.

For the Assemblies of God, theirs was an attempt to harvest the pentecostal wheat from amongst the tares quickly and without spending much time in a potentially dangerous field. Du Plessis, meanwhile, accepted the challenge to walk in the midst of a field much less weed-choked than his Pentecostal brethren believed and cultivate as much wheat as possible: “for Jesus said, the wheat and the tares will go together. You can never show me a clean field with no tares. The tares are there....Why not feed the wheat?”¹⁴⁹ It was in this field that du Plessis would come to garner more support than he ever had before.

¹⁴⁹ du Plessis, Menzies interview, 16. Though he is in this instance referring to his work amongst Catholics, the same kind of rhetoric remains *apropos* when considering interactions with the ecumenical movement.

CHAPTER FOUR

NOT BABEL, BUT PENTECOST

No discussion of Spirit-based, experiential Christianity in the years surrounding 1960 can ignore the ways in which du Plessis had for almost a decade prior felt it his mission to spread the word of Pentecost wherever he went. Through du Plessis's efforts, many ecumenical "outsiders" now sought and experienced the gifts of the Spirit. The fourth chapter therefore parses the roots and development of this Charismatic Movement. Du Plessis's connection to it and the manner in which he interacted with it will be an important focus. Ultimately, I will show that du Plessis's unique Pentecostal vision and calling to ecumenism prepared and helped him easily segue into the role of shepherd and elder statesman of the new revival.

Putting du Plessis aside for the moment, it makes sense to define the term "Charismatic Movement." According to one standard definition, it refers to "the occurrence of distinctively pentecostal blessings and phenomena, [and the] experience of infilling/empowerment with the Holy Spirit...outside a denominational and/or confessional pentecostal framework."¹ At base, the revival takes its name from the *koine* Greek word *charis* meaning "gift." The Apostle Paul lists those of the spiritual and supernatural variety in I Corinthians 12:8-10: "the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another

¹ P. D. Hocken, "Charismatic Movement," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 477.

prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues” (NIV).

That individuals embracing the Charismatic Movement and its related gifts remained in their own denominations provided a clear distinction from Pentecostalism. Quite simply, Pentecostals tended to be somewhat more schismatic. Many traced their lineage to Azusa Street or other early twentieth-century epicenters of revival and felt they had experienced a “new Pentecost” heralding a return to New Testament Christianity. For the most part, upon acceptance of Pentecostal teaching and experience they removed themselves or were evicted from their former denominations and established new groups such as the A/G. Charismatics, by contrast, felt much more compelled to stay in their denominational and theological homes.

Whether Protestant or Catholic, these charismatics interacted, especially early on, in a transdenominational fashion as they sought to experience the Spirit in a new way. David du Plessis was a major figure helping them along in this path of spiritual discovery.

For outside observers as well as those directly involved in the 1962 disfellowshipping of du Plessis, it seemed likely that the South African gadfly had finally been sidelined. Cut off from any manner of official position and with clear interest in increasing amounts of ecumenical dialogue, it appeared wholly feasible that his trajectory would take him ever farther away from Pentecostalism, never to return. After all, in each of the phases of du Plessis’s life—pre-1930s in South Africa and the AFM, the 1930s and 1940s in intra-Pentecostal work, and the 1950s in his increasing ecumenical efforts—he had moved on to more expansive fields of involvement and engagement. Yet what he

had not done was leave behind the passion or spirit of that which he had been involved in previously. Rather than moving from one phase to another in a kind of linear progression, du Plessis's life may therefore best be understood as a series of concentric circles, with each succeeding phase building on what went before while further expanding the boundaries. Working with charismatics, in other words, made him no less Pentecostal.

From his interactions with ecumenical Protestants early in the 1950s to Catholic leaders in the 1970s, du Plessis's words and explanations of the classical Pentecostal perspective helped outsiders understand the Holy Spirit in ways considered complementary and beneficial to their own spiritual experience. Du Plessis's deeply Pentecostal sense of mission and personal approach to such matters—evidenced well in the 1959 Princeton lectures—only underscores the way in which he helped prepare and gain some measure of leadership in the Charismatic Movement that was unleashed in the 1960s. In short, du Plessis's fingerprints are all over the revival.

Expansion in a manner faithful to his perceived calling is a helpful way of characterizing the phase of du Plessis's life that constitutes the bulk of this chapter: his work in the midst of the Charismatic Movement of the 1960s and 1970s following his disfellowshipping. For—somewhat counterintuitively—rather than diminishing his standing, du Plessis's ejection from the A/G actually provided a boost for his ministry:

In fact, the brethren did me a great service. I never before got much financial support from the churches...[now] I spend an average of \$12,000 a year on traveling and I travel an average of 100,000 miles a year. It didn't do me any harm.²

² David J. du Plessis, interview by William Menzies, TMs, transcript, June 28, 1967, 18, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

Du Plessis felt God had saved the best for last, just like Jesus' miracle of turning water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana (John 2): "Pentecost and the early days were good, but what we have today is the best wine. It's better, and it is far more abundant than what they had in the beginning. As Jesus predicted, I can write a Book of Acts of the Holy Spirit in my lifetime that would eclipse the Acts of the Apostles."³

Ecumenism and the Roots of the Charismatic Movement

From the Charismatic Movement in the mainline Protestant world beginning in the late 1950s through the Catholic Charismatic Revival later in the 1960s, numerous streams of renewal emerged in a relatively short amount of time. As they represented a Pentecostalization of a cross-section of non-theologically Pentecostal believers, the Charismatic Movement ushered in a new phase of American and world Christendom that welcomed the things of the Spirit. For du Plessis this new openness to such experience was a wonderful development and far from the confusing conflagration of tongues its opponents may have feared. By 1957 he lauded increased denominational interest in such matters as a sign of great things to come:

But during the last ten years there has developed a revolution even in this direction. Not only have Protestant leaders begun to recognize the Pentecostal Movement as a work of God, but may now acknowledge the "experience" to be the will of God for this generation. In recent years many ministers and members in the denominational churches have received the Holy Spirit with the "evidence" or "confirmation" of speaking in tongues. They have not been excommunicated but have rather become a reviving influence in their churches.⁴

³ David J. du Plessis, *Simple and Profound* (Orleans, MA: Paraclete Press, 1986), 147.

⁴ David J. du Plessis, "Pentecostal Revival and Revolution, 1947-1957," *Pentecost*, September 1957, 17.

The roots of this perceived move of the Spirit are not difficult to locate when perusing the associated literature. Walter Hollenweger, the dean of Pentecostal historiography and one of the first to give the movement historical attention, claimed a number of Pentecostal roots. Among these was one he called the “ecumenical,” noting “that Pentecostalism started in most places as an ecumenical renewal movement in the mainline churches, not unlike the charismatic movement in the ‘60s and the so-called ‘third wave’ in the ‘80s.”⁵ Clearly indicating that the realm of the Spirit transcended human boundaries, Hollenweger corrected the assumption that the Pentecostal ethos was sectarian. In many ways, this reflects the opinions of the earliest Pentecostals. Pioneer Charles Parham abhorred denominations, instead strongly holding to an open a view of Christianity less bound by manmade divisions:

Finding the confines of a pastorate, and feeling the narrowness of sectarian churchism, I was often in conflict with the higher authorities, which eventually resulted in open rupture; and I left denominationalism forever...Oh, the narrowness of many who call themselves the Lord’s own!⁶

Frank Bartleman shared his own experience of the Azusa-era revival, claiming, “God does not have many churches, all of different names. There is no division in a true Pentecost or in true worship.”⁷ For Grant Wacker, these sentiments were not

⁵ Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 334.

⁶ Sarah Parham, *The Life of Charles F. Parham: Founder of the Apostolic Faith Movement*, Reprint. (Joplin, MO: Hunter Printing Co., 1930), 23.

⁷ Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street*, Reprint. (Northridge, CA: Voice Christian Publications, 1962), 13. He decries the divisions that crept in even during the revival at Azusa Street: “It was no longer a free Spirit for all as it had been. The work had become one more rival party and body, along with the other churches and sects of the city. No wonder the opposition steadily increased from the churches. We had been called to bless

idiosyncratic, but representative of “what they believed the full gospel message offered: a new dispensation in the old divisions would be erased.”⁸ If nothing else, there was a link between this “new Pentecost” and the biblical one that had united believers as they spoke the word of God to those of many different nations. In this way the Acts 2 ethos remained ever alive, always hinting at something deeper than the phenomenological for those interpreting such matters.

For early Pentecostal believers, initial hopes for an interdenominational revival of the Spirit faded as many found themselves unwelcome in their former denominations.

Du Plessis himself would comment on this fact and his accompanying prejudice in *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*:

We were totally convinced that the Pentecostal teaching was the last wave before the return of Christ and that God had no further use for the main line denominational churches. They had missed the boat completely and were virtually apostate. They had ostracized the Pentecostals, criticizing and ridiculing at every turn. How could God possibly have anything more to do with them—the Dutch Reformed, the Anglicans, the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Catholics, all of them?⁹

Removed from their former church homes, many Pentecostals formed independent churches or banded together in larger denominational structures such as the Assemblies of God. In some cases, whole denominations such as the COGIC became Pentecostal.

Yet even there, its early leaders suffered a schism that led one to embrace Pentecost and

and serve the whole body of Christ everywhere. Christ is one, and His body can be but ‘one.’ To divide it is to destroy it, just as with the natural body.” Ibid., 71.

⁸ Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 178.

⁹ David J. du Plessis and Bob Slosser, *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1977), 4.

the other to reject it.¹⁰ In any case, after the initial groundswell of charismatic activity, Pentecostals found themselves either in independent congregations or as members of Pentecostal-only organizational groupings where they would remain for decades.¹¹ With the development of administrative structures a certain calcification set in which remained hard to shake.

Earlier ecumenical roots of Pentecostalism did not fade entirely, for by the late 1940s and early 1950s Pentecostals were again garnering attention from some outsiders interested in matters related to healing and the like. As historian David Harrell has shown, the rise of popular Pentecostal healing evangelists such as William Branham, Jack Coe, and Oral Roberts revealed yet again how the reach and attraction of some brands of Pentecostalism transcended defined boundaries. In his words, the healing revivalists of this period “were in large part responsible for the unexpected growth of pentecostalism in modern America...taken together, they were a powerful independent force in modern American religion and won the religious loyalty and financial support of millions of Americans.”¹² As they reached out to these millions “the great crusades, both home and abroad, added to the ecumenism of the revival.”¹³

¹⁰ See Ithiel Clemmons, *Bishop C. H. Mason and the Roots of the Church of God in Christ* (Bakersfield, CA: Pneuma Life Publishing, 1996) for more information.

¹¹ For a discussion of some of these groups, see Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 54ff.

¹² David Harrell, *All Things Are Possible: The Healing & Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975), 4.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 94. Personal research into the effects of an interdenominational Oral Roberts crusade upon a group of Lutherans in southern New Jersey helped shed new light on this unique moment in history. A large number of these German believers were led into Pentecost as a direct result of their attendance at the healing revival. Joshua Ziefle,

Another important indicator of non-Pentecostal openness in this area was a group called the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International. Founded by Pentecostal layman Demos Shakarian in 1951¹⁴ after his realization of "how many more businessmen there [were] in the world than preachers,"¹⁵ the "full gospel" description of the group was an important code for its charismatic orientation. He recalled his initial discussion with salvation/healing evangelist Oral Roberts about the name of the group and its vision:

"Yes, but don't you see, every one of the words is necessary."

Full Gospel. That meant no subject would have to be avoided at our meetings. Healings. Tongues. Deliverance. Whatever the man's experience, he could talk about it, just as it happened.

Business Men. Laymen. Ordinary people

Fellowship. That's what it should feel like. A bunch of people who love to get together—not a rules and committees and meeting-come-to-order kind of thing.

International... "I know that part sounds ridiculous, I admitted. "But Oral, that's what God keeps saying to me. *International.* The whole world. All flesh."¹⁶

"New Wine in Old Wineskins? A Study of Pentecostal Conversion in a German Lutheran Immigrant Community," (presented at the 39th Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, Minneapolis, MN, 2010). As Harrell states, "More and more the revivalists tried to reach the receptive in the traditional denominations. The spirit which led them out of a denominational ministry into independent revivalism prepared many of them for a wider fellowship." Harrell, *All Things Are Possible*, 96.

¹⁴ J. R. Zeigler, "Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 653ff. Shakarian felt a need for "businessmen who could come together from all different denominations to share their faith in Christ." In the midst of this ecumenical vision, it was clear that the Pentecostal emphasis was an important component—Oral Roberts and many of the other healing revivalists were all early speakers.

¹⁵ Demos Shakarian, *The Happiest People on Earth* (Old Tappan, NJ: Chosen Books, 1975), 89.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 118-119. Another conversation, this one with David du Plessis, underscores the interest and potential of the FGBMFI: "'Demos,' David said, 'you're really on to something here. What a dream! A worldwide fellowship of ordinary businessmen filled with the Holy Spirit! Each man a missionary to the people he works with every day!'"

For many historians, the FGBMFI serves as an important precursor to the Charismatic Movement, both as an indicator of interest in the Spirit outside classical Pentecostalism and a means of preparing outsiders with a familiarity with its message, content, and style. Edith Blumhofer upholds its “neutral turf,” noting “such meetings provided more respectable settings than did humble Pentecostal churches and were among the few places in which classical Pentecostals and charismatics mingled.”¹⁷ Vinson Synan echoes this, calling the FGBMFI a “vanguard” that “despite their unabashedly Pentecostal *statement of faith*, [led] hundreds of thousands of mainline Protestant and Catholic charismatics [to join] the group.”¹⁸

Though smaller in scope and impact, other signs of extra-Pentecostal interest grew during the 1950s as well.¹⁹ As we have already seen, du Plessis’s welcome at the WCC headquarters and invitations to ecumenical meetings belies the fact that there was a desire on the part of the mainline to learn more. As du Plessis himself found, John Mackay’s enthusiastic embrace showed how much potential there was in this new mission. Du Plessis’s work was thus not a one-way and idiosyncratic conversation but one that seems to have had deep roots in the history of Pentecostalism and, now, the apparent curiosity of non-Pentecostals believers.

¹⁷ Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 225.

¹⁸ Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*, 223-224. He also recalls “its major technique was to serve as a platform for newly Spirit-baptized persons—whether businessmen, ministers, or priests—to give their testimonies on the ‘banquet circuit’ as an encouragement to business leaders.”

¹⁹ Henry P. Van Dusen, “Force’s Lessons for Others,” *Life*, June 9, 1958.

In the midst of this historical moment and the concomitant surge of outside interest, David du Plessis's actions in embracing the ecumenical world in the run-up to the Charismatic Movement make a bit more sense. On many occasions the South African did not therefore speak into the void, but rather into the lives of sympathetic or at least mildly interested hearers. While his particular brand of enterprising evangelistic fervor is a character trait shared by many of those in this subset of American religion, the one difference du Plessis had with his brothers and sisters in the Pentecostal movement was this: instead of utilizing the apparatus of classical Pentecostalism or allowing ecumenical outsiders to come to him to learn more about the Spirit, in many cases du Plessis sought them on a personal level and dialogued with them on their own terms. So it was that as the 1950s moved on, du Plessis became adept at relating to non-Pentecostals in their own terms and within their understandings as a part of his ecumenical and personal mission.

As du Plessis's connections with those in ecumenical circles progressed, he became aware not only of an interest in the Holy Spirit on the part of his dialogue partners, but of actual charismatic practices and experiences. Here the confluence of his mission to spread the word of Pentecost and ecumenical activities reached an important turning point. As he wrote in 1960,

There are now hundreds of hearts that have been getting prepared for a real Pentecostal outpouring. Hundreds that were violently opposed to any such idea are now asking, "What must we do when it comes?" This is a great field with tremendous possibilities. When I say that I feel the Pentecostal revival inside the churches may yet become the greater of the two—one outside, the other inside—I really mean it.²⁰

²⁰ David J. du Plessis, "The Remarkable Move of God in the Denominational Church World," in *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), 25.

Before there was a name for the new revival of the Spirit that was taking place, du Plessis was publicizing reports of charismatic phenomena like glossolalia amongst believers in the mainline. In an undated pamphlet from around this period called “Pentecost Outside Pentecost,” he related the full bounds of what was taking place together with his excitement for it:

during the last decade an entirely new spiritual climate has come into the great Historic Churches of Protestantism. My conclusion does not stem from the spasmodic upsurges that we find here and there. I can discern a deep spiritual stir in the hearts of all ranks, but particularly do I find a sincere recognition of the work of the Holy Spirit among the top echelons of Protestantism. The opposition to and the criticism of mysterious and supernatural manifestations of the Spirit has been replaced by more than a casual interest in a true revival of the charismata in the church.²¹

In a 1959 circular letter, he detailed specific instances in which his life intersected those interested in the world of Pentecostalism: “two thrilling days” at Yale University with “a deep hunger for the Holy Spirit among both faculty and students,” a month in “Holland, meeting with Dutch Reformed Ministers and leaders and ministering in their churches,” presenting “the Pentecostal Message to a large Bible Class in the great Riverside Church of New York,” and more.²² In *Voice of Healing* during the autumn of 1960, du Plessis wrote of “The Astonishing move in ‘Liberal’ Churches” wherein “the Lord is answering the prayer of Christians for the RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH in this

²¹ David J. du Plessis, “Pentecost Outside Pentecost: The Astounding Move of God in the Denominational Churches,” ca. 1960-1961, 5, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

²² David J. du Plessis to “Beloved Friends”, TMs, circular letter, November 1959, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

age and truly a RAPID SPIRITUAL CHANGE is taking place in Christendom.”²³ Thus du Plessis remained present and active all throughout this ecumenical road of change.

The Charismatic Movement in Mainline Protestantism

In July 1959, a larger world beyond David du Plessis’s correspondence circle and readership began to become aware of the burgeoning Charismatic Movement through the publicizing of a revival taking place in an Episcopal congregation in Van Nuys, California. Though this particular effluence of glossolalia did not mark the single point of genesis for the movement, it does illustrate a moment at which the revival became more well known and perhaps mainstream.²⁴ Bennett’s own recollection speaking in tongues is as follows:

I suppose I must have prayed out loud for about twenty minutes—at least it seemed to be a long time—and was just about to give up when a very strange thing happened. My tongue tripped, just as it might when you are trying to recite a tongue twister, and I began to speak in a new language!²⁵

For him the Holy Spirit at work became a vital part of his religious life, making him “confident because of a vivid sense of God’s presence with me,” and leading to a new

²³ David J. du Plessis, “The Astonishing Move in ‘Liberal’ Churches,” *Voice of Healing*, October 1960.

²⁴ A *Newsweek* article made note of the situation for a nationwide audience, claiming “it is considered quite proper today for members of revivalistic and Pentecostal groups to be moved on occasion to praise God aloud in languages that often sound like gibberish and are entirely unfamiliar even to the speakers. But when such fervent worship moves members of a suburban Protestant Episcopal parish to speak similarly, it can be strange and quite troublesome indeed.” The article goes on to discuss the thoughts of those more positively disposed to such developments as well as others who felt it was “nonsense.” “Rector and a Rumpus,” *Newsweek*, July 4, 1960, 77.

²⁵ Dennis Bennett, *Nine O’Clock in the Morning* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), 20.

surrender of self: “God had freely given me the gifts of Salvation and Pentecost, and now I offered to Him the only thing I had to give—myself.”²⁶

Yet all was not well. As with others who sought such experiences in congregational settings, the soon sixty people who had entered into this new blessing became the target of some resistance and eventually, a call for Bennett to resign went forth. While he was aware he “didn’t *have* to leave,” the vehemence of his opponents and a stated desire to do what was best for all parties led him to resign the congregation.²⁷

Bennett moved on from Van Nuys to Seattle, where he continued to minister in an Episcopalian context more amenable to his new experience. Like many who took a step towards the Spirit yet remain committed to their denominational homes, he faced a peculiar mix of opposition, incredulity, and curiosity. In spite of this, Bennett made sure to reiterate his trust in the Spirit’s power in congregations such as his:

There is obviously something different about St. Luke’s Church....St. Luke’s is an Episcopal Church in good standing...[and] is regarded by our bishop and other chief ministers as one of the churches that is, as one said to me recently, “going upstream against the current, in a day when many churches are shrinking and dying.”²⁸

While not replicated wholesale, Bennett’s experience and that of his congregants can be seen in various churches and denominations during the years in question: Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, and more. In many ways, a groundswell of interest in the things

²⁶ Ibid., 30, 32.

²⁷ Ibid., 62. As Bennett related, “I knew that the little group that had arrayed themselves against me would fight me to the death; that it could easily turn into a court battle, with much unfortunate publicity. It didn’t seem to be the best way to proclaim the Good News!”

²⁸ Ibid., 200-1.

of Spirit seemed underway—a development for which du Plessis had both prayed and worked for some time.

As the revival continued, “Mr. Pentecost” continued his heavy involvement in promoting life in the Spirit, publicizing those places where he saw God at work and helping cultivate related developments. Numerous letters from the early 1960s continue this trend. On 14 February of 1962, he wrote to a fellow Christian worker to discuss, among other things, his controversy with the A/G, (“I am seeking to be all things to all men...that I might save some”), meeting with key church Episcopalian leaders to discuss Pentecostal issues and encourage them to investigate important related issues, and increasing his list of “ministers that have the BAPTISM.”²⁹ The very next day du Plessis expanded on these thoughts in an open letter further detailing his continued involvement in the Charismatic Movement within the Episcopalian context, noting:

Last Monday I spent several hours with two Episcopal Bishops...Both were keenly interested in the works of the Spirit, particularly the “glossolalia.” I believe that once again this was a Providential meeting...at the psychological moment. Almost weekly there are Episcopal Ministers baptized into the Holy Spirit. There seem to be NO RETREAT in this move of the Spirit within Episcopal churches. Very few bishops are opposed. Even those that are opposed have not been willing to take a stand against the present work of the Spirit. Other bishops openly favor this RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH. This is more or less the same attitude that the Methodist Bishops have, as well as Presbyterian Superintendents and Presbyters. Even the Lutheran leaders are more favourable than I had expected.³⁰

In May 1962 du Plessis wrote to Donald Gee to share exciting news of the spreading revival. Claiming “this has stirred the entire ecclesiastical world around here”

²⁹ David J. du Plessis to Joan, TMs, February 14, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

³⁰ David J. du Plessis to unknown, TMs, February 15, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

and permeated the media, du Plessis noted “during the next week I shall appear on TV and Radio to EXPLAIN.”³¹ This last part remains important, for it underscores the role of du Plessis as interpreter in addition to practitioner and promoter of the revival. By November of the same year, the always enterprising Pentecostal missionary continued in these three roles in a letter to Yale University chaplain and liberal light William Sloane Coffin. The letter mentioned reports he had heard of “a mighty revival of faith and life at Yale University in the ranks of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship.”³² Implicitly offering his guidance and experience, du Plessis enclosed pamphlets on both glossolalia and his own ecumenical perspective.

As time progressed, du Plessis’s work with the Charismatic Movement and his ecumenical efforts became somewhat more difficult to distinguish—though it should be noted that the missionary ethos that drove both were never that separate in the first place. Not surprisingly, Pentecostal leaders and other in the Assemblies remained cautious about his new field of operation. A 1962 letter from one Opal Affeldt lambasting him for letting ecumenical attitudes permeating his relationships with Pentecostals only reinforces this:

We have felt that is of God that you have been enabled to bring the message of Pentecost to those of His children who are now in member churches of the W.C.C. On the other hand, we have never felt that you were called of God to bring the W.C.C. message of Ecumenicalism to those Christians fortunate enough to belong to church bodies outside of the W.C.C. group.³³

³¹ David J. du Plessis to Donald Gee, TMs, May 15, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

³² David J. du Plessis to William Sloane Coffin, TMs, November 13, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

³³ Opal Affeldt to David J. du Plessis, TMs, January 31, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

In spite of this type of resistance du Plessis could not stop ministering in these expanding and ever-ripening fields of labor.

Ignoring continued pressure from and then expulsion by A/G leadership, he continually wrote about the Spirit for any who would listen. He delineated his approach in a 1961 issue of *Pentecost*: “I find that whenever I present this message frankly, clearly, and simply without compromise, saying: ‘This is God’s promised blessing for you and you do not have to leave your church to receive it,’ everyone is ready to listen and to discuss it.”³⁴ His autobiography reveals the simple direction in which he felt led: “I was sure there was not to be one charismatic church or denomination. This renewal was an influence, and inspiration, aimed at all the churches. And it was spiritual. I saw it plainly.”³⁵ For him, the circumstances and stakes involved demanded stark language: it was a simple matter of Pentecost together with the growth of the Church, or no Pentecost together with its impotence or death. In his words:

May I also remind you that John had a special word for the religious leaders of his day in Matthew 3:7-11. When they also came to him at Jordan he said: If you do not bear fruit that goes with repentance and make true confessions, you call yourselves sons of Abraham in vain, for the axe is laid to the tree that bears not good fruit, and it will be hewn down and cast into the fire. That my friends is judgment and destruction—simply HOLOCAUST. BUT IF YOU REPENT, then He that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. THAT IS PENTECOST. The only choice was PENTECOST or HOLOCAUST. Do we have any other choice today?³⁶

³⁴ David J. du Plessis, “The ‘Changed Climate’ Towards the Pentecostal Testimony,” *Pentecost*, December 1961-February 1962, 8.

³⁵ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 243.

³⁶ David J. du Plessis, “The Holy Spirit: Extracts From an Address to a Group From Many Denominations,” *Redemption Tidings*, June 28, 1963, 10.

Writing of “The Charismatic Movement in Our Day,” du Plessis reveled in what he saw to be a new outpouring. He continued to speak loudly in its favor for its effect upon the individual and—importantly—the Church at large: “this ‘Pentecostalism’ or ‘Charismatic Movement’ is becoming so universally accepted, there has emerged a NEW but not unexpected MANIFESTATION of the Spirit which is an ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT outside the generally recognized ‘ecumenical movement.’”³⁷ Thinking again in biblical terms, he elsewhere referred to the Charismatic Movement in terms of the miraculous catch of fish in Luke 5:

Now what has really happened in recent years? We started out fishing. We did not go according to the old church rules and regulations. We did not follow the usual way of the Christian church in recent centuries. We just launched out at His word. We were first told, “Whoever expects to see a repetition of Pentecost is foolish because there was the outpouring of the Spirit and He is in the church. He has been in the world all along and you cannot have another experience.” Nevertheless, on His word we obeyed and tried and it happened. We have been amazed.³⁸

By framing matters in this way, du Plessis yet again asserted his deep conviction that the renewal was not the result of emotion, argument, or manipulation, but rather a deep move of God. In this respect he stood together with the earliest of Pentecostals in asserting the primacy of God in the midst of all revival.

It seems clear a certain desire on the part of Protestant outsiders coincided well with du Plessis’s mission. Thus while du Plessis had a role to play in the years running up to the Charismatic Movement, he is less founder than cheerleader and trail guide.

³⁷ David J. du Plessis, “The Charismatic Movement in Our Day,” TMs, n.d., 3, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

³⁸ David J. du Plessis, “Address at Pentecostal Fellowship of North America,” TMs, transcript (Detroit, MI, n.d.), 9, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

These two roles in particular characterize his relationship with Protestants who came face to face with their own charismatic experience.

Du Plessis first worked with the Presbyterians, with whom he had a relatively long relationship since befriending Princeton Theological Seminary president John Mackay in the early 1950s. Rev. James Brown of the Upper Octorara Presbyterian Church in Parkesburg, Pennsylvania was an early convert to the charismatic lifestyle, joining their ranks by the late 1950s.³⁹ Du Plessis recalled the circumstances involved in *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*: “Jim opened the conversation. ‘Mr. du Plessis, we have become persuaded that there is a baptism in the Holy Spirit, and we want to know about that, with the confirmation of tongues. We want to know how we can get all the gifts of the Spirit.’”⁴⁰ The South African’s encouragement for him to remain in the Presbyterian fold after Brown had been baptized in the Holy Spirit guaranteed that he would continue to minister in this new way in his own denomination—the very definition of the Charismatic Movement. Brown’s acceptance of the gifts of the Spirit provided a spark for the movement within Presbyterianism, although it would not be until 1966 that the Presbyterian Charismatic Communion would be founded.⁴¹

³⁹ J. Rodman Williams, “Brown, James H.,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 444. Williams goes on to comment that “the Upper Octorara Church became famed for its charismatic life, and people came literally from around the world especially to attend the Saturday night prayer and praise service.”

⁴⁰ du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 184-185.

⁴¹ H. V. Synan, “Presbyterian and Reformed Charismatics,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 996.

A report issued in 1964 by the First United Presbyterian Church of Chandler, Arizona concerning issues related to the work of the Spirit and the power of God illustrated the challenges faced by the new movement. Though an anecdotal example not entirely representative of the whole, that the report dealt with “unrest” existing in the congregation dealing with glossolalia, healing, and a “lack of communication and rumors” is telling.⁴² The church concluded

We believe that gifts of glossolalia and healing have been overemphasized by the ministry and the laity of this church, including those who approve and those who disapprove.

We recognize and encourage the manifestations of the Holy Spirit and feel that all members of this church should seek to be filled with and guided by the Holy Spirit.

The attitude of the Session shall be to maintain the balance and equilibrium concerning the emphasis of these manifestations in our congregation.

We recognize and affirm the mission of our church is to encourage people to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The report remains illustrative both for what it says about the ability of this single congregation to cope with the new movement on local level and the way in which it points to larger denominational activity in the next decade.

The General Assembly of the southern-based Presbyterian Church in the United States in 1971 took action regarding those Presbyterians who sought and desired this new experience of the Holy Spirit through publication of a report entitled “The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit: With Special Reference to ‘the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.’”⁴³

⁴² First Presbyterian Church of Chandler, Arizona, “Statement of the Session Concerning Our Understanding of the Work of the Power of God in our Church in our Immediate Areas of Concern,” March 22, 1964.

⁴³ “Report of the Standing Theological Committee: ‘The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit With Special Reference to ‘the Baptism of the Holy Spirit’,” in *Minutes of the One-Hundred-Eleventh General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States*, vol. 1 (Massanetta Springs, VA, 1971), 104-117.

Within its pages there is a measured openness to the gifts of the Spirit—for instance, an assertion that “the ‘baptism of the Holy Spirit’ may be signified by certain pneumatic phenomena, such as speaking in tongues and prophecy.”⁴⁴ At the same time, the document also makes clear the belief that the Holy Spirit dwells in all believers and that it need not manifest “specific pneumatic phenomena.”⁴⁵ Ultimately, it concludes “it is clear that there is Biblical and Reformed witness concerning baptism of the Holy Spirit in the believing community. Of course, it is impossible to make any general pronouncement concerning the validity of particular claims, since multiple factors may be at work.”⁴⁶ With cautious permission to go forward with their views, Presbyterians gathered to discuss related matters at events like the 1976 Charismatic Leaders’ Seminar.⁴⁷

All the while, du Plessis busied himself visiting churches within their communion⁴⁸ and sharing correspondence and fellowship with individuals such as Presbyterian Charismatic leader Brick Bradford. In one such letter Bradford reminisced about an earlier time with du Plessis, noting “it was a genuine please to have been in your company for so many hours on Monday, June 27. The gift of tongues which I had

⁴⁴ Ibid., 115.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 114, 115.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 116.

⁴⁷ du Plessis, David, et al., *Report on the 1976 Charismatic Leaders Conference*, TMs, 1976, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁴⁸ See for instance, his visit to John Knox United Presbyterian Church of Canton, Ohio on August 14, 1966 or the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Lauderdale, Florida on 22 January 1967, among others (David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.).

received only a few hours before we met has remained fluent. Praise the Lord!”⁴⁹

Another letter spoke to the familiarity the two men shared, not to mention the help du Plessis might be for a minister like Bradford who in 1967 was facing some denominational pressure for his activities:

Whatever influence you can exert to relieve the pressure on us historic denominational ministers who have been caught up in the blessed charismatic movement would be deeply appreciated. I am still convinced that Lord Jesus desires the charismatic dimension to be a vital part of the total renewal of His Church.⁵⁰

Baptists were another group of Christians touched by the Charismatic Movement. As historian Claude Howe wrote in the late 1970s, “perhaps one hundred South Baptist Convention churches with about ten thousand members are charismatic, though ‘closet’ or secret charismatics might conceivably equal that number.”⁵¹ Even so, he was straightforward about some of the resistance certain Baptists faced: “small groups of charismatics have emerged in many Southern Baptist congregations, often creating fear and frustration.”⁵² Yet Baptists—within and without the Southern Baptist Convention—

⁴⁹ Brick Bradford to David J. du Plessis, TMs, ca. Summer 1966, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁵⁰ Brick Bradford to David J. du Plessis, TMs, May 15, 1967, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. The issue that Bradford writes about here garnered the attention of none other than John Mackay, who came out in support of the charismatic movement and one Bob Whitaker. See Synan, “Presbyterian and Reformed Charismatics.” See also Robert R. Curlee and Mary-Ruth Isaac-Curlee, “Bridging the Gap: John A. Mackay, Presbyterians, and the Charismatic Movement,” *Journal of Presbyterian History* 72, no. 3 (Fall 1994): 141-156.

⁵¹ Claude L. Howe, “The Charismatic Movement in Southern Baptist Life,” *Baptist History and Heritage*, no. 13 (August 1967): 20.

⁵² *Ibid.*; Hewett claims “within the mainline Baptist churches the charismatic renewal has met with mixed responses, from warm embrace to outright rejection and hostility.” J. A. Hewett, “Baptist Pentecostals and Charismatics,” in *The New*

engaged the revival. One such individual was Howard Ervin, who wrote an introduction to du Plessis's book *The Spirit Bade Me Go*. There, he said

Perhaps you will better appreciate my interest in this matter when I say that Brother David's ministry to me has been most graciously blessed of God, culminating in my own experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, and I thank God for David's part in helping to lead me into it. I know of no other man who is being used so effectively of God to reach the denominational people and ministers with this precious truth. I know by personal experience. Brother du Plessis' teaching and example have taught me a new appreciation and respect for my own denominational heritage, while maintaining my allegiance to the experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.⁵³

During this fertile season in his life and ministry, du Plessis interacted with Christians of the Lutheran persuasion as well. Lutheran minister Harald Bredesen, an early convert to the movement, also had some important connections with du Plessis. In his introduction to *The Spirit Bade Me Go* he like Ervin lauded du Plessis, stating:

I, together with many of my colleagues and ministers in the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist and other confessions, have come to look upon David du Plessis as the dauntless champion of the truth of the doctrine and experience of the Pentecostal blessing...His ministry has eliminated the opposition of our leaders to the Pentecostal experience with the confirmation of "speaking in tongues."⁵⁴

All of this contact and influence underscores the important place the South African played in the developing of the Charismatic Movement in the United States. A minor sampling of du Plessis's visits to churches and groups of numerous backgrounds during

International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 363.

⁵³ Howard Ervin, "Testimony of a Baptist Church Minister," in *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), 5.

⁵⁴ Harald Bredesen, "Testimony of a Reformed Church Minister," in *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), 4.

the 1960s and 1970s—from North Hollywood Methodist (Fort Lauderdale, FL) in 1967⁵⁵ to First Baptist (Dayton, OH) in 1969⁵⁶ to Prince of Peace Lutheran (Costa Mesa, CA) in 1971⁵⁷—further belies the reach his particular ministry had amongst those who were open to his words.

Charismatic Renewal in the Roman Catholic Church

Not long after the Charismatic Movement took root in mainline Protestant churches in the early to mid-1960s, a further expansion of Spirit-led influence in non-Pentecostal churches began to occur in a new and unforeseen field: the Roman Catholic Church. Reflecting on this later in his book *Simple and Profound*, du Plessis recalled a conversation he had with the famous theologian Karl Barth in which he was encouraged to reach out to Rome.⁵⁸ The South African's own feelings and prejudices—like that of many Pentecostals and Protestants—had served for some time as a limiting factor in his contacts with Catholic believers.⁵⁹ Even so, du Plessis moved past this. During the time

⁵⁵ David J. du Plessis, "Travel Journal," AMs, 1947, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁵⁶ Ibid.; David J. du Plessis, "My Gospel Journeys," AMs, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁵⁷ du Plessis, "Travel Journal."

⁵⁸ du Plessis, *Simple*, 175.

⁵⁹ Arnold Bittlinger makes a rather large understatement when he writes, "It is not so natural that Catholics and Pentecostals are in a Dialogue with one another." Arnold Bittlinger, "Catholics and Pentecostals: The Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue and Its Ecumenical Relevance," TMs (photocopy), 1978, 1, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

of the Second Vatican Council, he not only paid close attention to the proceedings but was actually invited as the only Pentecostal observer during one of its sessions.⁶⁰

The background for some of David du Plessis' contacts with the Roman Catholic Church derives from a meeting he had in 1961 with priest Bernard Leeming. Following one of du Plessis's lectures, he spoke with him regarding the work of the Spirit and related matters. Du Plessis later recalled that during that first meeting Leeming thanked him as "a Catholic priest for bringing to our attention this baptism in the holy Spirit....I always thought I had the Spirit, but you've convinced me tonight that I've missed the baptism."⁶¹ Intrigued by the discussion and topic, Leeming helped du Plessis develop connections within the hierarchy that later led to his invitation to the Second Vatican Council and conversations with leaders in the Church.

In light of this, it is both intriguing and revealing that some have seen Vatican II as preparatory for and congruent with the Charismatic Movement in the Roman Catholic Church. The Council's welcome of individuals like du Plessis was not the only hint in the early 1960s of the coming wave. As Peter Hocken has persuasively argued, "the movement among Catholics was lived from the start in the wake of the Second Vatican

⁶⁰ Writing to Cardinal Bea, du Plessis stated, "I would very much like to attend the continuation of the Vatican Council." David J. du Plessis to Augustine Cardinal Bea, TMs, August 27, 1963, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.; A year later, the desired invitation was indeed extended: "I have the honor to invite you to attend the third session of the Second Vatican Council as a 'Guest of the Secretariat'...we pray that through the Holy Spirit your presence as a Guest will be an efficacious contribution to an ever increasing understanding and esteem between all those who believe in Christ, our common Lord and Master." Augustine Cardinal Bea to David J. du Plessis, TMs, September 7, 1964, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁶¹ David J. du Plessis, *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), 201.

Council...[which called] specifically for the inner renewal of the Catholic Church and had prayed in this connection for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church as at ‘a new Pentecost.’⁶² This helps explain the interest in Pentecostalism by Roman Catholics in general and Father Kilian McDonnell in specific who, writing to du Plessis mere months before the initial outbreak of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, said the following:

I have been asked to give an extended paper on the Pentecostals and I turn to you for help. Much of the material I have been reading seems to be prejudiced and unsympathetic. I would like to give a paper which will be a true reflection of the Pentecostal movement. It seems to me that the established churches have much to learn from the Pentecostals.⁶³

All that went before in Protestantism was in many ways simply a precursor to the explosion of the Roman Catholic revival in the latter half of the decade. Similar to what occurred in Protestant circles, it was during this time that the various strands of connection, interest, and experience came together as a cohesive whole. The movement itself began with a student led prayer meeting at Dusquesne University in 1967. In the words of early participants and chroniclers Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan

In mid-February a small group of students together with the faculty members from Dusquesne decided to spend a weekend in prayer, meditating over the first four chapter of the Acts of the Apostles and seeking the will of God...There was no urging; there was no direction as to what had to be done. The individuals simply encountered the person of the Holy Spirit as others had

⁶² Peter Hocken, “The Impact of the Charismatic Movement on the Roman Catholic Church,” *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 25 (August 2004): 205-206. He continues: “active young Catholics on the university campuses who were first won over to this Pentecostal outbreak had already been inspired by the vision of Pope John and the Council. They understood this new movement from the start as a grace for the renewal of the whole Catholic Church.”

⁶³ Kilian McDonnell to David J. du Plessis, AMs, September 12, 1966, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

several weeks before. Some praised God in new languages; others quietly wept for joy; others prayer and sang.⁶⁴

From there the story moves to Notre Dame University, a place in which a desire for Pentecostal experience and its practice came alive amongst Catholic clergy and laypeople alike:

the leader announced that it was time for anyone who desired to be prayed over in order to receive the gifts of the Spirit. About a half dozen requested this, among them the two priests....Before long, all of those who were praying over the “candidate” [the first person] were praying in tongues.⁶⁵

As the Charismatic leader Cardinal Leon Joseph Suenens has shown by his life and writing, the Catholic hierarchy did not wholly reject the new movement. Speaking of a disagreement with a fellow cardinal he had during the Second Vatican Council, he “pointed out that the charismatic dimension was necessary to the Church....Indeed we might add... more important than ever before.”⁶⁶ The Catholic penchant for unity in multiplicity again gave room for the renewal movement to grow and mature.

⁶⁴ Kevin Ranaghan and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals Today*, Revised. (South Bend, IN: Charismatic Renewal Services, 1971), 18-20.

⁶⁵ Edward D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1971), 48.

⁶⁶ Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens, *A New Pentecost?* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1974), 30; T. P. Thigpen notes that though “relations between the CCR [Catholic Charismatic Renewal] and Catholic church officials have not always been warm,” progress was made over time. T. P. Thigpen, “Catholic Charismatic Renewal,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 464ff. This is in line with the Ranaghans’ perspective—that by 1975, Pope Paul VI’s “cautious and very general word of encouragement to a very small group of leaders” led them to sense they “were now free to respond more eagerly to the work that the Lord was calling us to do as a charismatic renewal movement, because we no longer had to defend our very existence.” Kevin Ranaghan and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals*, 51ff.

As time went on, groups such as Notre Dame's own "People of Praise" populated by individuals such as the aforementioned Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan were but one example of the way in which the somewhat fluid revival was solidifying and flourishing in the midst of cautious acceptance by Catholic officialdom. Indeed, these last years of the 1960s were a fertile period for what was coming to be known as the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church. According to *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal worldwide went from two prayer groups in two countries in 1967 to 4,000 in 93 countries in the span of less than ten years.⁶⁷ Even a year into the revival "there had been a considerable expansion in the number of people who thought of themselves as Catholic pentecostals."⁶⁸

David du Plessis's role in the midst of such happenings was, as often the case, advisory but important. Time and again during this season, he was involved in discussions with and wrote about what was taking place amongst a group that in former years had been far from his field of concern. Preaching a message entitled "Know What You Have" to a group of Roman Catholics, du Plessis noted, "I'm happy to be in the Roman Catholic sanctuary tonight. I think it's wonderful to be a Roman Catholic."⁶⁹ He went on in the sermon to laud Pope Paul VI as "thoroughly, completely, totally

⁶⁷ Thigpen, "Catholic Charismatic Renewal," 465.

⁶⁸ James Connelly, "The Charismatic Movement: 1967-1970," in *As the Spirit Leads Us* (Paramus, NJ: Paulist Press), 226.

⁶⁹ David J. du Plessis, "Know What You Have," TMs, n.d., David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Charismatic” and preach about Jesus Christ, the “head of your church” identified therein as the true baptizer in the Holy Spirit.⁷⁰

Born out of a new sense of Catholic openness in post-Vatican II days and the burgeoning Catholic Charismatic Renewal, all parties involved desired to understand a little more about one another. Du Plessis’s long involvement and interest in such matters made him the perfect candidate to engage in such conversations, and it was through him that an official Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue took shape. Following communication between the South African and a charismatic minister named Ray Bringham in 1969, discussions with certain Roman Catholic authorities took place regarding an official dialogue.⁷¹ More preparatory conversations between du Plessis and certain Catholic leaders in the following months led to an official plan for proposed dialogue on the part of Rome:

SUCH A DIALOGUE must be in accord with the ecclesiastical allegiance of those who are Pentecostals, and in the spirit of the above-mentioned Roman Catholic document on Ecumenical Dialogue. It should also relate realistically to PENTECOSTALISM which appears as a MOVEMENT, a SPIRITUALITY, rather than a systematic theology.⁷²

For du Plessis, understanding the “Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue and WHAT LED TO IT” had a great deal to do with his own involvement with in ecumenism, attendance at the Second Vatican Council, and connections and conversations with

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ C. M. Robeck and J. L. Sandidge, “Dialogue, Roman Catholic and Classical Pentecostal,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 576ff.

⁷² The Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, “A Proposed Description of the Nature and Purpose of a Possible Dialogue Between a Group of Pentecostals and Roman Catholics,” TMs (photocopy), September 3, 1970, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Catholics such as Bernard Leeming and Cardinal Bea.⁷³ While this is true, without general Catholic interest in such discussions they would never have taken place at all. The mere fact that Catholic officialdom entered such dialogue at all belies a sense of openness and curiosity that shows how much they were affected by the Spirit-led movement within and without. A portion of a report from the early days of the dialogues underscores this fact:

In an age of spiritual crisis, a dialogue on spirituality seems much in place, especially since such a dialogue is concerned with the centrality of prayer.

At this moment public attention is focused on the spiritual renewal manifesting itself in all the churches, especially in the “Jesus Revolution.” Further, at the level of the local church, there is a de facto informal sharing of prayer and theological reflection. It is therefore not inappropriate that prayer, spirituality and theological reflection be shared concerns at the international level.⁷⁴

Du Plessis’ own recollections of the events surrounding the dialogues indicate a very positive set of discussions: “Personally I would consider this first session of the Dialogue a very outstanding success and it should help greatly to clear the atmosphere in Roman Catholic-Pentecostal fellowship in the charismatic movement.”⁷⁵ Taking place over five years, the initial set of conversations occurred in various locales and focused on a number of different topics relevant to both groups and, by extension, the charismatics.

The first meeting, held at Zurich, Switzerland in 1972, covered the important topic of “the scriptural basis of the understanding which both sides have of the fullness of

⁷³ David J. du Plessis, “Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue and What Led To It,” TMs, November 6, 1971, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷⁴ “Vatican Enters Dialogue on Pentecostalism,” n.d., David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷⁵ “First Vatican Pentecostal Dialogue,” ca 1972, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

life in the Holy Spirit.”⁷⁶ A year later the group met in Rome and featured, among other things, a paper by du Plessis on the history of the Pentecostal movement.⁷⁷ In 1974, the journal “One in Christ” summarized the work of these first two discussions by commenting “one has the feeling that this dialogue could be described analogously in the words of Metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon: ‘Loving each other and conversing with each other in charity we do theology, or rather we build theologically.’”⁷⁸ A few years later, a final report on the 1972-1976 meetings detailed not only what was discussed there—topics ranging from “Baptism in the Holy Spirit” to “Christian Initiation and the Gifts” to “Scripture, Tradition and Developments” and more—but their perspective on what was accomplished by having such dialogues in the first place: “an occasion of mutual enrichment and understanding and offers the promise of a continuing relationship.”⁷⁹ Taken together, the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue represents a further expansion of du Plessis’s own missionary enterprise parallel to the growth of the Charismatic Movement within which his own life and career were now inextricably entwined.

⁷⁶ “Roman Catholic/Pentecostal Dialogue,” TMs, press release, June 20-24, 1972, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷⁷ “Press Statement,” n.d., David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷⁸ Basil Meeking, “The Roman Catholic/Pentecostal Dialogue,” *One In Christ* 10, no. 2 (1974): 109.

⁷⁹ “Final Report of the Dialogue Between the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity of the Roman Catholic Church and Leaders of Some Pentecostal Churches and Participants in the Charismatic Movement Within Protestant and Anglican Churches,” TMs, June 1976, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

In looking at du Plessis's role in the midst of the genesis and growth of the Charismatic Movement amongst Protestantism and Roman Catholicism it becomes clear that he was at work everywhere in their midst from the very beginning. When reading through the associated documents, one cannot help but find reference to a visit, consultation, sermon, or correspondence from the South African. Ever the missionary of Pentecost, he continually shared his testimony of the Spirit's work in his own life and let that same work impel him onward in his own felt calling.

While he was a ubiquitous fixture as these changes occurred, it would seem inappropriate to yield to the temptation of assigning him too important a role as a causal figure.⁸⁰ David du Plessis was not the father of the Charismatic Movement so much as he was its midwife and teacher. In many ways this follows Martin Robinson's research, who though claiming "there is a strong possibility that such [charismatic] stirrings could have remained what they always had been, a recruitment ground for the Pentecostal churches," and that "it was du Plessis that first recognized the possibility of a Pentecostal movement within the historic churches," nevertheless concluded his impact was less that of the founder than it was the caretaker.⁸¹ He adds "du Plessis together with Donald Gee, played an important part in nurturing the movement" as well as explaining, interpreting,

⁸⁰ See Brinton Rutherford, "From Prosecutor to Defender: An Intellectual History of David J. du Plessis, Drawn From the Stories of His Testimony" (Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2000), 106. Rutherford's comments regarding du Plessis's place in the larger historical moment agree well with my own findings: "Although du Plessis had been working quietly in mainline circles for many years, it was the events of 1960 [at Dennis Bennett's church] that provided the momentum needed to launch a Pentecostal Movement of national and international proportions within Protestant churches associated with the World Council of Churches."

⁸¹ Martin Robinson, "To the Ends of the Earth: The Pilgrimage of an Ecumenical Pentecostal, David J. du Plessis, (1905-1987)" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Birmingham (UK), 1987), 262.

promoting, and internationalizing it for increasingly wider audiences.⁸² Much of what du Plessis was involved in during the 1950s and that for which he was evicted from his own denomination was therefore preparatory to the larger acceptance of the Pentecostal message in the following decade.

A helpful way to understand du Plessis's role might be to think about the ways in which his own career benefited from the interest of others. For instance, in even his own recollection his initial foray into ecumenical circles to share about the Spirit-filled life was not one of continued persistence in the face of overwhelming skepticism, but rather a situation in which he was welcomed rather warmly by those with genuine interest. Here one recalls his first meeting at WCC headquarters in the early 1950s, his quick acceptance by Mackay after their initial acquaintance in Princeton, and the manner in which the Roman Catholic hierarchy from Leeming onward seem to have warmed to him. If anything, members of these ecclesiastical and theological circles had already been moving in this direction in some inchoate manner born of curiosity, and du Plessis merely filled a clarifying role in the midst of that groundswell of interest.

To say that David du Plessis filled a role in the midst of increasingly mainline Protestant and Roman Catholic interest in matters of the Spirit is not the same as saying that he was a simple placeholder. Forasmuch as he was not the single causal factor in the rise of the Charismatic Movement, he seems to have been indispensable as a person who encouraged, educated, and guided the revival through its earliest years. While leaders from many different mainline denominational groups each had to wrestle with issues specific to their own traditions, it was often du Plessis who was consulted in the middle of these discussions.

⁸² Ibid., 263ff.

Though another person might have been able to fill this position, it was du Plessis who did, thereby cementing his importance. He sought, in short, to be a friend to all those seeking Pentecost. Motivated by a deep sense of mission and calling, he engaged in Pentecostal work just as he did ecumenical discussions and consultation with the Charismatic Movement. This trio of fields functioned in his ministry as a kind of trinity, separate yet united. Though other groups and individuals had been laboring and would increase their efforts in each of them separately, only a few like du Plessis were able to address them together. For him the work continued to be a deeply personal project and one in which he had invested the whole of his life and career.

As we turn in the next chapter to a more complex comparison between his ministry and the Assemblies of God's growing rapprochement with the related revival, it is worth noting his reflection about the best biblical image with which to understand the larger movement:

We read in Acts 2:5: "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven..." The multitude came together and were confounded (as at the tower of Babel), and now in Jerusalem, it is again Father, Son (baptizer), and Holy Spirit in action. Only here they employ the very same phenomenon by which they scattered the nations, to seek to unite them in the Spirit.⁸³

Just as the judgment and curse upon the people of Babel was an act wholly under God's power, so too for du Plessis was the new blessing of Pentecost emerging all around him in the latter half of his life. It was this conviction which impelled du Plessis forward with abandon and why, it seems, he himself would never have assumed he was responsible for anything that happened. Ultimately, the Charismatic Movement represented the power of God bringing all into unity alongside which du Plessis was simply being obedient.

⁸³ David J. du Plessis, "The Holy Spirit Brings Us Into Unity," *Acts 29*, 1984, 9.

CHAPTER FIVE

PENTECOST SET FREE?

In the midst of the religious and cultural developments of the burgeoning Charismatic Movement, numerous questions arose concerning the groundswell of “Pentecost outside Pentecost.” For members of mainline denominations such as Dennis Bennett, Harold Bredesen, J. Rodman Williams, Cardinal Suenens and others who had embraced what they felt to be a fresh move of God’s Spirit, issues surrounding their place within their respective ecclesiastical homes remained open. While some like Dennis Bennett felt called to serve God through their own denominations,¹ the differences that existed between charismatics and non-charismatics led some to wonder whether existence in this ecclesiastical place was possible.²

For a Pentecostal denomination such as the Assemblies of God, the Charismatic Movement posed another no less important question of identity. They sought not so much to determine which of their members were true Pentecostals, but rather what the emergence of Pentecostal phenomena outside of certain theological borders implied about

¹ Dennis Bennett commented early in the revival that those baptized in the Spirit “were ‘part of the answer’ instead of ‘part of the problem.’” *Nine O’Clock in the Morning* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), 42. He recounted being later told by a Pentecostal minister (possibly du Plessis) to remain in the Episcopal Church, which “confirmed what I had already known in my heart, but it was surely the wisdom of God to underline the fact so well that day. Had He not, on the following day I might not have been quite so sure.” *Ibid.*, 60.

² David J. du Plessis and Bob Slosser, *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1977), 188. Du Plessis detailed a conversation he had with charismatic Presbyterian minister Jim Brown, who inquired of him “on the best Pentecostal church to join.” In response, du Plessis plainly stated, “that’s the last thing you must think of...the Lord wants you here.” He later gave Dennis Bennett a similar message.

their own distinctives, existing as they had within a defined theological milieu and praxis for over five decades. If Pentecostals had complacently rested in the fact that their own heretofore obvious differences marked them off as essentially separate—and perhaps better—than the great majority of those calling themselves Christians, what recourse would they have when those markers of experiential differentiation ceased to exist? As Pentecostal historian Edith Blumhofer notes: “When people who have claimed charismatic experiences failed to leave liturgical churches, reject infant baptism, turn from sacramental theologies, and to renounce lifestyles that permitted long-held Pentecostal taboos...they raised uncomfortable questions.”³ A concern that reverberated in these discussions revolved around the question of Pentecostals’ relationship with denominations—or at least subsets of them—that were more open to Spirit-filled experience. How Pentecostals should relate to denominational subgroups with distinct and varied theologies and how far they might go down the road of related ecumenical dialogue represented an open challenge vis-à-vis their long held conservative and separatist leanings.

In the middle of these concerns we find David J. du Plessis, fully aware of the questions that continued to circulate regarding boundaries and identity. According to historian Russell Spittler, “no one in the 20th century so effectively linked three of the major movements of the time—the pentecostal movement, the ecumenical movement, and the charismatic movement.”⁴ Though at times du Plessis’s related concerns were

³ Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 226.

⁴ Russell Spittler, “Du Plessis, David Johannes,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Revised and Expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 592.

fairly academic and open for protracted dialogue, at other moments he was caught up in their sometimes unfortunate resolution.

This story has thus far been a significant and primary focus of this project. As such and with an understanding of the development of the concerns at hand, our purpose here will be to analyze some of these deeper questions regarding a Pentecost set free from its former bonds. The causes of this liberation, shrouded as they are in interpretations of the invisible hand of Providence and the Holy Spirit's work, seem nevertheless much more than tangential to the labors and testimony of David J. du Plessis. The largely open approach favored by du Plessis and the slow but steady warming to the Charismatic Movement by classical Pentecostalism will therefore form the content of this chapter. Both will be parsed in an attempt to understand how this new Pentecost influenced and affected American Christianity broadly and historic Pentecostalism specifically. Ultimately, I will show how the Assemblies' managed and cautious rapprochement with the Charismatic Movement contrasted with du Plessis's innovative efforts to share the Spirit in the language of "the other." In so doing, both parties represented important facets of the story of American Pentecost.

The Ecumenism of the Charismatic Movement

David du Plessis's characteristic formulation of the matter that occupies this project remains helpful: "The renewal of Christianity must be both charismatic and ecumenical."⁵ As he delineated this principle during the later years of his life, he noted "in some sense, the United Nations and ecumenical movements are seeking unity in

⁵ David J. du Plessis, "The Renewal of Christianity Must Be Both Charismatic and Ecumenical," *Korea Pastoral Change Catechetical Newsletter*, June 1981.

humanity, but it is clear that all their efforts seem to be in vain...the unity that Christ prayed for is a spiritual unity, totally charismatic and never anything else.”⁶ If this providential progress faltered, du Plessis believed that the very work of the Spirit would be stymied and have little effect beyond the phenomenal. Du Plessis was therefore not simply pleased that members of other denominations could experience the Spirit in the same way as Pentecostals. He saw in the expansion of this experience an underlying purpose: unity.

As idealistic as they may perhaps seem, du Plessis’s hopes for a new ecumenism of the Spirit were not merely idiosyncratic outliers. Indeed, any reading of the associated literature reveals a groundswell of hope very much in line with du Plessis’s lofty rhetoric. Dennis Bennett’s autobiographical work *Nine O’Clock in the Morning* confirms this: “God is not interested in blessing any particular denomination or organization as such...The Holy Spirit today is reaching into the structures that man has set up...empowering those who are receptive.”⁷ From a Catholic perspective, Father Edward O’Connor echoes this by noting, “the charisms, the spontaneous desire to praise God, the

⁶ Ibid. Within, he tied the revival to the biblical account in Acts 2: “Then Joel says: ‘It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit (charismatic) upon all flesh (ecumenical).’ I plead that we do not part what God has joined in his promise. Let us remain fully charismatic and totally ecumenical. God did what He promised to Israel, and He will do what He promised about the outpouring of His Spirit.” Earlier signs of his thoughts in this area can be seen in comments concerning denominational Christians who were receiving the Spirit: “I met with a number of leading men on two nights. These ‘ecumenical’ conversations with leaders of all churches and societies are bearing rich fruit towards fellowship and spiritual unity.” David J. du Plessis, “Hundreds of Ministers ‘Receiving’,” *Pentecost*, August 1963. So too he stated: “The charismatic renewal has far, far outstripped everything else in the field of Christian unity.” “New Covenant Tenth Anniversary Interview,” 1975, 13, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷ Bennett, *Nine O’Clock*, 203.

powerful attraction for the reading of scripture...unity therefore there is, but not one produced by human planning.”⁸ So too Lutheran Larry Christensen in his book *Speaking in Tongues* could not help but offer the following:

He [God] has gone into His storehouse of gifts, dusted off one which has lain in general disuse for a time, and comes now to His people, the Church, and invites them to receive a gift which will be nothing but foolishness to the proud or carnal mind, but to the Body of Christ it will be the very blessing which Christ himself intended when He poured out His Spirit on the Day of Pentecost: “and they all spoke in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance”⁹

From the classical Pentecostal side, others besides du Plessis became excited about the ecumenical aspects of this new Pentecostal outpouring. One cannot help but recall Oral Roberts at this juncture, a man who began his life with a classical Pentecostal denomination but slowly moved outwards towards a great charismatic goal. As biographer David Harrell effusively writes, “no one in the pentecostal world was more aware of or attuned to the charismatic revival in the mainstream churches than Oral...[for instance he] sensed an openness in the Roman Catholic church...and urged Pentecostals to discard their anti-Catholic prejudices.”¹⁰

Chroniclers of the time often used grandiloquent language to describe the potential for unity in the Charismatic Movement. Here du Plessis’s words in 1975 that “the three streams [of Christianity] have been coming together beautifully and I trust that

⁸ Edward D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1971), 32.

⁹ Larry Christensen, *Speaking in Tongues and its Significance for the Church* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1968), 135.

¹⁰ David, Jr. Harrell, *Oral Roberts: An American Life* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 288. I would strongly question his assertion that no Pentecostal was more attuned to the new movement than Roberts. If nothing else, the project at hand makes a strong case that David du Plessis deserves that title.

this will continue”¹¹ are representative. Later historians have also spoken generously about the movement, whistfully and effectively capturing the tone—and content—of its heyday. To this end, Vinson Synan wrote that by

the end of the 1960’s, Pentecostalism, roundly rejected a half-century before by the mainline churches, began a triumphant entry into the heart of those very churches. The cycle was complete. The movement was returning with a new fire and vigor to find a place of acceptance among its former critics and enemies.... Within a decade of Bennett’s experience, it was estimated that 10 percent of the clergy and a million lay members of the mainline churches had received the baptism and had remained in their churches¹²

Perhaps nowhere is the hope for unity more pronounced than at the 1977 Kansas City Conference on the Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches and its associated summation in *Like a Mighty River* by David Manuel. There, Catholics, Protestants, and Pentecostals worshipped in the Spirit together and maintained grand hopes for unity.

Manuel wrote the following:

Joining my voice to the others, my scalp tightened at the thought that never before in history had so many hearts together poured out their love for Jesus so freely at the same time! I gazed up at the stands, turning slowly from extreme left to extreme right, trying to assimilate forever the incredible sight of so many people glorifying God. In the highest rows, I could barely make out the raised arms of worshippers, silhouetted against the darkening eastern sky.

We were in “the heavenlies”—an expression I never particularly cared for, but there was no better way to describe it...the Lord himself brought us back to earth, with a word of prophecy....“Mark down this day and remember it.../I am going to restore my people and reunite them./I am going to restore my people the glory that is mine”¹³

¹¹ du Plessis, “New Covenant Tenth Anniversary Interview.” The three streams being Catholic, Protestant, and Pentecostal.

¹² Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 233.

¹³ David Manuel, *Like a Mighty River: A Personal Account of the Conference of 1977* (Orleans, MA: Rock Harbor Press, 1977), 78-79. Perhaps more well-known is another prophecy offered at the conference detailed on 195 and including the lines “Mourn and weep, for the body of my Son is broken./ Mourn and weep, for the body of my Son is broken.../I would have made you one new man,/but the body of my Son is

Moving beyond individuals more directly involved with the Charismatic Movement, it is important to understand the perspectives of those who sympathetically viewed related matters from the outside—from both traditional denominations and the ecumenical movement as well as classical Pentecostalism. In this, John Mackay's continued correspondence with his friend du Plessis over multiple decades remains important. While some letters were shorter and more perfunctory in nature, most spoke clearly to the connections the two men felt and how such a denominationally wedded man as Mackay viewed the Charismatic movement.

Mackay's recollection of his visit to the charismatically oriented Oral Roberts University speaks to his interest: "I had a wonderful time on the campus, speaking several times to the student body...I was deeply moved by what I saw and felt and heard, the Holy Spirit is truly at work in what I believe can become a quite unique cultural

broken." For a somewhat more negative view, see S. David Moore, *The Shepherding Movement: Controversy and Charismatic Ecclesiology* (New York: T & T Clark, 2003). Within, he details how the controversial movement over pastoral authority called "The Shepherding Movement" led to great division in the midst of the Charismatic Movement. Moore states, "Perhaps the high-water mark for both the Charismatic Renewal and the Shepherding movement was the 1977 Kansas City Conference....After the Charismatic Catholics, the Shepherding movement had the largest representation with over 12,000 in attendance." *Ibid.*, 7. He continues: "the controversy over the Shepherding movement had forever changed the character of the Charismatic Renewal. Its ecumenical ideal and hope had been shattered. Despite the success of the 1977 Kansas City conference on the Charismatic Renewal in the churches, the Charismatic movement would never again be as united as it had been before the dispute over discipleship." *Ibid.*, 124. While no one seems to deny the success and potential promise of the Kansas City meeting, the issues involved in its inception and assorted behind-the-scenes developments remain telling. Yet since the ultimate goal of this project is not the broad history of the Charismatic Movement and tales of its decline are somewhat beyond our scope, simple awareness of the coming dissension—that of which even du Plessis himself could not fully repair—must suffice.

initiator.”¹⁴ In another letter to du Plessis a few years later, the 81 year old Mackay rejoiced that “the living Lord Jesus Christ is at work through the presence of the Spirit throughout Christendom,” mentioning that he thanks God that “fellow Presbyterian ministers, who have experienced in recent years the fresh reality of the Holy Spirit have been released from official harassment.”¹⁵

As Mackay entered his final years he wrote to du Plessis of a desire to compose his memoirs, on one occasion stating, “I am hoping within the next two years to complete an autobiography, the title of which will be ‘The Hand and the Road.’ In that book, when it appears, you, my beloved friend, will have a real place, and also the great movement in which you are a leading mentor.”¹⁶ As a denominational leader and ecumenical figure, Mackay helps to show once again the boundary stretching nature of the new movement of the Spirit in action. An insightful article by Robert R. Curlee and Mary Ruth Isaac-Curlee helps to show the ways in which he and du Plessis worked together in the middle of a particularly problematic situation related to charismatic Presbyterians and their respective denominations.¹⁷ Though, as they state, he cannot be rightly classified a

¹⁴ John Mackay to David J. du Plessis, TMs, May 26, 1966, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁵ John Mackay to David J. du Plessis, TMs, October 2, 1970, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁶ John Mackay to David J. du Plessis, TMs, March 1, 1974, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. While this autobiography never appeared and an informal interview with Mackay’s grandson revealed that such polite claims were not uncharacteristic of the man, his statements here combined with the decades-long relationship between the two cannot but speak to the kind of feeling he had for the charismatics and the apparent work of the Holy Spirit in the denominational churches.

¹⁷ Robert R. Curlee and Mary-Ruth Isaac-Curlee, “Bridging the Gap: John A. Mackay, Presbyterians, and the Charismatic Movement,” *Journal of Presbyterian History*

Pentecostal himself,¹⁸ his supportive hand in the midst of its deliberations speaks even more loudly to the possibility of openness and acceptance by the mainline and ecumenical world in the midst of the revival.

Catholics represent another large ecclesiastical group affected by the Charismatic Movement, and amongst their faithful one can also see a focus upon increased cooperation with and connection to this new phenomenon. The establishment of the Roman Catholic Pentecostal Dialogue in the early 1970s represented an important step in the direction of bringing together those touched by the revival, in the process showcasing unity in a new light. More than this, the Dialogue's very call to action was understood vis-à-vis unity. The official press release of the first meeting in 1972 noted:

The dialogue in this present phase is intended neither to take up questions of church union nor to enter into the problem of ecclesiastical structures. Rather it aims at discovering what unity already exists in the life, spirit, and experience of the various traditions represented around the conference table.¹⁹

72 (Fall 1994): 142ff. Mackay and du Plessis traveled to Austin, Texas to consult with seventeen Presbyterian ministers about their position as charismatics within a larger denominational groups.

¹⁸ Ibid., 142, 148. Noting his connections to Scottish evangelicalism, a spirituality conditioned by Spanish mysticism, and his appreciation for Latin American Pentecostalism, the authors assert Mackay was “never a tongues speaker but ever a ‘charismatic,’ in the best and broadest sense of the term...[one who] went on the line to help nurture the Presbyterian charismatic movement into healthy existence.” How far this charismatic experience went remains unknown; that he existed at the centers of Presbyterian power and had a great sympathy for and appreciation of the movement remains certain.

¹⁹ “First Vatican Pentecostal Dialogue,” ca 1972, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

It is helpful here to understand that the Catholic Church itself provided some of the impetus for this series of conversations in the 1970s.²⁰ While other larger gatherings came together because of the efforts of separate groups within and sometimes between denominations, the discussions initiated by Catholics tended to derive more from within the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Though there was an important and growing Charismatic Movement within the Catholic Church from the late 1960s onward, the Dialogue helps illustrate how interest emanated from not just a potentially schismatic group within Catholicism. It required the participation and permission of numerous individuals who themselves should not be rightly termed “charismatic,” such as Catholic priest Bernard Leeming.²¹ So too during a visit to Rome du Plessis wrote of meeting Cardinal Bea and how together “they talked at length—again with a primary emphasis on Jesus and

²⁰ Robeck and Sandidge claim the Dialogue has roots in du Plessis’s earlier ecumenical contacts as well as an encouraging 1969 article by Cardinal Willebrands. C. M. Robeck and J. L. Sandidge, “Dialogue, Roman Catholic and Classical Pentecostal,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 576ff. In conversation with du Plessis and others in the early 1970s, the RCP Dialogue was born. In the words of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, “The Holy Spirit in fact is always acting in such a way as to lead the Christian people to live the Holy Scriptures and to understand it better, and so to accomplish its prophetic role.” “A Proposed Description of the Nature and Purpose of a Possible Dialogue Between a Group of Pentecostals and Roman Catholics,” TMs (photocopy), September 3, 1970, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. It goes on to say, “the Secretariat...in response to the expressed willingness of certain leading members of both Classical- and Neo-Pentecostal Movements, is prepared to encourage some Roman Catholics to take part in DIALOGUE with these Christian brethren.”

²¹ Du Plessis recalls Leeming saying the following: “I’ve told Rome about you. I told them I had met a man full of the Holy Ghost and full of power. And, my brother, I told them about your love. You must come. The churches must hear your message.” After some thought, du Plessis simply wrote, “The door to Rome was open.” du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*, 199-204.

Pentecost.”²² If nothing else, his final chapter in *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost* shows the combination of official sanction and mass interest the Catholic renewal engendered. It juxtaposes the praises of the Roman Catholic faithful at the 1975 Congress on the Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church and Pope Paul VI’s presence and encouragement –shocking to du Plessis who wrote, “even the most optimistic of us had not been prepared for the Pentecostal message that came from such a slight figure on the high throne.”²³ Further, Peter Hocken has noted John XXIII’s own call for a new Pentecost during the time of Vatican II and connected this with the hopes and understanding of charismatic Catholics who “understood this new movement from the start as a grace for the renewal of the whole Catholic Church.”²⁴

The Assemblies of God and the Charismatics

Whether Catholic, Protestant, or some combination thereof, much of this positive, ecumenical, official, and occasionally unitive approach contrasts with the slower movement and at times antagonistic development of the Assemblies of God. As we have already seen, their initial responses to ecumenical matters of the Spirit in which du Plessis dabbled were what led to the South African’s ouster in August 1962. While referring positively to the Charismatic Movement early on in its existence, they refused its close connection with ecumenism in the person of du Plessis and went on record

²² du Plessis and Slosser, *Mr. Pentecost*. That du Plessis found himself speaking with ministers before parishioners here does not seem to diverge much from the ways in which he would interact with Protestants; the main difference is simply that here, the ecclesiastics with whom he spoke had more influence within the Catholic hierarchy.

²³ *Ibid.*, 238.

²⁴ Peter Hocken, “The Impact of the Charismatic Movement on the Roman Catholic Church,” *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 25 (August 2004): 205-206.

actively opposing any real involvement with interchurch dialogue movements. That a General Council resolution forbidding involvement in ecumenical matters precedes an official resolution on the Charismatic Movement by almost fifteen years points to the preeminent fears and surrounding related matters. Throughout the 1960s, 1970s and beyond, the Assemblies of God maintained its stance against completely open ecumenism, never coming to the place that many of its mainline and charismatic counterparts had done. Yet as the years progressed and this “second wave” of the Spirit began to make its influence felt throughout the larger Church, the denomination did come to desire a kind of unity, albeit one rather different than the ecumenists or du Plessis had intended.

That the Assemblies of God remained as steadfast as it did in the face of the charismatically ecumenical movement taking place around them is not surprising considering the developments discussed in this project. Though Pentecostals ought not to be categorized wholly together with the broader field of American fundamentalism, they have always been fellow travelers on the road of theological conservatism. Affiliation with a “liberal” organization such as the WCC or NCC was unlikely in the face of such an emphasis, and in fact was an important component in its rejection of an ecumenism it viewed as “the combination of many denominations into a World Super Church, which probably will culminate in the Scarlet Woman or Religious Babylon of Revelation.”²⁵ Eschatological matters had foundational importance in the movement, with the restorationism at its center often leading to both increased “end-times fervor” and

²⁵ General Presbytery of the Assemblies of God, “Resolution on Ecumenicity,” TMs (photocopy), August 31, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

sometimes obsessive attention to the details of the last days.²⁶ As this emphasis developed and at times intersected with the ecumenical enterprise, movements that seemed concerned with Church unity were often viewed in less than flattering ways.

As intriguing a possibility as it is to see the affiliation of Pentecostals in 1948 under the banner of the Pentecostal World Fellowship or the earlier cooperation of the A/G with the nascent NAE in 1942 as a likely sign of increasing ecumenical tendencies, this fails to take into account the deep conservatism of both alliances and other concerns for control that had come to pervade a group like the Assemblies of God. If theirs was an ecumenism it was of the most cautious and conservative nature, and one woefully unprepared for the spontaneity and elasticity that something as diverse and freewheeling as the Charismatic Movement demanded of it.

²⁶ In speaking of early Pentecostals Grant Wacker says that “though the spiritually blind might imagine progress in human affairs, Pentecostals perceived deeper forces at work.” During its formative years, he notes for the Spirit-filled “the present downward course of history would continue, the chasm between the classes and the masses would deepen until nations would burn with the flames of revolution, and science would continue to create weapons accelerating the suicide of the human race.” *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 257. Robert Mapes Anderson says much of the same in his landmark study *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979). If nothing else, the fact that nearly one quarter of the Assemblies of God’s “Statement of Fundamental Truths” adopted by the General Council from 2-7 October 1916 contained doctrine concerning eschatological matters shows the pervasiveness of attention to such matters. Four issues of the A/G’s *Pentecostal Evangel* (12.16.1916, 12.23.1916, 1.06.1917, 1.13.1917) detail the seventeen “truths,” the final four of which discuss “The Blessed Hope” or Rapture, “The Imminent Coming and Millennial Reign of Jesus,” “The Lake of Fire,” and “The New Heavens and the New Earth.” The *Pentecostal Evangel* of 26 August 1956 focusing on the end times and including articles on “Satellites and Scriptures” (pp. 4, 24-25) and “The Changing Climate: Is it a Sign of the Times” (p. 6) and another from 8 September 2002 including an article that references the chaos of September 11, 2001 (pp. 6-9) and in another section asking “What Does the Future Hold?” (pp. 26-27) underscores the continuing emphasis on related doctrines and teaching.

As we have already seen in the denominational brief against David du Plessis, the denomination's inability to control the terms of the debate was a major point of concern.²⁷ A combination of official anxiety regarding du Plessis's activities together with a conservatism deeply rooted and endorsed by letter-writing laity and denominational officials thus had much to do with their early opinions of the not entirely disconnected fields of ecumenism and Charismatic Movement. Though a kind of equilibrium and appreciation would be achieved over time, this came only after a decade of Pentecostal observation of related developments.

If a major Pentecostal denomination such as the Assemblies of God was unable to brook the theological moves of du Plessis during the time when the Charismatic movement remained rooted in the world of mainline Protestantism, it was even more woefully unprepared to embrace his kind of ecumenism when Catholics entered the fray in the later 1960s. From their earliest days, Grant Wacker notes, Pentecostals "above all things mortal they feared Roman Catholics...just as Pentecostals failed seriously to engage theological liberals, they all failed seriously to engage Roman Catholic spirituality."²⁸

Discussions in official publications from du Plessis' own Assemblies of God show how powerfully this anti-Catholic emphasis remained in the years surrounding his life and ecumenical work. In an A/G Ministers' Letter from the summer of 1947, discussions of rallies held together with the NAE note a desire amongst some "that a

²⁷ "Ministerial Records of David J. du Plessis," n.d., Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

²⁸ Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 182. He goes on: "Pentecostals summarily linked Catholics with superstition, socialism, criminality, tyranny, congressional corruption, and World War I."

team of converted Roman Catholics should appear on each program to hold conferences on this issues raised in American life by Roman Catholics attempting to capture America, and to help Evangelicals prepare for winning Roman Catholics to Christ.”²⁹ This somewhat urgent tone was echoed in a 1951 Ministers’ Letter that registered great disapproval of the Unites States’ appointment of an ambassador to the Pope in Vatican City. It directed readers to “the November 25th issue of THE PENTECOSTAL EVANGEL, page 16, for suggested form of letter to be addressed to your senator and congressman. Your protest will help.”³⁰

Perhaps most stringent was the publication of the General Presbytery’s position on the potential presidential election of Catholic John F. Kennedy. Unequivocally opposing “the election of a Roman Catholic candidate to the Presidency of the United States of America,” the group disclaimed “any charge of religious bias but do oppose the bigotry of the Roman Catholic church reflected in its position of the infallibility of its leadership.” Because “any Roman Catholic...must support the position of his church which is antagonistic to the best interest of American liberties,” Pentecostals should not only avoid voting for Kennedy, but were once again implicitly warned away from a suspect group.³¹

That Roman Catholics might share anything in common with faithful Pentecostals would have represented quite a shock to the A/G of the early 1960s. Yet because of the

²⁹ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Pre-Convention Flashes,” ca 1947, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

³⁰ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Ministers’ Letter,” December 10, 1951, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

³¹ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Ministers’ Letter,” September 20, 1960, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

advances the Charismatic Movement began making within Catholicism, matters were taking a turn. The old framework of attack and suspicion that had held for so long was no longer adequate for the tenor of the times. As matters proceeded into the 1970s, increased discussion and official contact between classical Pentecostals and the Roman Catholic Renewal occurred even as it had with the earlier Protestant Charismatic Movement. Such was the ongoing series of developments that by the time of the 1977 Kansas City Charismatic Conference, both Cardinal Suenens and Thomas Zimmerman could share the same billing.³²

Representative of a warming of sorts to Catholics and others touched by the Spirit, there are nevertheless a number of qualifications to these developments that require an analysis not only of the progression of this relationship, but the differing ways in which the A/G and du Plessis understood the expanding realm of the Spirit. It seems clear that a certain detente took place between the Assemblies of God and many of the groups that comprise the new Charismatic Movement during the first two decades of its existence. Though—as we have seen—the A/G did mention and laud the burgeoning move of the Spirit during some of the earliest days of the revival, their encouragement and involvement stopped far short of the place du Plessis felt it should. Appreciation for the work of the Spirit and openness to interdenominational dialogue and cooperation were thus two very different things for the A/G.

³² H. V. Synan, “Kansas City Conference,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 816. As Synan writes, “Major churchmen who participated in the conference were Leon-Joseph Cardinal Suenens, primate of Belgium and papal liaison to the Catholic charismatic renewal; Bishop J. O. Patterson, presiding bishop of the Church of God in Christ; and Thomas F. Zimmerman, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God.”

Although I have already discussed some signs of this rather sectarian approach, it is worth noting Carl Brumback's perspective in the denominational history *Suddenly...From Heaven*.³³ Published by the A/G's own press in 1961 and thus roughly contemporaneous to the developments taking place in the growing Charismatic Movement and the mounting controversy surrounding David du Plessis, it is helpful as we seek to understand the perspective of the time. Within, Brumback discusses "a further cause for optimism...the outpouring of the Spirit which, *today*, is falling upon representatives of practically every branch of Christendom in these United States."³⁴ A positive and hopeful appraisal, his words are in keeping with much of what we have seen early on from official channels. All the same, he did raise

an old question: "Can a person be Pentecostal without being in 'Pentecost'?" In former years, the answer was almost certain to be in the negative, for the established churches would not tolerate any "Pentecostalism." Today, the answer is "perhaps" or "it depends." It is still difficult to keep "new wine" in "old wineskins." Some are attempting to institute some form of Pentecostal "pietism" within the churches, but the services themselves remain rigidly non-Pentecostal, and the general atmosphere of the churches is not conducive to Pentecostal life. As a result, many who receive a genuine experience find it necessary to frequent Pentecostal services in order to "maintain the glow."³⁵

Somewhat ambivalent, his comments here show a not insignificant skepticism about the possibilities of an intra-denominational moving of the Spirit maintaining its "glow" outside of Pentecostalism. While he does go on to say "it was not intended that all who receive the Pentecostal blessing should be required to go behind a "Pentecostal

³³ Carl Brumback, *Suddenly...From Heaven: A History of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1961).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 352.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 353.

Curtain,³⁶ it seems likely in light of later developments—especially vis-à-vis David du Plessis—that classical Pentecostals such as Brumback had not yet come to a fully articulated position concerning what should be done.³⁷

While the issue of du Plessis’s dismissal must inevitably color the occasionally positive words of Brumback or the Assemblies towards the Charismatic Movement, a basic awareness and appreciation for the new revival emerged in even its earliest years. Du Plessis’s ecumenism, however, was neither welcomed nor discussed. Though it could be argued that membership in the NAE represented a certain progression in this direction, it was not the move into the ecumenical world some feared. As denominational leaders stated in 1948:

The National Association of Evangelicals took a definite stand on vital spiritual truths, and its doctrinal statement is a classic of simplicity, making possible the uniting together for definite purposes Christians of positive faith and convictions. It is in no wise a super church—merely a service agency to give expression in matters common to all evangelicals.³⁸

Proscribed in membership to those at the more conservative end of the spectrum and limited in reach and goals, the NAE thus represented not an interdenominational forum

³⁶ Ibid. In light of the theme of our investigation, Brumback’s assertion here that “we must be careful that we do not seek to direct this mighty move of God exclusively into organizational channels” and that they “we fulfill the divine purpose” remains ironic. As we have seen in the du Plessis situation and will see when looking more closely at the Assemblies’ relations with the Charismatic Movement in the 1970s, issues of denominational attempts at direction and control seem very much a part of the landscape in both of these situations.

³⁷ Clearly written in the midst of du Plessis’s struggles with the A/G, a letter from Carl Brumback indicates support for du Plessis’ mission work amongst the mainline denominations, but draws the line when it comes to either brooking the authority of the Executive Presbytery or engaging in too much ecumenism. Carl Brumback to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 7, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

³⁸ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, “Ministers’ Letter,” June 8, 1948, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

for theological discussion so much as it did—at least in the eyes of the A/G—a place from which to further the various Christian goals of the denomination itself.

The classical Pentecostal group's reaction and response to du Plessis's deep ecumenical contacts and relationships was a much different story. The conflict with the South African culminated in not only his infamous ejection from ministerial ranks but an official statement from the A/G on what it perceived to be the dangers of the ecumenical movement—developments that heavily reinforced its more negative relationship with such open and unsupervised conversations of theology and praxis. In other words, the NAE was a “safe” group with which the Assemblies felt comfortable associating; du Plessis was anything but.

In addition to these concerns, a confidential denominational record within du Plessis's ministerial file contains reference to former General Superintendent Ralph Riggs' attendance at a recent WCC meeting. While reporting on his attendance he shared his observations about “strong colored representation,” noting that the “conference [was] committed to integration even among local churches”³⁹—a thing seemingly as unwelcome among some Pentecostals as liberalism and Catholicism put together. If nothing else, this concern shows how a great deal occurred in private denominational conversations and remained off the record of official minutes, underscoring the need to closely examine extant sources to gain even brief insight into the world within which du Plessis was forced to interact. It seems safe to say that for the A/G a move of the Spirit in the denominational churches and their practice of spiritual gifts was one thing;

³⁹ "Ministerial Records of David J. du Plessis."

ecumenical dialogue with them in the midst of their own traditions and on their own terms another matter entirely.

One might also point to General Superintendent Thomas F. Zimmerman's involvement at the 1961 Jerusalem meeting of the Sixth Pentecostal World Conference as evidence of a more limited view of theological contact. At a time when the A/G's conflict with du Plessis was just beginning to manifest and the Charismatic Movement was itself accelerating, he spoke on the topic of a "Twentieth Century Pentecost."⁴⁰

Within, he stated:

God has raised us up as a separate people. Let us not surrender our identification but stand up and be counted. We cannot afford to compromise on our most basic, God-given position, which includes an unfaltering allegiance to the infallibility of God's eternal Word, the virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the atoning death of our Saviour, His victorious resurrection, and His bodily return to earth again.

Those who would compromise on these positions, or would join hands with those who do compromise are being unwittingly used as tools against us and not for us. We have been commanded, "Come ye out...and be ye separate." This is our calling. This is God's answer to compromise.⁴¹

The A/G leadership was simply unwilling to be involved with the more complicated ecumenical edges of the new revival. Indeed, that no official statement on the Charismatic Movement would be made for another fifteen years only underscores the

⁴⁰ Thomas F. Zimmerman, "Twentieth Century Pentecost," in *Addresses Presented at the Sixth World Conference, Jerusalem, Israel, May 19th to 21st, 1961* (Toronto: The Conference Advisory Committee, 1961), 51.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 55. The contents of this portion of Zimmerman's speech are notable for asserting key evangelical/fundamentalist beliefs as impossible to sacrifice. His words both lend credence to the theory that Assemblies was becoming closely allied with evangelicalism and that the lines it was drawing against compromise spoke directly to fears concerning ecumenical contact and involvement with more "liberal" churches amongst whom these core doctrines may have been interpreted differently.

fact that the A/G had a great deal to observe and ponder before beginning the kind of work du Plessis had years before.

It was not until the 1970s that a one is able to discern a steady warming to the Charismatic Movement in du Plessis's former denomination. In this, we might turn to the developments in the Assembly of God's own Council on the Spiritual Life. The published records of its 1972 "Be Filled With the Spirit" meeting in Minneapolis contain numerous comments regarding the work of the Holy Spirit in the wider world. The introduction—written by none other than Thomas Zimmerman—notes "Fellow Christians from other communions mingled freely among us, delighting in the exposition of Pentecostal truths and responding to the flow of the Spirit with an eagerness that matched our own."⁴² So too the General Superintendent's message "Be Filled With the Holy Spirit" remains notable for its inclusion in the conference. Within he optimistically spoke of

the secret of successful spiritual living—recognizing that we are temples of the Holy Spirit and letting the Holy Spirit have all of us, spirit, soul, and body. Let us pray earnestly that this shall not be only an occasional experience, but that it shall be a way of life—fill with the Spirit.⁴³

While not addressing the charismatics specifically, that Zimmerman as denominational leader would allow such an event and include his words amongst those who were increasingly interacting with mainline believers represents a sea change. Yet even this was tempered with the understanding that there should be a conservative order in the

⁴² Thomas F. Zimmerman, "Introduction," in *Live in the Spirit: A Compendium of Themes on the Spiritual Life as Presented at the Council on Spiritual Life* (Springfield, MO: General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1972), 6.

⁴³ Thomas F. Zimmerman, "Be Filled With the Spirit," in *Live in the Spirit: A Compendium of Themes on the Spiritual Life as Presented at the Council on Spiritual Life* (Springfield, MO: General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1972), 7-11.

revival: “if we want the glory of God in our midst, corporately or individually, we must live by the eternal, inerrant Word of God...we cannot bend the Word to suit us—we must bend to the Word of God.”⁴⁴ Further, while at least two of the forums at the council addressed the revival directly—“The Charismatic Movement” by Joseph Flower and “The Charismatic Renewal in Your Community” by D. Leroy Sanders— many of the others seemed rather functional, focused as they were on sometimes basic and non-controversial topics such as “How to Develop a Devotional Life,” “Building a Christian Home,” “Making Church Services More Meaningful,” and “The Pastor’s Wife.”⁴⁵

At the Assembly of God’s biennial General Council meeting in 1973, its Spiritual Life Committee issued a report in which it officially went on record that the Holy Spirit was at work outside the traditional Pentecostal bodies.⁴⁶ Beyond this, it provided what it felt to be the characteristics of genuine revival, ostensibly as a means to judge what was happening outside their own borders:

⁴⁴ Ibid., 9. While the idealism contained in Zimmerman’s assertion that “the reason we are having this Council on Spiritual Life is that all of us might because more life the Lord. We are not here because we are interested in establishing our will. We want God’s will,” it would seem that leaders such as Zimmerman had already long since decided what they felt this will to be and thus simply expected the same of those who had such experiences of the Spirit. Ibid., 10.

⁴⁵ Other forums may have touched somewhat on the revival as they discussed “The Jesus Movement” and “What Really Happens When You Are Baptized in the Holy Spirit?”

⁴⁶ “There is thrilling evidence that God is moving mightily by His Spirit through all the earth. The winds of the Spirit are blowing freely outside the normally recognized Pentecostal bodies. This is the time of a greater fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy. Thousands of people have prayed for this would come to pass. The coming of the Holy Spirit upon so many and in such a broad sweep of the church world is God’s way of counteracting the liberalism, secularism, humanism, and occultism that plagues our present-day society.” General Council of the Assemblies of God, “Minutes of the Thirty-Fifth General Council of the Assemblies of God,” August 16, 1973, 80.

1. Emphasis on worship in spirit and truth of Almighty God.
2. Recognition of the person of Christ—His deity, His incarnation, and His redemptive work.
3. Recognition of the authority of, and a hunger for, the word of God.
4. Emphasis on the person and work of the Holy Spirit.
5. Emphasis on the second coming of Christ.
6. Emphasis on prayer for the sick.
7. Emphasis on sharing Christ by witness and evangelism.⁴⁷

These changes remain notable for two reasons. First, the fact that the A/G was finally and officially coming to terms and engage the charismatics shows a clear departure from its earlier position of relative silence or at best baseline acceptance. Second and perhaps more interesting, the denomination could now identify for itself the “true” participants in the work of the Holy Spirit through its publication of defining marks or criteria. Though the report proclaims “neither do we categorically condemn everything that does not totally or immediately conform to our standards,”⁴⁸ the undercurrent of its sometimes magisterial pronouncements leaves the matter open for interpretation.

The report of the Spiritual Life Committee thus represents notable progress from the days of du Plessis’s expulsion while on the other gives an indication that they were continuing to reject outright the generous and open-armed embrace of the mainline denominations for which du Plessis was so famous. If theirs was to be an ecumenism of any kind, it was to be one of great caution. The A/G were willing to take steps in this direction only under the conditions that they themselves could forge a new path between their previous position of exclusivism and the world of ecumenism. It was a place in which they, as we shall see, fervently sought to define most of the terms of the discussion.

⁴⁷ General Council of the Assemblies of God, “Minutes of the Thirty-Fifth General Council of the Assemblies of God.”

⁴⁸ Ibid.

As the Assemblies progressed through the 1970s, it finally issued denominational statement concerning the Charismatic Movement at their 1977 General Council meeting:

WHEREAS, Gifts of the Holy Spirit have been manifested by members of the historic Christian churches and such members have been tolerated and sometimes encouraged to practice their beliefs within their respective denominations; and

WHEREAS, many charismatic groups have expressed an interest in fellowship and dialogue with the Assemblies of God; and

WHEREAS, The Assemblies of God has been raised up to witness to the power of the Holy Spirit in the 20th Century and is in position to provide sound Biblical teaching to the numerous converts in the current revival wherever possible; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That an executive officer of the General Council be requested to serve in liaison with charismatic groups and report quarterly to the Executive Presbytery on problems and opportunities which exist; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Assemblies of God accepts invitations to participate in various interdenominational charismatic conferences; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Executive Presbytery convene a conference on the Holy Spirit, inviting leaders of the various charismatic movements from the respective denominations to participate and be available to answer questions regarding this charismatic movement and that some of our own pastors, evangelists, educators, and missionaries involved in this movement also be invited to participate and conduct workshops on the problems and opportunities in effort to broaden the relationship of the Assemblies of God with the charismatic movement and to assist local pastors and other ministers, helping them as they seek to be involved. Such a conference should take place in 1978, or as soon as feasible.⁴⁹

The 1977 General Council minutes provide evidence that those in leadership supported the new decision. There, a resolution to discipline those involved in discussions of an

⁴⁹ General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, "Ministers' Letter," October 28, 1977, 2-3, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO. General Superintendent Thomas Zimmerman follows the resolution with the statement that he was "very happy with the resolution that has been adopted" all the while noting "deviations from scriptural teaching...have become increasingly grotesque." Thus while now officially accepting of charismatics, "the centrality of the importance of right doctrine" seems as firmly lodged in the Pentecostal mind as ever.

ecumenical nature was quickly put down. Resolution 8, as it was referred to, sought to “provide for penalties” for the violating of the 1960s resolution concerning Ecumenism. Its plan was that “ministers or churches who are found to be in violation of the above may be subject to censure or charge which may necessitate the recall of their credentials or certificate of fellowship.”⁵⁰

While at first glance its failure to achieve passage may seem a softening more towards the ecumenical movement than the charismatics, it seems likely in context that the new agenda of working together with believers from various denominations affected by the revival necessitated a greater openness, if not to ecumenical matters, than at least towards cooperation with Spirit-filled believers from various churches. The spectre of uncertain penalties in the midst of these efforts likely seemed counterproductive.

Another important sign of increased openness by the denomination was—as noted earlier—the participation of Thomas Zimmerman in the 1977 Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches. There together with Suenens, du Plessis, and many others, his presence spoke of the work of the Holy Spirit in his time and displayed a new kind of openness in what must have been for him a rather unfamiliar field.

Overall, the high water mark in A/G connections with the Charismatic Movement seems to have been the Regional Conferences on the Holy Spirit, whose genesis can be seen in the 1976 resolution and whose fulfillment came in the early 1980s.⁵¹ These meetings, together with the somewhat unexpected reinstatement of du Plessis in 1980,

⁵⁰ General Council of the Assemblies of God, “Minutes of the Thirty-Seventh General Council of the Assemblies of God,” August 18, 1977, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁵¹ See Thomas F. Zimmerman, “Regional Conferences on the Holy Spirit Slated for September,” *The Pentecostal Evangel*, April 27, 1980, 4.

represented an important alteration in Pentecostal-Charismatic relations. In a Minister's Letter from 1980, a notice of upcoming events states, "in view of the widespread outpouring...it is felt this series of conferences can help us as a Movement to maximize our involvement in the current visitation of the Holy Spirit."⁵² A published digest of the proceedings of these Conferences on the Holy Spirit was set forth in two volumes in 1982. Within, the statement of purpose by Thomas Zimmerman stood as an important indicator of Pentecostal-Charismatic progress:

If we look back on these 3 days as seeing these purposes accomplished, then this transdenominational gathering of believers may well become an impetus of spiritual unity and fervor to make these last decades of the 20th century more exciting than the first. I believe the best is yet ahead of us as we yield ourselves unreservedly to the blessed Holy Spirit.⁵³

Numerous articles within the digest speak to various facets of the Spirit-filled life, from "The Spirit and the Believer" and "Pentecostal Phenomena in the 20th Century" in the first volume⁵⁴ to "The Holy Spirit in Corporate Worship" and "Slain in the Spirit" in the second.⁵⁵

⁵² General Council Executive Office to Assemblies of God Ministers, "Assemblies of God Minister," May 16, 1980. Advertising in the Northern California District's own denominational magazine includes words from Zimmerman, who additionally references the 1977 Resolution on the Charismatic Movement and states the purpose of the conferences: to "have a gathering where those who are a part of the Assemblies of God can meet in openness with each other to share what God is doing and to offer practical helps as to how we as a movement might most effectively related to the Holy Spirit and this end-time visitation." "Regional Conference on the Holy Spirit," *Glad Tidings*, July 1980.

⁵³ T. F. Zimmerman, "Introduction," in *Conference on the Holy Spirit Digest*, ed. Gwen Jones, vol. 1 (Springfield, MO: General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1983), 8. That the conference was initiated under the auspices and direction of the Assemblies of God and held in the city that houses its national headquarters should not go unnoticed.

⁵⁴ George O. Wood, "The Spirit and the Believer," in *Conference on the Holy Spirit Digest*, ed. Gwen Jones, vol. 1 (Springfield, MO: General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1983), 42-45; Klaude Kendrick, "Pentecostal Phenomena in Church

Two articles are particularly notable: the first entitled “Baptism in the Holy Spirit” by Episcopalian charismatic pioneer Dennis Bennett and the second by denominational Pentecostal Everett Stenhouse entitled “Unity in the Spirit.” Though Bennett spoke “as an Episcopal priest, [who] would seem in many ways removed from you in doctrine and practice,” he from the outset noted his own Spirit baptism and belief that “this experience is not optional, but a commandment of the Lord for all Christians.”⁵⁶ Stenhouse’s comments remain notable for their discussion of the theme of oneness: “The common denominator is the indwelling of the blessed Holy Spirit...the unity is not uniformity, and it may well be a unity amidst diversity.”⁵⁷ A positive and encouraging note, this theme of unity remains powerful and speaks loudly to the new tone in charismatic conversations with the mainline. Even so, the predominance of Assemblies of God influence—over eighty percent of the seminars were led by A/G leaders, pastors, or educators—even in a conference billed to be a “transdenominational” meeting

History,” in *Conference on the Holy Spirit Digest*, ed. Gwen Jones, vol. 1 (Springfield, MO: General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1983), 129-135.

⁵⁵ Robert Schmidgall, “The Holy Spirit in Corporate Worship,” in *Conference on the Holy Spirit Digest*, ed. Gwen Jones, vol. 2 (Springfield, MO: General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1983), 153-158; Marvin Gorman, “Slain in the Spirit,” in *Conference on the Holy Spirit Digest*, ed. Gwen Jones, vol. 2 (Springfield, MO: General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1983), 300-305.

⁵⁶ Dennis J. Bennett, “Baptized in the Holy Spirit,” in *Conference on the Holy Spirit Digest*, ed. Gwen Jones, vol. 1 (Springfield, MO: General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1983), 11.

⁵⁷ Everett Stenhouse, “Unity in the Spirit,” in *Conference on the Holy Spirit Digest*, ed. Gwen Jones, vol. 2 (Springfield, MO: General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1983), 69. For Stenhouse, at least, this unity remained a relatively generic thing lacking much specificity—at least here. What direction it was given seems as follows: “to obediently fulfill His commission to carry the gospel to the end of the earth. It will also prepare the Lord’s church for His return. In the unity of the Spirit we are able to anticipate with joy His wondrous return for that one Body in on Spirit.” *Ibid.*, 7. What exactly this unity would look like thus remained open.

featuring “more than 100 nationally known speakers”⁵⁸ reveals something much less than full openness to dialogue.

Interpreting the Assemblies of God’s Changing Perspective

The change in the relationship between the Assemblies of God and the Charismatic Movement was significant. Connected as it was—at least in David du Plessis’ eyes—to the larger ecumenical movement, there were numerous questions with which the Pentecostals had to wrestle before taking steps to embrace it. Further, even in those places where they did come to join hands with their Spirit-filled counterparts, the contrast between their halting connection with the Charismatics and du Plessis’s full acceptance requires some explanation and interpretation of the events thus far detailed.

The denomination’s “Resolution on the Charismatic Movement” provides clear insight into their complicated relationship with a revival it appeared to have so much in common with. The text of the resolution remains, as we have seen, rather simple in what it asserts: the Assemblies of God decided after some deliberation that the Charismatic Movement was a legitimate move of the Holy Spirit. Sharing words of welcome for a movement to which the right hand of fellowship should logically have been extended years before, it stands a stark reminder to the slow and methodical way the A/G sought to approach the charismatics. They would not wholeheartedly embrace them as had du Plessis, but at the same time remained hesitant or incapable of rejecting outright those who had such deep experiences with God’s own Spirit. Seen as both historically and

⁵⁸ A brief count of the authors involved in the two volumes detailing the conference shows that of the 104 different sessions, a full 87 were led by identifiable Assemblies of God members.

theologically “other,” the A/G kept them at arm’s length for as long as possible before welcoming them into the fold (with more than a few qualifications).

Along these lines, the Resolution is also notable for the issues it chose not to address in its few sentences. Among these is the question of du Plessis himself. Forcibly removed from the denomination fourteen years prior for his involvement with movements both ecumenical and charismatic, his official status vis-à-vis the A/G constituted a not insignificant question. Not addressing his situation in the Resolution indicates a persistent sense of disequilibrium or lack of consensus amongst denominational leaders as to the place of the South African and his work. So too the Resolution’s silence on the ecumenical issues du Plessis held dear is telling.

If the Charismatic Movement had to be ecumenical, the A/G was attempting to do everything in its power to mitigate or downplay that fact within its official statement. Indeed, the sometimes magisterial tone of the resolution also raises the issue of how the Assemblies viewed itself in relation to the charismatics. For if the Charismatic Movement was an ecumenical and free-floating revival of the Spirit as du Plessis had long suggested, the denomination’s actions towards it were summary and controlling. Seen optimistically, the denomination was simply attempting to offer the imprimatur of classical Pentecostalism upon the charismatics. Long hesitant because of fears theological, eschatological, ideological and otherwise, the A/G may have finally been ready to move to a place similar to that of David du Plessis years before—even if this shift ought to be qualified because of du Plessis’s much more expansive views of and relationship with the ecumenical movement.

Considered in a more cynical fashion, the Resolution had a good deal to do with controlling a development the A/G had refused to help initiate but which had grown to the point that it could not be ignored. The conferences proposed in the resolution would thus stand not as open-ended discussions but rather as a chance for the Assemblies to gain some measure of foothold amongst the charismatics, ostensibly to offer what it felt to be decades of additional experience on this still recent movement of Catholics and mainline Christians. In their resolution, subsequent conferences, and the actions they were to take from the mid-1970s into the early 1980s, one could persuasively argue the denomination was attempting to achieve order and control. In short, their dialogue was not of the open, ecumenical kind that du Plessis had pioneered years earlier. A simple comparison of the rather basic words of the resolution and the pragmatic topics it attempted to address with the much bolder and inventive actions of du Plessis in founding the often highly theological Roman Catholic Pentecostal Dialogue shows how little the A/G was willing to fully engage their charismatic counterparts.

Our understanding of these initial clues can be further developed by consulting the work of sociologist Margaret Poloma. Coming out of the Charismatic Movement herself, Poloma has dedicated a significant portion of her career to analyzing Pentecostalism as it develops and matures.⁵⁹ In her 1989 study entitled *The Assemblies of God at the Crossroads: Charisma and Institutional Dilemmas*, she asks a number of probing questions about denominational Pentecostalism. Along the way, a number of

⁵⁹ Among her works are Margaret Poloma and Ralph W., Jr. Hood, *Blood and Fire: Godly Love in a Pentecostal Emerging Church* (New York: New York University Press, 2008); Margaret Poloma, *The Charismatic Movement: Is There a New Pentecost?* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982); Margaret Poloma, *Mainstreet Mystics: The Toronto Blessing and Reviving Pentecostalism* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003) together with numerous other pieces.

what she calls “institutional dilemmas” are utilized in an attempt to probe the Assemblies’ growth and persistence, providing “a base upon which to present additional data and interpretation relevant to contemporary developments within the Assemblies of God”: mixed motivation, administrative order, power, delimitation, and the symbolic dilemma.⁶⁰

While each of Poloma’s dilemmas might be said to have some impact upon the issue of du Plessis and the Assemblies, two in particular stand out as worthy of attention. The first of these, administrative order, seems most appropriate in the context of our discussion as it has to do with “elaboration versus effectiveness...the tendency of a structure to overelaborate itself and make the organization an unwieldy machine” and “structures that were set in place at an earlier time [which] refuse to bend to change.”⁶¹ The tension of Spirit versus denominationalism that emerges here reflects the tone of the debate surrounding du Plessis’s drawn-out dismissal. Though perhaps most rightly seen in the context of a single denomination addressing the outliers in its midst—du Plessis’s “struggles of a prophet with a bureaucracy as well as a sense of mission given him by God” and “any number of would-be prophets who struggle against the organization”—this conflict is helpful in understanding the situation at hand. While not exhausting the

⁶⁰ Margaret Poloma, *The Assemblies of God at the Crossroads: Charisma and Institutional Dilemmas* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1989), 94-98. Though her work is now over twenty years old, the dilemmas she presents often refer back to developments during the period discussed in this project, making her work an important dialogue partner. This combined with the fact that relatively little sociological work has been undertaken in the area since this time means Poloma’s conclusions are a necessary starting point.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 96.

reasons for du Plessis's troubles, it does shed light on the difficulties faced by an individual in his situation.⁶²

The second of Poloma's dilemmas that applies to our discussion is that of delimitation. In brief,

delimitation addresses the threat to charismas which tends to relativize the original religious message in relation to new conditions. One horn of the dilemma is the danger of watering down the message to fit the times...this phenomenon may be observed in numerous ways in established churches where the call to conversion and change of lifestyle has long given way to rituals and accommodative forces. The other horn of the dilemma is a rigid observance of legalisms set up in an attempt to capture the charisma of the original religious movement. Legalistic rules, both proscriptive and descriptive, quench the charismatic fire and fervor.⁶³

As Poloma links the openness of the Assemblies (or lack thereof) and the emergence of charisma outside its denominational walls, she once again places du Plessis and the Charismatic Movement at the center of her discussion. The linked issues of mainline charismatics and Pentecostal fear of ecumenism represented an almost impermeable boundary for the denomination to cross. Though her judgment on the matter may be rather basic, it nevertheless aligns with much of the discussion here; concerning the 1973 resolution on the Charismatic Movement, she comments it "indicated that the Assemblies of God still had a charismatic spirit, but many events that followed have allowed institutional flesh to overpower spirit."⁶⁴ Seen as such, the problems of administrative order and delimitation help to establish a theoretical baseline for understanding and

⁶² Ibid., 132-133. As Poloma writes, "That prophets are in tension with organized religious bureaucracies is sociologically understandable. Prophets are dangerous to religious organization."

⁶³ Ibid., 162-163.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 183.

describing the conflict between institutionalism and autonomy or, more appropriately, spirit and law.

On this point both Poloma and historian Edith Blumhofer agree. Identity foreclosure with the larger movement of evangelicalism—that bogey of the du Plessis dismissal controversy—remains a cogent possibility here,⁶⁵ although as previously discussed the Assemblies’ bowing to the forces of respectability was likely indicative of larger issues which intervened and led the A/G down the road of boundaries, limits, association with evangelicalism, and hesitance towards the Charismatic Movement. All in all, much deeper than a need for respect was the need for control.

During the fifteen months of correspondence between du Plessis and the Executive Presbytery prior to his dismissal, the Assemblies of God made repeated efforts to reign in his activities culminating in an attempt at forced adherence to three specific demands. The leadership’s sometimes panicked approach to the publicity he was receiving in various newspaper articles without, apparently, taking a great deal of time to investigate the various claims reflects a need to minimize damages and quickly correct a concerning matter of public relations. While du Plessis himself cannot be exonerated for

⁶⁵ Ibid. Under the heading of delimitation, Poloma concludes “institutional limitations were stronger than charismatic outpourings in convincing many Assemblies of God leaders and followers that it was safer to stay within the evangelical harbor for interchurch dialogue than to venture into the wider seas.” In her final pages of her research she also notes, “The marriage between evangelicalism—and even a more conservative fundamentalism—with the Assemblies of God is not without great cost to charisma.” Blumhofer puts a finer point on the discussion: “By the post-World War II years most if not all of the American, white, trinitarian, Pentecostal denominations had shed the movement’s early restorationist stress on unity. Their reluctance to embrace it failed to check the spread of charismatic renewal in the Christian world. Assemblies of God leaders found it much simpler to identify with evangelicals than they did to embrace charismatics.” *Restoring the Faith*, 238. See also Walter Hollenweger, who largely repeats the familiar story of evangelical co-option. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 350ff.

his sometimes halting and limited responses to denominational authorities, his actions were not nearly as dire as the Assemblies of God supposed.

One recalls here the somewhat surprising disavowals and promises du Plessis made to the denomination in his letter of 4 August 1962.⁶⁶ Denying that he disparaged the A/G, rejecting the appellation of spokesman for the denomination, and noting he had never encouraged others to join an ecumenical group, he went so far as to indicate he had no intention of doing the things the Assemblies forbade. Startling in its seeming acceptance of all he has been asked to do, his promise to follow the course set for him in seems to have been summarily ignored by the Executive Presbytery, who not long after replied that his “letter offered no solution to the problem area which exists”⁶⁷ and took the final steps towards having him removed from the denomination. They decided that his very presence within their fellowship was more than they could risk.

Related questions of control have consistently been raised throughout the history of Pentecostalism. Whether attempting to organize in its early days, applying pressure on those who transgressed boundaries newly formed boundaries, or holding back the tide against those who resisted the new order, the movement has had its share of those who worked hard to keep those in this fellowship of the Spirit from spinning off into myriad and powerless divisions. As they did so they helped reveal a little of what historian Grant Wacker has termed “the ecumenism of the carnivore,” in context referring to the notion

⁶⁶ David J. du Plessis to Bartlett Peterson, TMs, August 4, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁶⁷ Bartlett Peterson to David J. du Plessis, TMs, September 14, 1962, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

that “everyone was welcome as long as they were willing to be devoured.”⁶⁸ Put more simply, the goal for Pentecostals was always getting others to join them. As we have seen in the evangelically ecumenical situation of Zimmerman and the NAE, hints of this remain even fifty years later. Understood in this way, the question of who was attempting to control whom in the relationship between the NAE and the A/G becomes much more complicated.

The “carnivorous” quality of Pentecostalism even led it to swallow those within its own midst whose actions flouted rules set down by those in leadership. In the case of the Assemblies of God, one recalls the decisions made in light of the “New Issue” and other early controversies as evidence of a deep desire for order in the midst of the sometimes idiosyncratic Spirit-led movement. By the time of the “New Order of the Latter Rain” in the 1940s and—as we shall see—the salvation/healing revivals of the 1950s and Charismatic Movement in the following decade, the Assemblies had a time-proven method of control and order for addressing such situations.

The growth of the denomination and its accompanying development as a structural and organizational force only buttressed these tendencies. When issues arose that tended more towards the Wacker definition of “primitivism,” the forces of pragmatic order were there armed with new tools and a deep memory of how to address such situations. As Pentecostal ecumenist and historian Cecil Robeck writes of contemporary developments in his revealingly titled “An Emerging Magisterium? The Case of the Assemblies of God,”

in recent years the Assemblies of God has increasingly, but on the whole unknowingly, adopted this same position [as the Roman Catholic Church]. Its

⁶⁸ Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*, 178.

executive officers, the General Presbytery, and together they have essentially removed the discussion of certain doctrines from the general fellowship.⁶⁹

Like most things in Pentecostalism, doctrine and practice have always been closely linked. As the group has, perhaps, unwittingly circumscribed acceptable doctrine so too it has done the same with respect to behaviors the leadership has found less than pleasing.

If denominational leaders saw David du Plessis as an unstable element moving far too quickly and unpredictably down the road of Pentecostal ecumenism and involvement in the Charismatic Movement, the Assemblies of God was by contrast the group that favored the slow and methodical approach towards similar involvement. Theirs, as we have seen, was an approach that had both real limits and great caution. Nevertheless, they did take huge steps from the days they evicted du Plessis to their Conferences on the Holy Spirit. The A/G resolution concerning the Charismatic Movement stands as testimony to its increasing involvement in such matters, even if, as we have seen, the Assemblies would only deal with outsiders on classical Pentecostal terms.

Stated differently, one might once again use the metaphor that du Plessis had much earlier in his life: that of the wheat and the chaff. Speaking to the very first World Pentecostal Conference in 1947, du Plessis used the images from Matthew 3 to discuss

⁶⁹ Cecil M. Robeck, "An Emerging Magisterium? The Case of the Assemblies of God," *Pneuma* 25 (Fall 2003): 170. While the doctrine under discussion here is one associated with glossolalia and the baptism in the Holy Spirit, there are clear parallels to other issues as Robeck, 179 writes "until late 1918, the Assemblies of God was willing to tolerate ambiguity on the subject and it could still do so because it did not believe the Statement of Fundamental Truths was a part of the Tradition. With the adoption of the Statement of Fundamental Truths, however, the Assemblies of God had begun to close the door on differences of opinion."

the differences between “on-fire-believers” and “older and experienced Pentecostals.”⁷⁰

As he further shared:

Just as the growing wheat on the field responds to every little breeze, so young Christians filled with the Holy Spirit will respond to the breezes of heaven...the precious brother or sisters who now brings such wonderful messages in tongues and interpretation or in prophecy was once as noisy as some of the worst shouters among the young converts.⁷¹

Though the context for du Plessis here precedes the first inklings of the Charismatic Movement by a full decade, his calls for balance between the passion and excess of newfound faith and the maturity and caution of more experienced believers reveals much of his irenic and open nature and the way he would come to interpret the later revival of the 1960s and 1970s.

Du Plessis’s language is not that of the sociologist, but nevertheless presages Poloma’s later interpretive turn when du Plessis comments on the complicated problems of charisma vis-à-vis institutions: “remember that when the floods come, it will not keep to our well-prepared channels, but it will overflow and most probably cause chaos in our regular programs.”⁷² All told, his passion for this wheat wherever it grew—though tempered with an awareness of the persistence of the chaff—constitutes his continuing review of Spirit-led revival in general and represented a much more open and embracing view than that for which the denominational institution seemed ready.

⁷⁰ David J. du Plessis, “Gather the Wheat-Burn the Chaff,” TMs, sermon preached at the opening of the First Pentecostal World Conference (Zurich, Switzerland, January 1947).

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

The Continuing Mission of David J. du Plessis

There were sometimes stark differences in the approaches utilized by the Assemblies of God and their sundered brother. It comes as no surprise to learn that even as the denomination was taking faltering steps towards embracing what du Plessis had over a decade and a half before, he was himself harvesting even more, exceeding even his earlier efforts and going further down the road of charismatic ecumenism.

Illustrative of du Plessis's continuing journey was his theological discussion of Jesus Christ as the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit. A tenet of Pentecostal faith from a time before there even was a specifically Pentecostal brand of faith, the idea was deeply coded into the movement's DNA.⁷³ Even so, du Plessis's formulation of it in the midst of charismatic discussions reflected this long held belief in an entirely new light. For charismatics coming from theological traditions not connected with those that gave rise to Pentecostalism, understanding Jesus Christ as the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit helped to distinguish that moment in the Christian life from the more specific presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers at the point of conversion or baptism with water.

As du Plessis wrote in 1967:

The first intimation in history that a baptism with the Spirit was a possible event in the life of the human being came from John the Baptist. However, he did not announce the *experience* but the *one who gave* such an experience. He clearly states that God had told him that Christ would be the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost.⁷⁴

⁷³ Donald Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Francis Asbury Press, 1987).

⁷⁴ David J. du Plessis, "Jesus Christ, The Baptizer in the Holy Spirit," *Advent Christian Witness*, May 1967, 4.

He went on to distinguish between being “baptized into one body by the Spirit,” which happened for the disciples as Jesus breathed the Spirit upon them in the gospel of John from the idea “that Jesus would *baptize* with the Spirit” as on the day of Pentecost, when “this spirit of the disciples was baptized into the Holy Spirit and their bodies were filled with the Holy Spirit.”⁷⁵

While some of this discussion would seem to be an exercise in theological hair-splitting, the real impact of du Plessis’s theological perspectives at this point help to correct the mistaken notion that Pentecostals refused to admit any presence of the Holy Spirit in the non-charismatic believer. The Spirit, du Plessis noted, was not absent from any believer but rather active and present from the moment of conversion. All the same, the deeper experience of the Spirit given by Jesus Christ himself—the baptism in the Spirit—was a subsequent experience in the believer’s life. Du Plessis’s words represent willingness for theological explication and engagement in fields that his more cautious denominational brethren had not yet thought to enter. As Ron McConnell shares in a paper co-authored by he and du Plessis, part of the South African’s genius here was his avoidance of “an awkward and superimposed “new” theology” for non-Pentecostals by showing how “‘baptism’ in the Holy Spirit can take place within the framework of an existing theology.”⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Ibid., 15.

⁷⁶ David J. du Plessis and Ron McConnell, “Charismatic Experience and Christian Theology: An Attempt at Theological Reconciliation,” TMs, ca 1977, 18. The author continues: “in doing so, he has helped many, including Roman Catholics, to better understand their own theology and faith.” While this last statement may be a bit optimistic, that du Plessis was actively pursuing such dialogue and teaching shows an openness that far outstripped his Pentecostal peers, especially in 1967.

Du Plessis's thought further reflects theological development and openness when one considers his discussions of Spirit baptism proper. Interesting and insightful in this respect are the images he utilized to describe the work of the Spirit in the life of the believer. Using the metaphor of water, du Plessis again parsed the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Speaking to a group of Catholics, he compared the "drink" of water/Spirit Jesus gives at the moment of conversion with the baptism in Spirit/water Jesus gives at another point in the Christian life. He was very keen on distinguishing between the two as separate experiences:

Jesus offered NOT a baptism, he began by offering you a drink, and I cannot understand why we now link the drink to the baptism. And this is the problem: is the drink a baptism or is the baptism a drink? And that's what helped me, for a baptism is UPON you and I've never seen a drop get into the candidate. I've watched priests baptize babies, I've never seen them get a sip....Even in immersion the water comes on you and never into you, and already I think you begin to see it.⁷⁷

The end result of theological reformulation or restatement in the midst of this audience is that, while not necessarily diverging from the bounds of classical Pentecostalism and biblical language, du Plessis nevertheless indicated a willingness to dialogue with and explain the message of Pentecost in ways that had not been done before and with respect to theologies Pentecostalism had never engaged. It represents an approach that, far from controlling or limited, attempted to dialogue with traditional mainline theologies on their own terms.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ David J. du Plessis, "Know What You Have," TMs, n.d. , David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁷⁸ Ibid. An amusing passage here goes so far as to share du Plessis's views on the place of Mary: "I said, 'Well, as she's the Mother of Jesus.' He says, 'And then?' I said, 'Isn't Jesus the bridegroom?' 'Yes.' 'Who's the bride?' 'The church, of course.' 'Well,' I said, 'but we're still courting. We haven't come to the marriage of the Lamb yet. But

Concerns regarding baptism, the place of Jesus Christ, the theological mechanics of Holy Spirit baptism and other matters pervaded his writing. He even offered a reinterpretation of the long-held belief that the Day of Pentecost was the “birthday” of the Church in his attempt to erect a wide tent and avoid an over-emphasis on Spirit baptism as a constitutive element of necessary Christianity:

And [Jesus] said to them, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth” and breathed on them and said, “Receive ye the Spirit.” The church was born right there...Pentecost...was not a maternity ward, it was a baptismal font; and can you baptize anything that hasn’t been born? How could the church have been born on the day of Pentecost?⁷⁹

Discussing matters openly and flexibly was an important practice that those in a fixed denominational home like the Assemblies of God seemed somewhat less willing to undertake. Perhaps because of the potential for open-ended discussions or results that did not fall cleanly into line with established doctrine, the Assemblies during the period of the 1970s and early 1980s—while making increasing deeper forays into related discussions—often did so at a much more cautious pace than du Plessis.

While remaining a classical Pentecostal in theological orientation, du Plessis’s approach to the Charismatic Movement—and by extension ecumenical matters—was far from the classical Pentecostal approach to matters. Despite the great steps the A/G had taken towards embracing the Charismatic Movement, in the end he simply engaged more

after the marriage of the Lamb, then I’ll be quite happy to acknowledge Mary as Mother-in law of the church.””

⁷⁹ Ibid. Though du Plessis’s description of the matter is complicated by the fact that a person’s baptism in water is only used symbolically here as a means of explaining another spiritual principle and not meant to be taken as a part of the specific discussion or salvation or Spirit baptism, it still remains a fascinating interpretation of a more commonly held view for a wider audience.

and went farther than his former denomination. His was an approach bolder, more open, and seemingly more irenic than others.

Even so, du Plessis was not without his own prejudices and feelings on matters theological and otherwise. Just as the A/G had its own readily identifiable boundaries, so too there remained limits to du Plessis's approach. Ever the Pentecostal and clearly more on the conservative end of the theological spectrum, du Plessis shared an early and in certain cases persistent mindset that divided matters in the categories of "liberal" and "conservative." For instance, when discussing some of his early interactions with the ecumenical movement, he makes sure to insist that the majority of individuals there are not of the unfortunate liberal type, but rather good bible-believing brothers. Indeed, of his attendance at the 1954 WCC meeting in Evanston, Illinois, he wrote

one could find people of almost every persuasion from Roman Catholics to Fundamentalists...some of the "liberals" were shocked to hear so much evidence of evangelical and fundamental theology. "This is awful," said one. "I certainly did not come all this way to listen to a theology from which I escaped 10 years ago.

Most of the Evangelical friends that spoke to me expressed their complete surprise and delight at finding so many "evangelical minded" friends in the World Council, and at hearing such strong fundamental expressions in the addressees.⁸⁰

While clearly very early in du Plessis's ecumenical dealings, this brief glimpse nevertheless shows that there was, at least initially, some framework for theologically assessing the validity of various individuals. Whether this liberal/conservative schema changed radically or finally mattered in his ecumenical and charismatic dealings is

⁸⁰ David J. du Plessis, "The World Council of Churches," *Pentecost*, December 1954.

difficult to determine, for he tended to say little overtly about such matters during the extent of his career.

Further, though it cannot be certain what du Plessis felt towards those of the more progressive or liturgical strain who desired nothing to do with the Charismatic Movement, the individuals with whom he did minister tended to be those already inclined towards acceptance of more traditional biblical and theological views like John Mackay, Dennis Bennett, and various Catholic leaders.⁸¹ On the other end, rigid fundamentalists and their evangelical cousins who held to sometimes cessationist and overly intellectual positions garnered much ilk from du Plessis, who blamed them for an un-Pentecostal conservatizing of the Assemblies and its dismissal of his ministry in the early 1960s. As he recounts telling Thomas Zimmerman during a later interview, “I can no longer associate with them [the NAE] because they will not allow us to preach the truth, to preach the pentecostal message.”⁸² Though not indicative of an unwillingness to minister in a certain field, these particular prejudices help us to understand that du Plessis’s irenic

⁸¹ Corwin Schmidt suggests that charismatic experience heightens conservatism, yet the corollary to this might also be true—namely that a more conservative background may help predispose an individual towards some openness to the revival. “Praise the Lord’ Politics: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Characteristics and Political Views of American Evangelical and Charismatic Christians,” *Sociological Analysis* (Spring 1989): 53-72. Dennis Bennett should be mentioned at this juncture, for he describes himself as fairly conservative in the years before his period of charismatic experience. Speaking of the theological school he attended, he stated it “was of the most extreme ‘liberal humanist’ persuasion,” such that “I hadn’t been there long before I found that my beliefs were to be challenged.” When such a challenge came in the form of friendly advice from a senior student, Bennett reflects “his argument didn’t convince me, because, having met Jesus, I knew He was the divine Son of God.” He also speaks with respect to his Episcopal denomination, commenting on the power of the Creeds to uphold orthodoxy “no matter how much a layman or priest might deny the basic truths of the Faith or of the Scripture.” *Nine O’Clock in the Morning*, 10.

⁸² “Agora Talks to David du Plessis,” *Agora*, Summer 1978, 9.

approach was as much about his temperament as it was about the level of compatibility others had with his own personal brand of Pentecostalism. When confronted with others within his own denomination or on the outside with whom he shared less in common, mutual opposition and on occasion less than positive confrontations would result.

A connected though somewhat undeveloped line of investigation revolves around du Plessis's views on race. As a South African and world figure at a time when the system of apartheid came under increasing scrutiny and criticism by the world community, du Plessis was well placed to extend his unique ministry to address the issue. That he did not raises questions about his personal racial beliefs. In an *Agora* magazine interview, he admitted that though he had tried integration early on during his ministry, racial realities won the day. When asked by the interviewer whether this was “just a capitulation of scriptural ideal to the pragmatic problems of a sinful status quo,” du Plessis answered, “Yes. Well, what can you do? The trouble is not simply blacks and whites. It's a problem of sinful hearts.”⁸³ With that the interview ends. Little else in the extent record reveals much about du Plessis's view of apartheid or racism proper. Though perhaps the case could be made that his ministry focused on other matters, his drive for unity in the Spirit, openness, and—as we shall see, forgiveness—are well suited for application in this area. That du Plessis never connected these principles to issues of race raises numerous questions about his silent complicity.

In his own research, Brinton Rutherford has probed du Plessis's understanding of forgiveness for those mainline churches that ostracized Pentecostalism when it first began. For du Plessis, who later in life took to wearing pins emblazoned with the logo

⁸³ “Agora Talks to David du Plessis,” 13ff.

“70x7,” personal comprehension of the need to forgive past hurts and move through his fears was what ultimately helped him minister within ecumenical and charismatic circles.⁸⁴ Appearing both in writings of the 1960s and with increasing frequency as he moved into the 1970s and beyond, the idea of forgiveness became a touchstone for him.

Rutherford has spent a great deal of time and research deconstructing the facts of the matter, particularly with regards to the exact chronology by which du Plessis came to this new understanding of forgiveness. Whatever the case, that he did so near the end of his life represents his own reflection on what he had been doing over the past three decades:

I realized that our problems centered around the table of the Lord, and the Lord’s Body....I know how others have tried my spirit and totally misjudged me. I had also come to learn that because of prejudice and an unforgiving attitude, I had been guilty of judging the spirits of others falsely. How can I be sure that I shall never misjudge anyone?...Have I ever prayed, “Forgive us Pentecostals our sins as we forgive those Protestants and Roman Catholics that have sinned against us?” Indeed not.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Brinton Rutherford states “du Plessis used a mixture of life events, historical inaccuracies, and creative legends to successfully communicate theological truth to a diverse, ecumenical audience. He successfully communicated a message of love and forgiveness based on the sacrificial life and death of Jesus Christ to two generations.” “From Prosecutor to Defender: An Intellectual History of David J. du Plessis, Drawn From the Stories of His Testimony” (Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2000), (abstract). While caution in fully trusting his recollections has been a constant throughout this project, I have no doubt as to the sincerity of du Plessis’s emotion and sentiment as he shared.

⁸⁵ Du Plessis reflected powerfully on the theme that increasingly dominated the end of his life. When asked the secret of his success he responded, “I pray the prayer the Lord showed me. On the cross of Calvary the Lord prayed a prayer that is more effective, more powerful than even the prayer “Our Father” or the prayer for unity in John 17. On the cross Jesus prayed to the Father, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” It is a prayer for saint and sinner, past, present, and future. Christian forgiveness must be offered unconditionally. I’ve learned that I must forgive, and not try to change people. God will change them. That’s the secret of my success.” du Plessis, “The Renewal of Christianity Must Be Both Charismatic and Ecumenical.”

Whether this forgiveness applied ultimately to those fundamentalists, evangelicals, and liberals who rejected or stymied his approach remains open; that he faced and began to overcome limits beyond which he did not feel his ministry or irenicism could go earlier in his life—with admittedly, the seeming exclusion of the important racial question— seems certain. As stated in an interview for the charismatic journal *Christian Herald* in 1977, “[God] told me to preach the gospel and stop judging. The role I now attempt to fill is that of public defender, have mercy on everybody. God can take care of the judging.”⁸⁶

Both du Plessis and the Assemblies of God denomination faced limits regarding developments in the Charismatic Movement and the linked ecumenical movement. Though the great weight of those issues fell on the side of denominational Pentecostalism seeking delimitation and authority in the midst of the accelerating revival, it is clear that du Plessis in his own way struggled with complicated issues as he attempted to walk the tightrope of life as a classical Pentecostal called to ecumenical ministry. His was a personal journey, borne out of a shared Pentecostal history and a story all his own. Both du Plessis and the Assemblies of God, despite their own respective concerns and issues, continued to develop in their relationship with the growing and enthusiastic Charismatic Movement throughout the 1960s and 1970s. For du Plessis this meant increased ecumenical ties, theological reformulation of Pentecostal doctrines, and discussions of Pentecost far and wide increasingly under the umbrella of forgiveness and irenicism. For the A/G, this meant a slow and cautious approach that sought to control the terms of the discussion. For both it was another step into the unknown, albeit one necessary in light of the fervor for Pentecost arising out of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

⁸⁶ “‘What the Spirit Saith Unto the Churches’: A Conversation with David du Plessis,” *Christian Herald*, September 1977, 62.

Ultimately the developments charted here may best be represented by a series of three dichotomies that represent the new ways in which du Plessis and the Assemblies sought to interact with the ecumenically seasoned Charismatic Movement. The first of these is in the contrast between spontaneity and caution. Where the Assemblies would pause, reflect, and take small steps towards engagement in a controlled environment through study, resolution, or sponsoring their own conferences, du Plessis seems often to have barreled into discussions even as he relates charging into the headquarters of the WCC in 1951.⁸⁷

The second contrast is between forgiveness and skepticism. Though we have here seen that the idea of forgiveness was one with which du Plessis struggled and seems to develop most fully near the end of his life, he very early on seemed to have moved past the inherited Pentecostal skepticism of movements ecumenical, mainline, or “other.” The Assemblies of God, while making important strides in this direction, still seemed by the 1970s and beyond to have a certain implicit skepticism regarding the ecumenical issues swirling around the Charismatic Movement. That their 1962 resolution on the ecumenical movement remained in effect speaks well to this fact.

A third and final contrast that illustrates the changing ways in which denominational Pentecostals such as the Assemblies of God and an ecumenical Pentecostal maverick such as David Johannes du Plessis diverged focuses upon vision, namely worldwide versus parochial. While Pentecostals of all stripes have had from their very inception a deep passion for outreach, du Plessis’s moves vis-à-vis the ecumenical movement and Charismatic Movement represented a new field of missions that was

⁸⁷ David J. du Plessis, *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), 13.

worldwide in ways beyond mere geography. Through his efforts, he sought to spread the message of Pentecost amongst any who would listen—often without the fears, limits, or theological caution with which others of his theological background maintained.

The Assemblies of God, however, did not immediately see matters in this way and chose to divorce the charismatic and ecumenical pieces of du Plessis's vision, limiting the more spontaneous and free developments that occurred within his ministry. Theirs was not an intentional parochialism, for they as du Plessis felt strongly the energy of the new Pentecost. Nevertheless, even as they moved to embrace more and more of the movement in the 1970s, the sense of control, skepticism, and caution with which they approached the renewal helped to show that they, at least initially, would brook matters only on their terms—a move that transcribed their involvement and necessarily limited the impact they may have had in the midst of a renewal du Plessis insisted must be charismatic and ecumenical.

CONCLUSION

THE LESSONS OF PENTECOST

The epilogue to the story of David du Plessis is in many ways an anticlimactic one. In the midst of a life full of international travel, controversy, and ecumenical connections at the highest levels, his eventual reinstatement to the Assemblies of God happened without much fanfare. If nothing else, it was an ironic culmination to a career anything but standard, taking place as almost an afterthought in a period marked by great change. Du Plessis, for his part, was the same as he had ever been: peripatetic purveyor of Pentecost to any group that would listen. At even the close of his life he remained committed to the unitive aspects of the Spirit. For him the work was never a matter of convincing others to join his group so much as it was letting them experience the Spirit as he had. His personal sense of call to be an ambassador helping bring all into unity had been present from his earliest days and never faltered throughout his long life.

The role played by the Assemblies of God in this final chapter is somewhat less in keeping with its longer history but which nonetheless makes sense when viewed as a part of a larger trajectory. If David du Plessis had remained fairly steady in his personal convictions and the directions of his efforts, the A/G had followed a much more halting path of change, internal questioning, and gradual openness. Yet even though the eventual detente was on their terms only, it nevertheless marked a decided about face from the days of the du Plessis controversy in the early 1960s. The Assemblies of God, in their own way and for their own reasons, had altered their position so that by the beginning of the 1980s they felt safe in readmitting their sundered brother.

Ironically, du Plessis's readmission to the fold occurred just as the Charismatic Movement itself had begun to falter and fade as a transdenominational ecumenical enterprise. The decision for reinstatement thus took place at a point in which both because of his age and the direction of the times there was little more damage that du Plessis would be able to inflict. To adopt a hermeneutic of suspicion at this point seems tempting, but ultimately assumes that the denomination knew how things were going to work themselves out—a kind of foresight unlikely at the time. Rather, the development and growing openness of the A/G towards the Charismatic Movement (even if only on their terms) led to the decision that it was time to come together once again despite differences in style.

As this concluding chapter looks at the process by which du Plessis's restoration took place, the denomination's actions must not be seen in isolation but as part of a much broader story. The reinstatement serves as an important bookend to a period defined by significant cleavage between David du Plessis and the Assemblies of God. Historical developments within the Pentecostal denomination and outside trends in the 1970s led to a cooling of emotions that culminated in du Plessis' reacceptance in 1980. Ultimately, this *détente* between antagonists provides space for us to consider the ways in which the controversy reflected on Pentecostalism broadly, the changing character of the larger movement, and the possibilities for continued dialogue between it and other religious expressions in our age of burgeoning worldwide Pentecostalism.

We begin here with the process of du Plessis' reinstatement to the Assemblies of God, not so much because of the specific detail it reveals but because it provides insight into the tenor of a conflict briskly moving towards resolution. Especially in light of the

contentious and widespread correspondence that accompanied his dismissal in 1962, the reversal of that decision nearly twenty years later seems to have taken place with a minimum of controversy or delay. Like the first decision, much of the extent record takes the form of official minutes and correspondence and between du Plessis and denominational officials.

The first hint of du Plessis's return comes from A/G Executive Presbytery meetings in the late 1970s.¹ Finally amenable to the prospect of reconciliation, they during their October 1979 extended a friendly invitation to du Plessis.² This remains particularly interesting not only because of their forceful ejection of the evangelist two decades prior, but also because of decisions made only a few years before by the same governing body. In 1976, for example, an issue arose over the publication of du Plessis's name in an advertisement in the *Pentecostal Evangel*. The EP decided "to omit David du Plessis' name from a camp advertising in the "Evangel" and inform the Michigan District that it is not in our policy to publicize his name."³ The following year the same governing body decided that du Plessis should not receive a proposed honorary degree from an Assemblies of God college because "anyone so honored should be a person who

¹ A matter "relative to David du Plessis" arose in the Executive Presbytery and was forwarded to the General Council Credentials Committee. "Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes," March 26, 1977, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO. Following their review, "the Executive Presbytery concurs with the action of the Resolutions Committee with respect to resolutions submitted that pertain to David du Plessis' reinstatement," in this case towards the goal of his readmittance. "Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes," June 4, 1979, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

² "Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes," October 15, 1979, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

³ "Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes," April 14, 1976, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

has general acceptability with the Assemblies of God.”⁴ Thus even in the years approaching his return to the fold and the simultaneous warming in relations between the A/G and the Charismatic Movement, there seems to have been at least some measure of resistance to his actions and legacy. Du Plessis’s reinstatement, while reflective of the changing state of Pentecostal/Charismatic relations, nevertheless represents a new and definitive direction taken by a group that had not long before held views somewhat counter.

General Superintendent Thomas Zimmerman made official contact with du Plessis in October 1979, noting, “I am pleased to invite you to join with us in a time of conversation and fellowship during the November meeting.”⁵ A few weeks later du Plessis accepted their offer “with keen anticipation that we shall find God’s will and His way to bring about an arrangement that will satisfy all the people of God.”⁶ During the meeting a conversation took place with Assemblies of God leaders unlike any that had gone before. According to the minutes,

The general superintendent gave some background for the occasion of meeting together with Brother du Plessis, following which Brother du Plessis was invited to share whatever was upon his heart. He gave a history of the Lord's leading in his life.

⁴ “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” March 28, 1977, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, MO.

⁵ Thomas F. Zimmerman to David J. du Plessis, TMs, October 19, 1979, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁶ David J. du Plessis to Thomas F. Zimmerman, TMs, November 10, 1979, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. Zimmerman acknowledged receipt of the letter in further correspondence, confirming the EP would “look forward to you coming to Springfield to meet...on Wednesday, November 28.” Thomas F. Zimmerman to David J. du Plessis, TMs, November 16, 1979, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Later in the interview he was asked if he desired to have an organic relationship with the Assemblies of God by having his credentials reinstated. He indicated that this was his desire, and was given a Reinstatement Application for Ordained Ministers.⁷

Officially encouraged to apply for reinstatement through the bureaucracy in his current district, the leadership concluded the meeting in prayer: “executive presbyters gathering around Brother du Plessis and praying for God's continued blessing upon him and his ministry.”⁸ To say that no one could have anticipated such an occurrence is an understatement, but it does fit with the trajectory of development within the A/G. The Charismatic Movement of which du Plessis was so much a part and to which the Assemblies sought increasing ties therefore had direct impact on the relationship between two twenty year strangers.

Following the meeting with the Executive Presbytery niceties continued on an official level. Zimmerman wrote a brief letter thanking not “Brother du Plessis,” but “Brother David” for his attendance on 29 November, reiterating “as I mentioned to you, please feel free to contact me at any time.”⁹ During the 7 December meeting of the Executive Presbytery they further decided to reimburse his travel costs. For his part Du Plessis quickly followed their instructions regarding reinstatement and contacted the Northern Californian/Nevada District. Following brief discussion in that jurisdiction, “a motion prevailed to recommend that David du Plessis be reinstated as an ordained

⁷ “Assemblies of God Executive Presbytery Minutes,” November 26-28, 1979, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Thomas F. Zimmerman to David J. du Plessis, TMs, November 29, 1979, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

minister and that his application be endorsed...and that he be approved on the strength of the interview with the General Council Credentials Committee.”¹⁰

General Secretary Joseph Flower Official gave official notice of his restoration in a letter dated 6 February 1980.¹¹ Du Plessis responded in turn on 15 February and stated, “the kindness and confidence of my Executive Brethren is deeply appreciated.”¹² Flower wrote more a few weeks later: “It is wonderful how the Lord has opened so many doors for you, and we trust that the Lord will continue to undergird you and give you the strength needed for your many responsibilities.”¹³

The relationship between du Plessis and Zimmerman warmed even further. An April 1980 letter between the two men dropped all formalities, with du Plessis calling Zimmerman “Tom” and discussing a number of his ecumenical enterprises including a

¹⁰ Northern California and Nevada District Presbytery, “Conference Call Minutes,” December 27, 1979, Northern California/Nevada District Office. Current district official Jay Herndon noted, “You need to understand, the General Council does not issue credentials on its own, without the intermediary of a district. And they rarely force credential issues on a district or overturn their recommendation. In this case, however, the matter was clearly a General Council one that did not involve our district. The General Council interviewed David du Plessis (I’ve never known this to happen) and decided that his credentials should be returned without any district involvement. Nevertheless, once they were satisfied they still needed a district to process the reinstatement, and so they asked our district to make the recommendation. Although clearly it wasn’t our recommendation, but theirs.” Jay Herndon to Joshua Ziefle, “RE: David Du Plessis,” November 27, 2008.

¹¹ Joseph R. Flower to David J. du Plessis, TMs, February 6, 1980, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹² David J. du Plessis to Joseph R. Flower, TMs, February 15, 1980, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹³ Joseph R. Flower to David J. du Plessis, TMs, March 4, 1980, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

“matter of the PENTECOSTAL/CATHOLIC DIALOGUE.”¹⁴ The South African’s invitation to and speaking presence at the Assemblies-sponsored Conference on the Holy Spirit further underscores the rapprochement taking place and the new era that was dawning in the relationship between these two branches of Pentecostalism. A letter from Zimmerman to du Plessis in the summer of 1980 further confirms this conclusion as he asked the South African to include his in a group of “testimonies from various individuals concerning the contemporary outpouring of the Holy Spirit” at the upcoming September event.¹⁵

Though reinstatement had seemed a pipe dream in the early 1960s and, as we have seen, looked far from likely even in the years leading up to the 1979 decision, when it occurred it did so with marked rapidity and a willingness to look beyond the mistakes and patterns of the past. Forward progress and engagement with the Charismatic Movement was the hallmark of the day for both the Assemblies and du Plessis. Yet during the period when he returned, there were signs that the revival was losing some of its visibility and ecumenical direction. Du Plessis noted his own fears for the movement’s increasing tendency to retreat from inter-denominational connections towards intra-denominational conversations in a 1975 interview:

Lately I’ve been noticing something that greatly disappoints me: a trend toward holding prayer meetings only for members of a particular church, discarding the ecumenical approach. I sincerely hope the charismatic renewal

¹⁴ David J. du Plessis to Thomas F. Zimmerman, TMs, April 10, 1980, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁵ Thomas F. Zimmerman to David J. du Plessis, TMs, July 11, 1980, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA; “Information Sheet: Regional Conference on the Holy Spirit (Northeast),” TMs, September 1980, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

will continue to be ecumenical. My experience has been that when prayer groups become sectarian in spirit things go onto a dead-end street. I've seen prayer groups flounder and fade away because they tried to become exclusively Catholic, or exclusively Presbyterian, or Methodist, or Episcopalian, or whatever. These groups made their own customs and traditions, their own "cultural baggage," a hindrance to fellowship with others. When the ecumenical spirit disappears, the spirit of renewal also dries out.¹⁶

For du Plessis, such changes were anathema because they contradicted what he perceived to be the entire purpose and direction of the movement.

Other chroniclers of the time agree the movement peaked during the mid to late 1970s, with the 1977 Kansas Charismatic Conference representing the great high-water mark of the revival's scope and influence: "certainly, CR [Charismatic Renewal] in the historic churches was no longer a novelty and attracted less attention...most would agree that the élan and promise of the Kansas City conference did not last."¹⁷ Historian Vinson Synan summarizes matters well when he refers to the Kansas City Conference as a "cresting of the movement in America" after which "various charismatic denominational groups returned to their separate annual conferences" and "diversification and regionalization became the order of the day."¹⁸ These developments in the early 1980s helped lead the state of the movement today, where in the United States only tamer and more diffuse aspects of the once very public and decidedly ecumenical revival still

¹⁶ David J. du Plessis, "New Covenant Tenth Anniversary Interview," 1975, David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

¹⁷ P. D. Hocken, "Charismatic Movement," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, revised and expanded. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 485.

¹⁸ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 263.

persist. Put simply, the ecumenical hopes du Plessis and others shared have not reached realization.

All of this is not to imply that the Assemblies simply utilized a finely honed political calculus in deciding when to readmit du Plessis. They did not wait for the movement to die before approaching du Plessis; rather, they simply required a great deal of time to ponder all its implications. The Assemblies of God, while pleased that others had embraced the Spirit in the early 1960s, were hesitant of the ecumenical and theological implications of the movement in such a way that only time could temper. During the intervening decades du Plessis simply continued his work amongst the non-Pentecostals, whether purely ecumenical in nature or more focused upon the Protestant and Roman Catholic Charismatic Movement and all their derivations. To this the Assemblies of God, with their cautious and slow approach, were definite latecomers to a movement they seemed fully willing to embrace only when it failed to confirm their fears and within a context in which they could feel they had some measure of oversight.

If the baptism in the Holy Spirit of which du Plessis spoke had indeed to do with fire, his preference was for a kind of “wildfire” that would not only touch those in need but go further. The ecumenism he sought was one that revolved around the work of the Spirit—the most mysterious and least defined member of the Trinity—and as such was open to the multiple directions it might take. By contrast, the Assemblies of God was stilted, authoritarian, and glacial in its actions regarding du Plessis and the burgeoning Charismatic Movement. Even so, this does not mean that the A/G was entirely deaf to the movement or sought its demise. While questions arose about the ecumenism in which du Plessis was involved, the idea of working with individuals from other

denominations was something they had undertaken in an extremely limited form through their relationship with the NAE in the early 1940s. Further, around the time of the initial outbreak of the Charismatic Movement they too made positive comments regarding the potential of the work of the Spirit in places beyond their own denomination.

When compared with du Plessis's relationship to the Charismatic Movement, the Assemblies displayed a deep-seated sense of caution that had long since become one of its hallmarks. Borne neither out of malice nor pettiness but rather out of the experiences of "wildfire" and dissension within their own history, the vigilance with which they approached this seeming outlier becomes more understandable. Faced with yet another situation that might negatively affect their group, they decided upon caution and deliberation as sufficient remedies to the speed and abandon with which the new "Mr. Pentecost" seemed to be moving. The A/G was by this point no longer a small group of early twentieth century ministers meeting in a town in Arkansas curious about the way forward, but a national and international organization with structures and bureaucracies that had developed over time. Their position vis-à-vis the issues that comprise the focus of this research, though unfortunate for du Plessis, are nevertheless understandable in light of the historical and administrative realities faced by the group.

Whatever the reasons for their divergence and unique perspectives, when the concerns of the South African ecumenist and his adopted denomination came together in the early years of the 1960s a collision occurred that generated no small number of repercussions. The ejection of du Plessis and his long sojourn outside official Pentecostalism was not something he had welcomed, but which in the long term had proved to be helpful in his larger mission to share the message of the Spirit. During the

years of his exile the Assemblies of God did not remain static in their position, but through their own mix of interest, caution, and bureaucracy took halting steps towards acceptance of the movement and all it entailed, even if always in their own way.

As du Plessis continued to push the bounds of his calling through ongoing dialogue and ecumenical work, the A/G finally reconciled with him and his mission, seeking the rapprochement detailed above. When they began in some instances to work together on issues of mutual interest, the two partners found themselves in a place they could have been two decades earlier had it not been for the intervening realities that separated them.

The lessons learned from the story of David J. du Plessis and his relationship with official Pentecostalism in the form of the Assemblies of God are multiple and important. One is historiographic in nature, and points to a need for reevaluation of some long-held views about the Assemblies of God and its supposed long march towards accommodation with the surrounding religious culture and climate. From du Plessis himself through to historian Edith Blumhofer, a popular theory has been that his ejection had to do with the denomination's closer association with American evangelicals.¹⁹ As the logic goes, A/G participation with the religious subgroup both represented and encouraged a deep need

¹⁹ Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 232ff. While Blumhofer referred to existing Pentecostal eschatological fears of the "World Church" as contributing to decisions about the ecumenical movement, an evangelical leavening is also suggested: "The remarkable growth and continued vitality of charismatic renewal movements helped reveal how thoroughly denominationalized classical Pentecostalism had become. Evangelical priorities seemed solidly entrenched." Ibid., 238. See also Walter Hollenweger, who reiterates the NAE's impact upon the du Plessis dismissal and cites Martin Robinson and Russell Spittler in support. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 353.

for respect and acceptance. Whatever evangelicals deemed important was then seen to be ported—sometimes wholesale—into Assemblies practice.

While there are signs of this within the record, the situation du Plessis faced had more to do with his own sweeping actions and the history of a denomination that had long faced the prospect of numerous outliers and challengers to its authority. In short, the Assemblies of God sought control of du Plessis's actions and the establishment of order in the midst of developments it felt were dangerous. Du Plessis by comparison saw little need for outside management of matters that to him were clearly Spirit-led.

In their own way both were attempting to remain true to their particular vision of Pentecost. Enough has been said about du Plessis in this regard, but for the Assemblies of God it was simply a matter of doing as much as it could to help to retain the revival in the ways they saw fit. An important result of this research, then, is not to paint the denomination in a negative light as have those accusing it of accommodation, but rather to understand it as it was—past history, present fears, and future hopes all in tow. That David du Plessis and the Assemblies of God were not in line in the early 1960s seems clear; that developments led them back together and showed the openness of a denomination that in the very least had softened its perspective during those years appears equally true.

Amidst the possible reasons the Assemblies of God chose to readmit du Plessis, two related suggestions are worth briefly considering because of the insights they provide into the issues that have comprised the focus of this research. A first possibility posits the co-option of du Plessis as a means of tempering his actions and assuming nominal authority and direction over his actions may thus be the reason for the Assemblies'

decision in 1979-80. A helpful strategy from the denomination's standpoint, it is unlikely considering the fact that by this point du Plessis was already approaching advanced age and much of his life's work had already been completed. Though there was, as always, more for an energetic soul like him to do, for the A/G to decide that twenty years later was a good time to corral the ecumenist seems peculiar at best. Moreover, the very circumstances by which his disfellowshipping took place seems to show that there was very little control to be had over one so sure of his calling and place as du Plessis. As Thomas Zimmerman knew this firsthand, it was unlikely he would try to force the issue again.

More likely than a blunt co-option of du Plessis in order to control his actions is the second possibility: a simple desire to have him "join the team" in a world that now included official denominational acceptance and support for the Charismatic Movement. A more studied co-option might be then assumed, not of his current and continuing actions but rather of his long legacy in the renewal. The Assemblies of God realized that there were more important matters to discuss and issues to contend for than a twenty-year conflict with a minister whose views seemed rather less controversial than they had in 1960. As the main issue moved from the sensitive topic of ecumenism towards the more acceptable and now-developed Charismatic Movement, it was easier for the A/G to be generous in its dealings with du Plessis. Though neither in 1980 nor to this day have they entirely recanted their discomfort with the kind of ecumenism in which du Plessis was involved,²⁰ the developments and progression in their relationship with the Spirit-based

²⁰ General Council of the Assemblies of God, "Minutes of the Fifty-Second General Council of the Assemblies of God," August 8, 2007. Article IX, Section 11 encourages mutual cooperation with those of evangelical beliefs, but also states, "The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall not belong to any interdenominational or

revival softened the blow of readmitting one who had by now become an important face—not so much of inter-church efforts with “liberals,” but of dedicated work with charismatics the world over.

The Assemblies’ eventual acceptance of “Mr. Pentecost” necessitates obvious reevaluation of the earlier controversy. It is therefore worth pondering the verity of the often heroic imagery associated with David J. du Plessis. While the notion of a solitary righteous figure standing against the heartless machine may be a ready archetype, it fails to acknowledge the complexities of the historical record. Even so, some of the myth of du Plessis as the hero of the Charismatic Movement remains. It goes without saying that he was an innovator within classical Pentecostalism who often operated on his own terms and in his own particular fashion. He was chastised for his actions by the Assemblies, evicted by their decision, and later went on to have a very public role in the midst of the para-Pentecostal revival of the ensuing decades. But to assume that his situation vis-à-vis the denomination was akin that of Galileo or some other stalwart of truth fails to take into consideration the deep ways in which du Plessis stymied and frustrated an organization that, in retrospect, desired caution more than anything else. While the A/G was far too restrictive of his movements and the patterns his life was increasingly following, du Plessis’s somewhat antagonistic behavior during this time—including sending a very public circular letter seeking support during the Executive Presbytery’s deliberations—did not help matters. Whether conscious of it or not, he was a man who enjoyed the

ecumenical organization that denies the evangelical beliefs stated in the above paragraph, and urges its ministers and churches to avoid entanglement with such interdenominational or ecumenical organizations except as opportunity may arise to support biblical values in the culture or provide opportunity to bear witness to our evangelical and Pentecostal faith and experience.” This statement, while revealing no small amount of distancing from ecumenical matters, seems directly affected by the experiences they had with their own ecumenical ambassador David du Plessis.

limelight, repeatedly publicizing his own perspectives on this and related issues. In the process he left the 1960s-era Assemblies little space to quietly consider his membership and actions.

For the Assemblies of God, du Plessis's sometimes self-promotion and headstrong nature constituted a danger they could not abide. Though he was the right individual at the right time for shepherding and encouraging the Charismatic Movement, he was not a welcome figure in a denomination attempting to deliberate on its true nature in the midst of a changing religious climate. In their eyes he was too public a figure and a "loose cannon" whose recalcitrance was not welcome.

Du Plessis was not the unequivocal hero others have claimed. He was a person who felt deeply and worked with an energy unmatched by many of his contemporaries, yet was bounded by a passion no less singular than that of the Assemblies of God. This combined with a realization that he was just as limited as his contemporaries on issues of his own time such as apartheid and race leaves us not with an icon, but a human being. Du Plessis' actions were inspiring and in many ways trailblazing and for those reasons are worthy of study and reflection. Yet in spite of all of this, it simply does not do to construct a dichotomy that has him stand apart from the rest of the world.

There are at least three ways of understanding and appreciating du Plessis while not mitigating the important and understandable concerns of the Assemblies of God. The first of these is, as previously discussed, the now established Wacker thesis of "primitivism" vs. "pragmatism." With du Plessis representing the former and the Assemblies of God in the 1950s and 1960s firmly in line with the latter, there seems in retrospect little doubt that the two would come to blows over their differing visions of

Pentecost. In the case of his dismissal and the negative feelings that persisted through the following years, what Wacker had seen played out in the minds of individual early Pentecostals was being personified in the forms of du Plessis and Assemblies of God leaders such as Thomas Zimmerman. Because the conflict took place not inside a single psyche as per Wacker but somewhat publicly between individuals, it took on a dire tone that would have repercussions for both sides in the following years.

Another perspective helpful for understanding the divide that came to exist between du Plessis and the A/G and their partisans has to do with the matter of ecumenism. Surprising as it may seem, both players in the great debate had their own desires for ecumenism that came from a deeply coded impulse within the larger movement itself. For du Plessis the impetus for connection to the larger Church derived from his belief that Jesus Christ through Spirit baptism and other activity brought all Christians together. Only the “move of God” need take place for all to come into unity. Du Plessis, emboldened by this belief, went forward to share the message of Pentecost amongst any and all believers. An ecumenical openness to the Spirit from all corners was what he sought and desired to cultivate amongst his hearers.

The Assemblies of God, by contrast, believed in an ecumenism not so much of the du Plessis variety, but rather one that purposed to invite all to join them in their Pentecostal life. So doing would assure specific standards of belief and behavior over which they would have specific oversight. It concerned them that those embracing the Spirit through du Plessis’s ministry were not bound by such authority and that as he operated in those suspect ecclesiastical and theological circles du Plessis himself was

largely beyond their purview. Ecumenism, despite its stated goal of unity, could thus paradoxically be a cause for division.

A third and central point in conceptualizing the du Plessis controversy and ensuing developments involves the countervailing forces of expansion and control. Throughout his life du Plessis continually worked to expand the blessings of Pentecost and encourage others to open themselves to God's Spirit. As I have shown, his own life follows a pattern best modeled by an ever-expanding set of concentric circles. From international intra-Pentecostal dialogue through to ecumenical talks with the World Council of Churches and contacts with a growing Charismatic Movement, du Plessis modeled an effective kind of expansionary growth.

As the 1950s progressed, however, the Assemblies of God became increasingly wary of the perceived open-ended nature of such expansion and the need for some measure of oversight. When the desire for a du Plessis-style expansion met with an equal push for control on the part of a growing and structurally complex denomination such the Assemblies of God, the result was almost a foregone conclusion.

Conflicting understandings of the nature of Pentecost, questions about the bounds and purpose of ecumenism, and the forces of expansion and control all contributed to the controversy surrounding David J. du Plessis, the Assemblies of God, and the Charismatic Movement. As Pentecostalism itself moved out from the margins and onto a world stage, its own growth and development led to difficulties in the late 1950s and onward. Questions of how permeable the boundaries of Pentecost might be and what the defining hallmarks of the Spirit-filled reverberated throughout the 1960s and beyond.

Pentecostalism in the form of the Assemblies of God was initially much less ready and able to deal with the groundswell of interest that was the Charismatic Movement than a single person with agency and intent such as du Plessis. As a classical Pentecostal group feeling the forces of denominationalism, the A/G had great difficulty addressing the unbounded revival. The difficulty was not entirely its fault, for this same urge towards centralization and organization, long commented on by sociologists from Max Weber onward, has affected numerous groups and institutions—even the Charismatic Movement itself. As du Plessis said to Catholic Charismatics in a 1975 interview, “you are a large body and you are trying to capture the renewal for yourself and want to keep it for yourselves...already some Catholic groups have vanished because they tried to keep it Catholic.”²¹ No matter the group, the sociological forces were the same.

Having observed the broad course of du Plessis’s life and work and the accompanying development of his personal Pentecostalism vis-à-vis that of a major denomination, it is intriguing that after so much *Sturm und Drang* that the two would arrive at largely the same place: acceptance of the Charismatic Movement and each other. Perhaps in this way Hollenweger was right when he claimed an ecumenical root for the movement:

Pentecostalism begins as an ecumenical renewal movement, breaking through racial and denominational barriers. It sees in the experience of the Holy Spirit the one important force which sweeps away all denominational, racial, educational, and social divides.²²

²¹ “An Interview With David du Plessis,” *Pneuma* 2 (September 1975): 19.

²² Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism*, 355.

If ecumenism and the hopes for unity—whatever form it might take—is at the heart of Pentecostalism, this goes a long way towards explaining both the larger rhetoric of Pentecostalism and the specific actions of David du Plessis in the 1960s and the A/G nearly two decades later.

Personal experience and issues of practical theology tended to dominate the lives of believers engaged in the revival, and it is was in those fields that the drive towards unity took place. If one is to assert with du Plessis a unitive purpose inherent in such Spirit-based movements, we must conclude that it be praxis-based. Forms of systematic and constructive theology may seek to offer comment, critique, or analysis of said experience, but it is always that experience which is primary. From the earliest days in Kansas and Azusa to the testimony of Charismatic pioneer Dennis Bennett through to the conferences sponsored by the A/G in the early 1980s, practical experience and concerns tended to dominate. As the experience of the Spirit became a shared one, a natural drawing together occurred for many from very different walks of the Christian life.

As I have shown, the grand and millennial hopes of those caught up in the heyday of Charismatic Movement were expansive. Language that referred to God drawing his people together in preparation for the last days was not uncommon. Yet just a little over thirty years from the zenith of the revival and the Assemblies' readmission of du Plessis little remains of the once broad movement. Found now in diverse corners of Protestant and Catholic churches and diffused in various places, the movement that at once had seemed so pan-Christian and far-reaching seems, at least in that form, to have retreated

from its ecumenical heyday. Sadly, the fears du Plessis shared near the end of his life seem to have come to pass.²³

This said, the path of the movement's descent into obscurity has not been the purpose of this research. Rather, our plan has been from the outset to help recover the hopes, dreams, and divergent paths of those involved in a widespread religious revival of the 1960s and 1970s now been largely forgotten. Whether or not God can or will use such means to prepare all Christians for the end of time is not for us to say. What can be stated is that such a movement represented a deep groundswell in American and world Christianity that had, it seemed, the potential for a kind of cross-denominational pollination rarely seen. While its eventual sectioning into component parts, diversification, and dilution does raise important questions about the power of bureaucratization and denominationalizing, the large picture reveals how the ecumenical hopes of the 1970s were not naïve wishes but accurate reflections of the tenor of the times.

Studying the story of David du Plessis and encouraging reflection on the promise and difficulties of the Charismatic Movement has raised numerous questions about the state of American Pentecostalism specifically, conservative religion broadly, and the way

²³ Peter Hocken notes “it remains true that much church life continued as though the CM-CR [Charismatic Movement-Charismatic Renewal] never happened. The WCC assembly in Canberra (1991) with the ‘Come, Holy Spirit’ virtually ignored CM-CR in the program planning, and the Ecumenical Directory from the Vatican (1993) with guideline for Catholic participation in ecumenical activities and worship does not call attention to the widespread rise of charismatic groups. Even Pope John Paul II’s encyclical on ecumenism, *Ut Unum Sint* (1995), which is strongly aware of the role of the Holy Spirit and the centrality of prayer and repentance, makes no reference to CR.” “Charismatic Movement,” 519. Though the influence of the impulses at the core of the Charismatic Movement have had great impact in the American Church and around the world, the transdenominational and ecumenical trajectories of the united Charismatic Movement of the mid 1970s have faded greatly.

in which pan-Spiritist movements across the globe are currently or may come to be linked. If the stated hopes and desires of the South African evangelist are ultimately correct, there may be much more of this story to tell.

In a world where Pentecostalism and Pentecostal-like phenomenon are growing across the globe and especially in the developing world, further study is needed regarding their own links amongst themselves and with the sometimes very different Pentecostals in the West. As of 2005, Pentecostals, Charismatics, and Neo-Charismatics in the United States were estimated at approximately 70 million.²⁴ While a sizable number, it is well eclipsed by the over 545 million such “renewalists” across the globe. How these believers, now constituting a full quarter of all global Christians, will interact and work alongside of other members of body of Christ and what they have to contribute is a vital question of our time.

Du Plessis therefore represents an important and early bridge amongst Pentecostals themselves and between Pentecostals and other believers who desired a similar experience of the Spirit. In this new world, where not denomination but culture and race can be the dividing factors in even intra-Pentecostal ecumenism, questions of experience and the sharing of that experience ought to be increasingly asked. If, in the words of a contemporary Pentecostal theologian, “Christian theology can continue to speak in this new global context...[and] Pentecostal theology in particular can do so,”²⁵ then this project has important merit. That such a theology may help get “beyond the

²⁴ “Most Pentecostals by Country,” *World Christian Database*, <http://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd/esweb.asp?WCI=Results&Query=344>.

²⁵ Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh: Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 18.

impasse²⁶ of not only these international differences but towards development of a larger understanding of world religions remains even more promising. If Pentecostal denominations are willing to look beyond the understandable fears coded in their past and able to follow the path of Pentecost wherever it leads, a new chapter may yet be written. It is to the inheritors of “Mr. Pentecost’s” missionary soul to take on these challenges and more as they continue to teach—and learn— the lessons of Pentecost.

²⁶ Amos Yong, *Beyond the Impasse: Toward a Pneumatological Theology of Religions* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2003).

APPENDIX

A PARTIAL TIMELINE OF THE LIFE AND TRAVELS OF DAVID J. DU PLESSIS, WITH EMPHASIS ON THE PEAK YEARS OF HIS ECUMENICAL AND CHARISMATIC ACTIVITY

Compiled from:

- DDP**=du Plessis, David J. TMs, circular letter to "Beloved Friends", November 1959. David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.
- GJ**= du Plessis, David J. "My Gospel Journeys." AMs, 1979. David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.
- LSK**= du Plessis, David J. "A Brief Life Sketch of David J. du Plessis." TMs, ca 1978. David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.
- LS**= du Plessis, David J. "The Life Story of David J. du Plessis." TMs, n.d. (post 1952). David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.
- MP**= du Plessis, David J., and Bob Slosser. *A Man Called Mr. Pentecost*. Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1977.
- T**= du Plessis, David J. "Testimony." TMs, ca. 1980. David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.
- TJ**= du Plessis, David J. "Travel Journal." AMs, 1947-1985. David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.
- TJ (HS)**= Stewart, Henry. "Travel Journal." AMs, 1937. David du Plessis Center for Christian Spirituality, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA.

Roots: *Huguenots: Jean Pierre du Plessis.* T

1905

-7 February—*Born near Capetown at Twentyfour Rivers in the District of Piquetberg, Cape Province, South Africa.* LS

1911—*Moves with parents to Ladybrand, Orange Free State Colony.* LS

1914—*Parents converted and became members of a Pentecostal church.* LS

- 1916**—*Conversion (“born again”).* LS
 -*Moved with parents to Mount Tabor in Basutoland; father built home for missionaries.* LS
 -*Moves with parents back to Ladybrand.* LS
- 1917**
 -*February—Water baptized.* LS
 -*Later in the year—Gained a job at publishing office of Apostolic Faith Mission.* MP
- 1918**
 -*February—Receives baptism in the Holy Spirit and call to ministry.* LS
- 1920**—*Becomes an “open-air” preacher.* T
- 1921/22**—*Leaves high school and enters fulltime ministry.* LS
- 1922/23**—*Returns to high school to complete classes (“called but not SENT”)* LS
- 1923/24**—*Attends Grey University College in Bloemfontein.* LS
- 1925**—*Finds work at Railway Mechanical Engineer’s Office in Durban, Natal.* LS
 -*Transfers to Chief Mechanical Engineer’s Office in Pretoria, Transvaal.* LS
 -*Becomes assistant pastor of Pretoria Assembly.* LS
- 1927**—*Elected District Secretary of Northern Transvaal District Council.* LS
 -*13 August 1927—Marries Anna Cornelia Jacobs.* LS
 -*22 December—Ordained in the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM).* LS
- 1928**—*Serves as evangelist, pastor, editor of all publications and general secretary in the AFM from 1928-1948.* LSK
 -*10 December—First child (daughter was born).* LS
- 1930**—*Called to Bethlehem in Orange Free State.* MP
- 1932**—*General Secretary of the Apostolic Faith Mission.* T
- 1937**—*Invited by J. Roswell Flower to the A/G General Council in Memphis, TN.* T
 -*3 July—Arrived in the Azores.* TJ (HS)
 -*8 July—Arrived in New York Harbor.* TJ (HS)
 -*2 December—Visits Carlsbad Caverns.* TJ (HS)
- 1938**—*Returns to South Africa after ministry in Europe.* MP
 -*At a European Conference of some sort.* T
- 1940**—*Starts Bible School in South Africa.* MP

- 1944**—*Leaves Apostolic Bible College.* MP
- 1947**—*Du Plessis' visits the United States a second time.* LSK
 -*Delegate to the First Pentecostal World Conference in Zurich.* T
 -23 May—London TJ
- 1948**—*Mentions NAE, PFNA, & WCC.* T
 -31 May—Locarno, Switzerland TJ
 -5-6 June—Copenhagen, Denmark TJ
 -7-23 June—Malino, Mulsjo, Odensbacken, Orebro, and Stockholm Sweden TJ
 -24 June—Basel, Switzerland TJ
 -7 August—Clarens TJ
 -10-13 August—Stuttgart, Germany TJ
 -14 August—Basel, Switzerland TJ
 -16 August—London TJ
 -*Receives call to go to America.* MP
 -20 August—New York TJ
 -21-22 August—Stamford, CT TJ
 -24-31 August—Birmingham, AL TJ
 -*At Church of God General Assembly* TJ
 -3 September—Washington, DC TJ
 -5 September—New York TJ
 -7-10 September—Hamilton, ON TJ
 -11-15 September—Springfield, MO TJ
 -16-26 September—Los Angeles, CA TJ
 -*Resigns from Apostolic Faith Mission.* MP
 -29 September—New York TJ
 -1 October—Green Lane, PA TJ
 -3 October—Brooklyn, NY (w/ Waldvogels) TJ
 -6 October—Beckley, WV (w Paul Walker) TJ
 -8 October—*Accident (in hospital 2 months).* TJ
 -*Lives in Somerset, PA until going to Canada in August 1949.* TJ
 -*Says "God Speaks. FORGIVENESS. My life Change. BUT FEAR."* T
- 1949**—*Secretary for the Second Pentecostal World Conference in Paris.* LSK
 -2 October—*Enters USA with family.* TJ
 -*Lives in Cleveland, TN and teaches at Lee College.* LS
- 1951**—*Mentions "Mackay."* T
 -9 January—*Sees Gordon Lindsay and attends Branham service.* TJ
 -2 February and after—*In Los Angeles (Angelus Temple).* TJ
 -10 April—*Pentecostal Fellowship of North America (PFNA).* TJ
 -11-12 April—*National Association of Evangelicals (NAE).* TJ
 -17 April—Atlanta, GA TJ
 -17 June—Springfield, MO TJ

- 18 June—Joplin, MO TJ
- 23 August—*Leaves Lee College and moves to Stamford, CT.* TJ
- 24-26 August—Stamford, CT TJ
 - Gets settled in at house.* TJ
- 27 August—Paterson, NJ TJ

1952— *Secretary for the Third Pentecostal World Conference in London.* LSK

- 3-5 January—Toronto, Canada TJ
 - At Toronto Conference; meets leaders of WCC and NCCC.* TJ
- 15-16 January—New York TJ
 - Meeting at the National Council of Churches.* TJ
- 11 March—Princeton, NJ TJ
 - Sees John Mackay.* TJ
- 8-17 July—Willingen, Germany TJ
 - Observer at the International Missionary Conference.* LSK
 - Visser t'Hooft invited DDP to Evanston WCC Meeting.* MP
 - 16 July—*Speaks about Pentecostalism.* TJ
- 18 July and after—Paris, France. TJ
- 23 October—Glassboro, NJ TJ
- 30 November—Belmar, NJ TJ
 - With Rev. John McCall of South Belmar Baptist Tabernacle.* TJ
- 1 December and after—Memphis, TN TJ

1953

- 1 January—Dallas, TX TJ
- 2 January—Tulsa, OK TJ
- 12 April—Columbus, OH TJ
- 13 April and after—Cincinnati, OH TJ
 - At the NAE.* TJ
- 22 April (?)—*Sees Philip Hogan.* TJ

1954

- 17 January—Krugersdorp, South Africa TJ
- 11 March—*Billy Graham Service.* TJ
- 26 March—*At Baptist Womens' Society.* TJ
- 11 April—*At Calvary Baptist Church.* TJ
- 14-15 May—New York TJ
 - Sees Visser t'Hooft.* TJ
- 10 June—*Notes one Dr. A. Price (Episcopalian).* TJ
- 22 June—Washington, DC TJ
 - Jack Coe speaks.* TJ
- 23 June—*William Branham speaks.* TJ
- 25 June—*Banquet: Oral Roberts.* TJ
- 17 July—Staten Island, NY TJ
 - IMC Conference at Wagner College.*
- 28 July and after—Princeton, NJ TJ

- Attends the Seventeenth Presbyterian and Reformed World Alliance in Princeton. LSK
- Mentions Dr. Pradervand. TJ
- 15-21 August and after—Evanston, IL TJ
- Attends the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches. LSK
- 25 October—At Mission Service of PFNA. TJ
- 26 October—Springfield, MO TJ
- “The Purpose of Pentecost” TJ

1955—Serves as a pastor in Stamford at an A/G church. T

1956

- 9-12 April—Cleveland, OH TJ
- At NAE. TJ
- 14 April—Philadelphia, PA TJ
- 22 April—Trenton/Princeton, NJ TJ
- 23 April—Princeton, NJ TJ
- Sees Dr. Mackay and Pro. D. Theron. TJ
- 25 April—Princeton, NJ
- Sees Dr. Mackay. TJ
- 26 April—Princeton, NJ TJ
- Sees Professor Homrighausen. TJ
- 30 October-1 November—Atlanta, GA TJ
- At PFNA. TJ
- 2 November—Greenwich, CT TJ
- At Seabury House with IMC and Gordon Lindsay. TJ
- 3 November—Meets with NCC and WCC men. TJ

1957

- 18-19 January—Atlanta, GA TJ
- Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship (FGBMF). TJ
- 1-5 July—Chicago, IL TJ
- FGBMF (Hicks, Nunn, Sumrall, Roberts, Branham). TJ
- 6 July—Lima, NY TJ
- 30 October-1 November—Seattle, WA TJ
- PFNA. TJ
- 2 November—New York TJ

1958— Secretary for the Fifth Pentecostal World Conference in Toronto. LSK

- Consultant at the International Missionary Conference in Ghana. LSK
- 24 February—See Howard Carter. TJ
- 25 February—Lunches with Branham; evening with the Carters. TJ
- 26 February—See Tomlinson. TJ
- 11 March—Albert Outler—Highland Park Presbyterian. TJ

1959—Attends the Eighteenth Presbyterian and Reformed

World Alliance in Sao Paulo, Brazil. LSK

- 11-13 January—Minneapolis, MN TJ
 - 11 January—*On television: "Finding Pentecost in Unexpected Places" and "Ecumenical Pentecost."* TJ
- 8-9 March—New York TJ
 - 8 March—*Riverside Church and Glad Tidings.* TJ
- 10 March—Philadelphia, PA TJ
 - Lunch at the Princeton Club.* TJ
- 11-12 March—Washington, DC TJ
- 3 April(?)—Los Angeles, CA TJ
 - Angelus Temple with Branham.* TJ
- 28 April—Philadelphia, PA TJ
- 29 April-1 May—Princeton, NJ TJ
 - 29 April—*Meets Dr. Mackay; evening banquet.* TJ
 - 30 April—*Chapel; Meets Marcus Barth and Torrance; evening at Dr. Mackay's home.* TJ
 - 1 May—*Chapel; lectures on Acts; Goes to Liebenzell w/ Dr. Mackay & 25 students.* TJ
- 2 May—Liebenzell Retreat Center TJ
- 7-9 May—Princeton, NJ TJ
 - 7 May—*Meets faculty and students of Princeton.* TJ
 - 8 May—*At Princeton Seminary.* TJ
 - 9 May—*Princeton Seminary Evangelistic Fellowship.* TJ
- 13 May—Trenton, NJ TJ
 - Farewell lawn supper in Princeton for Dr. Mackay.* TJ
- 14 May—Princeton, NJ TJ
 - At Princeton Seminary.* TJ
- 16 May—Baltimore, MD TJ
- 30-31 October—Greenwich, CT DDP
 - At Seabury House.* DDP
- 7 November—Stamford, CT TJ
 - Sees Presbyterian "Holy" Mackay (?).* TJ
- 2-4 November—Princeton, NJ DDP
 - Delivers Missions Lectures.* DDP
- 16 November and after—Bossey, Switzerland DDP
 - Lectures at Ecumenical Institute.* DDP

1961—*Attends the Sixth Pentecostal World Conference in Jerusalem.* LSK

- Attends the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi, India.* LSK
- 7-9 May—Dallas, TX TJ
- 10-11 May—New York TJ
- 12 May—Mount Vernon, NY TJ
- 13-14 May—Lisbon, Portugal TJ
- 15 May—Rome TJ
- 16 May—Tel Aviv TJ

- 17-21 May—Jerusalem TJ
- 22 May-1 June—Holland TJ
- 2 June-18 June—Great Britain TJ
 - Talks to the Commission on Faith and Order in Oxford. (?) MP
 - 18 June—Meets Bernard Leeming in Oxford. TJ
- 19-26 June—Holland TJ
- 27-28 June—Lima, NY TJ
- 30 June-4 July—Dallas, TX TJ
- 5-7 July—Miami, FL TJ
- 8-9 July—New York TJ
- 10-15 July—Wells, VT TJ
- 17-20 July—Dallas, TX TJ
- 21-23 July—Lake Lavon, TX TJ
- 24 July—Dallas, TX TJ
- 25 July—Panama TJ
- 26 July-10 August—Lima, Peru TJ
- 11-14 August—Dallas, TX TJ
- 15-17 August—California TJ
- 18-24 August—Portland, OR TJ
 - Attends a portion of the Assemblies of God
General Council meeting. TJ
- 25-27 August—Denver, CO TJ
- 28 August 6 September—Dallas, TX TJ
- 7-9 September—Washington, DC area TJ
 - Meets John Weaver. TJ

1962

- The year of “Springfield problems” and disfellowshipping. T
- 2 May—Ardmore, OK GJ
- 4 May—Houston, TX GJ
- 7 May—Baton Rouge, LA GJ
- 15-16 May—Green Lake, WI GJ
- 20 May—Madison, WI GJ
- 21-27 May—Chicago, IL GJ
- 28 May—Hamilton, ON GJ
- 30 May—Flint, MI GJ
- 1 June—Bad Axe, Bay City Michigan GJ
- 2 June—East Tawas, Alpena, MI GJ
- 3 June—Gladwin, MI GJ
- 4 June—Harrison, Lansing, MI GJ
- 5 June—Detroit, MI GJ
- 9-11 June—San Jose, CA GJ
- 12 June—Palo Alto, CA GJ
- 13 June—San Jose, CA GJ
- 14 June—Henderson, TX GJ
- 15-17 June—Shreveport, LA GJ

-18-19 June—Baton Rouge, LA GJ
 -20-21 June—Springfield, MO GJ
 -29 June—Washington, DC GJ
 -1 July—Stamford, CT GJ
 -2-9? July—Wells, VT GJ
 -15-16 July—Albany, NY GJ
 -22 July—Grantham, NH GJ
 -29 July—East Islip, NY GJ
 -14 September—Columbus, OH GJ
 -23 September—Girard, Youngstown, OH GJ
 -24 September—Ardmore, OK GJ
 -26-28 September—Lubbock, TX GJ
 -29 September—El Paso, TX GJ
 -30 September—Phoenix, AZ GJ
 -15 October—Santa Ana, CA GJ
 -20 October—Palo Alto, CA GJ
 -21 October—San Jose, CA GJ
 -23-25 October—Berkeley, CA GJ
 -31 October—Los Angeles, CA GJ
 -2 November—Glendale, CA GJ
 -3 November—San Pedro, CA GJ
 -10 November—Dallas, Bedford, TX GJ
 -19 November—Greenville, SC GJ
 -23 November—Franklin Springs, GA GJ
 -26-29 November—Tampa, FL GJ
 -1-4 December—Hanford, Visalia, Avenal, Salem, CA GJ
 -28 December—Merced, CA GJ

1963

-2-6 January—Sarasota, FL GJ
 -8-13 January—Fort Worth, TX GJ
 -16-21 January—Tulsa, OK, El Paso, TX, Phoenix, AZ GJ
 -8 February—Ashland, OR GJ
 -14 February—Los Angeles, CA GJ
 -15-17 February—Dallas, TX GJ
 -18-20 February—Greenville, SC GJ
 -21-24 February—Washington, DC GJ
 -25-28 February—Los Angeles, CA GJ
 -2 March—Berkeley, CA GJ
 -9 March—Eugene, OR GJ
 -10 March—Salem, OR GJ
 -11 March—Pasco, WA GJ
 -12 March—Moses Lake, WA GJ
 -14 March—Spokane, WA GJ
 -15 March—Lewiston, ID GJ
 -16 March—Missoula, MT GJ

- 17 March—Twin Falls, ID GJ
- 18 March—Boise, ID GJ
- 21 March—Atlantic Highlands, NJ GJ
- 22 March—Parkesburg, PA GJ
- 23-24 March—Valley Forge and Philadelphia, PA GJ
- 26 March—Paterson, NJ GJ
- 27 March—Newark and Bellevue, NJ GJ
- 28-29 March—Liberty Corner, NJ GJ
- 1 April—Miami, FL GJ
- 3-14 April—Bogota, Columbia GJ
- 18-19 April—Berkeley, CA GJ
- 21-22 April—San Antonio, TX GJ
- 24-25 April—Phoenix, AZ GJ
- 28-29 April—Bogota, Columbia GJ
- 29 April—Medellin, Columbia GJ
- 2-3 May—Medellin, Columbia GJ
- 4-6 May—Cali, Columbia GJ
- 7-8 May—Darranquilla, Columbia GJ
- 15-16 May—Newark, CA GJ
- 19 May—Napa, CA GJ
- 21 May—Los Gatos and Santa Clara, CA GJ
- 22-23 May—Yuba City, Marysville, and Sacramento, CA GJ
- 24 May—Livermore, CA GJ
- 25 May—Portland, OR GJ
- 2 June—Portland, OR GJ
- 4-8 June—Seattle, WA GJ
- 9 June—Sunnyvale, CA GJ
- 12 June—Vallejo, CA GJ
- 14-15 June—Alameda, CA GJ
- 25-27 June—Beaumont, TX GJ
- 28-30 June—Wichita Falls, TX GJ
- 1-5 July—Houston, TX GJ
- 6-7 July—Lima, NY GJ
- 8-21 July—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 22 July—Wells, VT GJ
- 28 July—Everett, TX GJ
- 29 July—Boston, MA GJ
- 12 August—Minneapolis, MN GJ
- 7-11 September—Philadelphia, PA, Parkesburg, PA, and Camden, NJ GJ
- 12-27 September—The Hague, De Hezenberg, Hattem, Utrecht, Holland GJ
- 28 September—Rome GJ
- 4-5 October—Utrecht, Holland GJ
- 7-10 October—Zurich, Basel, Geneva GJ
- 12-17 October—Dagenham and London, England GJ
- 18 October—Stony Point, NY GJ
- 29 October—Irving, TX GJ

- 4-10 November—Islington, Hamilton, and St. Elizabeth's, ON GJ
- 11 November—Belleville and Kingston, ON GJ
- 12 November—Tulsa, OK GJ

1964—*Attends the Seventh Pentecostal World Conference in Helsinki.* LSK

- 2 January—Alameda, CA GJ
- 4 January—Stockton, CA GJ
- 5-12 January—Fresno, CA GJ
- 20-26 January—Mexico City GJ
- 29-31 January—Berkeley, CA GJ
- 11-16 February—Chattanooga, TN GJ
- 16-20 February—Greenville, SC GJ
- 21-22 February—Washington, DC GJ
- 23-29 February—Geneva, Neuchatel, Basel, Zurich, Vern, Montreux, Switzerland and Rome GJ
- 1-8 March—Johannesburg, Krugersdorp, Mayfair-West, Boksburg, N. Benomi Springs South Africa GJ
- 9-15 March—Cape, Kimberley, Stellenbosch, Maitlane, Bellville, Plumstead, Goodwood, Parow, South Africa GJ
- 16-18 March—Victoria West, Bloemfontein, O. F. S. Ladybrand, Bethlem OFS, South Africa GJ
- 19-25 March—Pietersburg, Pretoria, Hercules, Gezina, Westonia, Rosettenville, South Africa. GJ
- 16 March—Lyndhurst, South Africa GJ
- 1 April—Capetown, South Africa GJ
- 13-14 April—Geneva, Chateau de Bossy, Chalon, and Taize, France. GJ
- 20-28 April—Strasbourg, Mulhouse, and St. Die, France, Stuttgart, Germany GJ
- 29 April—Zurich, Basel, St. Gellen and Bern, Switzerland GJ
- 4 May—London GJ
- 1 June—Holland, Finland GJ
- 25 July—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 2-3 August—Boston, MA GJ
- 4-16 August—Wells, VT, Los Gatos and Berkeley, CA GJ
- 7-12 September—Utrecht, Holland GJ
- 13-18 September—Rome GJ
- At the Second Vatican Council.* LSK
- 19-26 September—Krugersdorp, Benomi, Pretoria, Victoria West, and Johannesburg, South Africa G
- 5-7 October—Capetown GJ
- 8-11 October—Johannesburg GJ
- 12-28 October—Rome GJ
- 29 October—Holland GJ
- 8 November—Holland GJ
- 9-11 November—Cayton Hall, London GJ
- 12-13 November—New York and Paterson, NJ GJ
- December—Tulsa, OK, Forth Worth and Dallas, TX, Tucson, AZ GJ

1965

- 2-18 January—Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Vancouver, and Kamloops, Canada, Seattle, WA, Portland, OR, Modesto, Turlock, and Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 6 January—Vancouver, Canada TJ
- 7 January—Seattle, WA
 - At St. Luke's with Dennis Bennett.* TJ
- 8 January—Seattle, WA TJ
- 9 January—Portland, OR TJ
- 10-12 January—Kamloops, Canada TJ
 - 11 January—*With 10 ministers, 2 of them Roman Catholic.* TJ
 - 12 January—*Visits Roman Catholic convent.* TJ
- 18 January—Van Nuys, CA TJ
 - Meets with and resigns from Blessed Trinity Society.* TJ
- 19 January—Glendale, CA TJ
- 1-2 February—Denver, CO GJ
- 8 February—Greenville, SC GJ
- 9 February—Easley, SC GJ
- 10 February—Spartanburg, SC GJ
- 10-14 February—Greenville, SC GJ
- 15 February—Burlington, NC GJ
- 16 February—Winston-Salem and Asheboro, NC GJ
- 18 February—Salem, NC GJ
- 19 February—Richmond, VA GJ
- 24 February—Washington, DC GJ
- 27 February—Boston, MA GJ
- 28 February—Norwalk, CT GJ
- 1-5 March—Lima, NY GJ
- 6 March—Santa Cruz, CA GJ
- 7 March—San Jose, CA GJ
- 8 March—Richmond, CA GJ
- 9 March—“Home” TJ
- 10 March—Berkeley, CA TJ
- 11 March—San Francisco, CA TJ
- 12 March—Ephrata, WA GJ
- 13 March—Moses Lake, WA GJ
- 14 March—Quincy, WA GJ
- 16 March—Vancouver, Canada GJ
- 23 March—Portland, OR GJ
- 24 March—Naselle, WA GJ
- 26 March—Berkeley, CA GJ
- 28 March—Palo Alto, CA GJ
- 29 March—Hayward, CA GJ
- 30 March—Sunnyvale, CA GJ
- 2 April—Berkeley, CA GJ
- 7 April—Davis, CA GJ

- 15 April—Geneva, Switzerland and Chalon, France GJ
- 18 April (Easter Sunday)—La Porte Ouverte TJ
 - Preaches forgiveness.* TJ
- 19 April—La Porte Ouverte TJ
- 20 April—Chalon, France to Geneva, Switzerland TJ
- 21-22 April—Geneva, Switzerland TJ
 - 22 April—*WCC* TJ
- 24 April—Geneva, Territet-Montreux, and Zurich, Switzerland GJ
- 2 May—Basel, Switzerland GJ
- 12-28 May—Nijmegen and Amsterdam, Holland, Denmark, Copenhagen, London, Gillingham, Kent, Belfast, Dublin GJ
- 28 May—Amityville, NY GJ
- 29 May—Staten Island, NY and Parkesburg, PA GJ
- 30 May—Paterson, NJ GJ
- 1 June—Stony Point, NY GJ
- 2 June—Atlantic Highlands, NJ GJ
- 3 June—Princeton, NJ GJ
- 5 June—Paterson, NJ GJ
- 17 June—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 22-27 June—Florida GJ
- Early July—Indiana GJ
- 2 July—Chicago, IL GJ
- 9-16 July—Toronto and Islington, Canada, Lima, NY GJ
- 16 July and after—Grantham, NH, Boston, MA, Osaka, Katsuura, Kyoto, and Tokyo, Japan GJ
- 26 July—Osaka, Japan TJ
- 27-29 July—Katsuura, Japan TJ
 - Meetings and lectures.* TJ, MP
- 30 July—Mt. Kora, Japan TJ
- 7-8 August—Los Angeles, Long Beach, and Anaheim, CA GJ
- 10 August—Pittsburgh, PA GJ
 - 14 August and after—New York, Brooklyn, Staten Island, Norfolk, VA, Charleston, Georgetown, and Greenville, SC, Atlanta, GA GJ
- 21 August—Dallas-Fort Worth, TX GJ
- 23 August—Tucson AZ and Denver, CO GJ
- 9 September—Lisbon, Portugal GJ
- 14 September and after—Johannesburg, Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth, Capetown, Victoria West, Pretoria, Pietersburg, Westonaria, Krugersdorp, South Africa and Athens, Greece GJ
- 18 September—Beirut, Lebanon GJ
- 20-29 September—Jerusalem, Rome, Paris GJ
- November—London, Dartford, Cambridge, Turnbridge, Wells, Stanwell, Boxhill, Tuffnell Park, St. Leonards, Bradford, Otley, Putney, Rayleigh, Oxford GJ
- 7-11 November—London, England TJ
 - 8 November—*Sees Dennis Bennett.* TJ

- 11 November—*At Brompton Road; also FGBMF meeting.* TJ
- 12-13 November—Turnbridge Wells, England TJ
- 1 December—London GJ
- 2 December and after—Waterville, ME and Grantham, NH GJ

1966

- 29 January and after—Dunedin, Christchurch, Nelson, Wellington, Masterton, Wanganui, Hawera, Eltham, New Plymouth, Palmerston, North Hastings, Hamilton, Whangarei, and Auckland, New Zealand GJ
- 30-31 January—Dunedin, New Zealand TJ
- 1-3 February—Christchurch, New Zealand TJ
- 4 February—Nelson, New Zealand TJ
 - Meets Bishop Sutton (Anglican).* TJ
- 13 February—Palmerston, New Zealand TJ
 - At St. Paul's Methodist.* TJ
- 25 February—Petersham and Sydney, Australia GJ
- 26 February and after—Adelaide, Melbourne, Victoria, Canberra, and Picton, Australia GJ
- 14 March—Brisbane and Queensland, Australia GJ
- 17 April—Long Beach, Topango Canyon, and Santa Monica, CA GJ
- 25 April—Culver City, Anaheim, Ontario, and Corona, CA GJ
- 16-19 May—San Pedro, Anaheim, and Yucaipa CA GJ
- 21 May—Stony Point, NY GJ
- 22-28 May—Indianapolis, IN TJ
 - 22 May—*At Tuxedo Park Baptist.* TJ
 - 23 May—*With Tuxedo Park Baptist Advisory Board.* TJ
 - 24 May—*With Tuxedo's Council of Churches.* TJ
 - 26 May—*Tuxedo Park Baptist Congregational Meeting.* TJ
 - 27 May—*Tuxedo Park Baptist Seminary for ministers.* TJ
- 3-5 June—Spokane, WA GJ
- 19 June—Morgan Hill, CA GJ
- 20 June—Tucson, AZ, GJ
- 22 June—Alice and Corpus Christ, TX GJ
- 25 June—Houston, TX GJ
- 27 June—Austin, TX GJ
- 28 June—Irving, TX GJ
- 29 June—Dallas, TX GJ
- 30 June—Oklahoma City, OK GJ
- 1 July—Tulsa, OK GJ
- 3 July—Granite City and Alton, IL GJ
- 4-6 July—St. Louis, MO GJ
- 7 July—Columbus, OH GJ
- 8-11 July—Arlington, VA GJ
- 12 July—Valley Stream, NY GJ
- 14 July—Lima, NY GJ
- 15 July—Grantham, NH GJ

- 17-21 July—Gray Ledges, NH TJ
- 22 July—West Hartford, CT GJ
- 23 July—Lowell, MA TJ
- 28 July—Bridgewater, MA GJ
- 29 July—Boston, MA GJ
- 3 August—Waterville, ME GJ
- 11 August—Concord, NH GJ
- 13 August—New York GJ
- 14 August—Akron and Canton, OH GJ
- 15 August—Berne, IN GJ
- 17 August—Minneapolis, MN GJ
- 22 August—Grand Coulee Dam, WA GJ and Helena, MT TJ
- 23-26 August—Mount Rainier, WA GJ
- 23 August—Grand Coulee TJ
- 24 August—Tacoma, WA TJ
- 25-26 August—Seattle, WA TJ
 - At *St. Luke's*. TJ
- 27 August—Naselle, WA GJ
- 17 October—San Jose, CA TJ
- 20 October—Roseburg-Medford, CA TJ
- 21 October—Roseburg-Coos Bay, CA TJ
- 26-29 October—Los Angeles, CA TJ
- 30 October—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 1-6 November—Washington, DC GJ
- 7-8 November—Philadelphia, PA GJ
- 11 November—Shelton and Bristol, CT GJ
- 13-16 November—Greenville, SC GJ
- 17 November—Georgetown, SC GJ
- 18 November—Little Washington, NC GJ
- 19 November—Roanoke, VA GJ
- 20 November—Salem, VA GJ
- 21 November—Portsmouth, NH GJ
- 22 November—Greenwich, CT GJ
- 23 November—Stony Point, NY GJ
- 25 November—Grantham, NH GJ
- 3 December—Fresno, CA GJ
- 4 December—Glendale, CA GJ

1967—*Attends the Seventh Pentecostal World Conference in Rio de Janeiro.* LSK

- January—Macon and Atlanta, GA, Greenville, SC, Miami, FL, Hartford, CT, and London GJ
- 22-23 January—Fort Lauderdale, FL TJ
 - 22 January—*At First Presbyterian Church and North Hollywood Methodist* TJ
 - 23 January—*At Presbyterian Church.* TJ
- 25 January—Hartford, CT TJ

- 26 January—Stamford, CT TJ
- 31 January and after—Nairobi, Nakuru, Mombasa, Eldoreb, Kisumu, Maseno, Limuru, Fort Hall, Kenya GJ
- 1 March and after—Durban, Maritzburg, Newcastle, Standerton, Carolina, Pretoria, Pietersburg, Johannesburg, Krugersdorp, Westonaria, Germiston, Irene, Capetown, Kenilworth, Belville, Parow, Strand, and Stellenbosch, South Africa GJ
- 1-2 April—Rome GJ
- 28 April—Copenhagen GJ
- 29 April-4 May—Vevey, Switzerland GJ & TJ
- 7 May—Geneva GJ
- 9-11 May—The Hague, Hilversum, and Utrecht, Holland GJ
- 12-17 May—London GJ
- 17 May—Liverpool GJ
- 26 May—Berkeley, CA GJ
- 27 May—Santa Cruz, CA GJ
- 17-19 June—Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, CA GJ
- 22-25 June—Lairmont and Bellingham, WA GJ
- 26-30 June—Chicago, IL GJ
- 1-2 July—Lima, NY GJ
- 3-5 July—North Carolina GJ
- 6-8 July—Miami, FL GJ
- 15-16 July—Sao Paulo, Brazil GJ
- 17 July—Sao Paulo, Brazil TJ
- 18 July and after—Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Buenos Aires, Argentina, Lima, Peru GJ
 - 18 July—Rio de Janeiro, Brazil TJ
 - 19 July—Rio de Janeiro, Brazil TJ
- 30 July—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 9-12 August—Pittsburgh, PA GJ
- 20 August—San Jose, CA GJ
- 22 August—Van Nuys, CA GJ
- 24 August—Claremont, CA GJ
- 25 August—Thousand Oaks, CA GJ
- 26 August—Long Beach, CA GJ
- 27 August—San Bernardino, CA GJ
- 29 August—Pacific Grove, CA GJ
- 30 August—Nappanee, IN GJ
- 4 September—Lansing, MI GJ
 - At Mt. Olivet Baptist.* TJ
- 5 September—Lafayette, Indiana GJ
- 6 September—Lafayette TJ and Kokomo, IN GJ
 - At Roman Catholic Church in Kokomo.* TJ
- 7 September—South Bend, IN GJ
 - To Notre Dame.* TJ
- 8 September—Lafayette, IN TJ

- 11-16 September—Grantham, NH GJ
- 17 September—Norwalk, CT GJ
- 18 September—Worcester, MA GJ
- 21-22 September—Norwalk, CT GJ
- 23 September—Parkesburg, PA GJ
- 24 September—Charlotte, NC GJ
- 25 September—Charleston, SC GJ
- 28-29 September—Charlotte, NC GJ
- 1-4 October—Staunton and Harrisonburg, VA GJ
- 5-6 October—New York GJ
- 7 October—Norfolk, VA GJ
- 8 October—Washington, DC GJ
 - At Christ Church and Presbyterian Church.* TJ
- 9 October—Dallas, Texas
- 10-12 October—Austin, TX GJ
 - 10 August—*Meets with Brick Bradford, John Mackay, and J. Rodman Williams as well as 20 other ministers.* TJ
- Mid to late October—Los Angeles, Glendale, and North Hollywood, CA GJ
- 22 October—“Home” TJ
 - Appears to be at Grace Cathedral with Karl Rahner?* TJ
- 23 October—*At Apple Valley FGBMF.* TJ
- 24 October—*Travels home.* TJ
- November—Stony Point, NY, Rhode Island, Hartford, CT, Stamford, CT GJ

1968—*Becomes a naturalized citizen of the United States.* LSK

- January—Portland and Salem, OR, Vancouver, Canada, Roseburg, Coquille, Coos Bay, Gold Beach, Ferndale, Eureka, Arcabe, CA GJ
- 10 February—Chattanooga, TN GJ
- 11-17 February—Cleveland, TN and Birmingham, AL GJ
- 19-20 February—Greenville, SC GJ
- 21-24 February—Washington, DC GJ
- 4 March—Boston, Bridgewater, Boxford, MA and Providence, RI GJ
- 10 March and after—Montreal, Canada, Providence, RI, Norwalk, CT, Waterville, ME, Lexington, MA GJ
- 16 April—El Paso, TX and Pittsburgh, PA GJ
- 19 April—Pittsburgh, PA TJ
 - At service with Bob Mumford.* TJ
- 21-28 April—Vevey, Switzerland GJ
 - 25 April—*Stops at WCC and visits Hollenweger.* TJ
- 29 April—Rome GJ
- 14 May—Geneva GJ
- 24-26 May—Paris GJ
- 1-4 June—Belgium and Holland GJ
- 5 June—Oostende, Belgium TJ
 - Learns of Robert F. Kennedy's death and writes, “we feel terrible and sort of lonely.”* TJ

- 6 June—Oostende, Belgium TJ
- 10-24 June—London GJ
- 2-6 July—Holland and Germany GJ
- 8 July—Uppsala, Sweden TJ
 - Interacts with Killian McDonnell.* TJ
- 14-20 July—Uppsala, Sweden GJ
 - Attends the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches.* LSK
 - 17 July—*Meets more people at WCC. A service with Matthson-Boze and Pethrus; “a number of very prominent WCC men are there.”* TJ
- 22 July—Denmark, Germany GJ
- 10 August—Bossey and Geneva, Switzerland GJ and Basel, Switzerland TJ
- 15-17 August—Paris GJ
- 19 August—Anaheim, CA TJ
 - With Brick Bradford.* TJ
- October—Johannesburg and Pretoria, South Africa GJ
- December—Queenstown, South Africa GJ

1969

- January—Durban, South Africa, Pittsburg, PA, Atlantic Highlands, NJ, Dallas, TX, Chula Vista, Escondido, and Glendale, CA GJ
- 2 February—San Pedro, CA GJ
- 22 February—Kansas City GJ
- 23-25 February—Kansas City TJ
 - 23 February—*At a “Negro” church and Presbyterian church.* TJ
 - 24 February—*At Methodist and Roman Catholic churches, FGBMF banquet.* TJ
 - 25 February—*At Methodist church (St. Paul’s?).* TJ
- 26 February—Portsmouth, VA GJ
- 27 February—Williamsburg, VA GJ
- 3 March—Rocky Mount, NC GJ
- 4 March—Charlotte, NC GJ
- 5 March—Greenville, SC GJ
- 7 March—Cleveland, OH GJ
- 12 March—Akron, OH GJ
- 13 March—Youngstown, OH GJ
- 15 March—New Wilmington, PA GJ
- 16 March—New Castle, PA and Canton, OH GJ
 - At John Knox Presbyterian.* TJ
- 17 March—Ashland, OH GJ and Canton, OH TJ
- 18 March—Dayton, OH GJ
 - At Methodist seminary and First Baptist.* TJ
- 19 March—St. Paul, MN GJ
- 20 March—St. Paul, MN TJ
 - Lectures at Luther Theological Seminary and participates in dialogue.* TJ
- 21 March—“Home” TJ
- 23-30 March—Glendale, CA GJ

- 4 April—Chico, CA GJ
- 5 April—Mountain View, CA GJ
- 8-9 April—New Orleans, LA GJ
- 10 April—Escondido, CA GJ
- 13 April and after—Chula Vista, CA, Dallas, TX, Strawberry Lake, Mountain Lake, Minneapolis, Daystar, and North Saint Paul, MN, Bloomington (IN?), Lancaster and Parkesburg, PA, Arnold, MD, Berkeley, Eureka, Redding, Vina, and Richardson Springs, CA
- 24 April—“Home” TJ
- 25-26 April—Notre Dame TJ
- 4-8 May—“Home” TJ
 - 6-8 May—*Berkeley Congress*. TJ
 - 6 May—*At Berkeley Chi Alpha*. TJ
 - 7 May—*Bill Bright is listed*. TJ
 - 8 May—*Speaks at Berkeley Congress*. TJ
- 3 August—Vancouver, Canada TJ
- 6-8 August—Lincoln City, OR TJ
 - 7 August—Has an operation. TJ
- 21-24 August—Arcata, CA TJ
 - 23 August—*Radio TV Channel 3*. TJ
 - 24 August—TV Channel 6 (2 programs); with Baptist ministers. TJ
- 26-27 August—*FGBMF Regional*. TJ
- 2 October and after—Stockton and Palo Alto, CA GJ
- 10 October and after—Hartford, Jewell City, and Norwich, CT, Albany, NY, Wallingford and East Providence, RI
- 13 October—New England TJ
- 14 October—Hartford, CT TJ
- 15 October—Jenett City, CT? TJ
- 16 October—Norwich, CT TJ
- 17-18 October—Albany, NY TJ
 - 17 October—*Meets Roman Catholic priests and goes to convent*. TJ
 - 18 October—*At Albany FGBMF*. TJ
- 22-26—Belleville, IL and Christiana, PA GJ
- 31 October and after—London and Liverpool, England GJ
- 3 November—Chester, England GJ
- 4 November—St. Paul’s GJ
- 7-9 November and after—Scarborough, Cober Hill, Kelham, and Stoke-on-Trent, England, Simsbury, CT, Baltimore, MD GJ
- 30 November and after—Richmond, VA, Montreat, NC, Hendersonville, NC, Greenville, SC, Miami, FL GJ
- 30 November—Baltimore, MD
 - At Central Methodist*. TJ
- 1 December—Montreat, NC TJ
- 2 December—Hendersonville and Greenville, SC TJ
- 3 December—Miami, FL TJ

- 1970**
- 1 January—Sacramento and Vacaville, CA GJ
 - 11 January—Hayward, CA GJ
 - 13 January—Glendale, CA GJ
 - 14 January—Gardena, CA GJ
 - 15 January—Escondido, CA GJ
 - 17 January—Berkeley, CA GJ
 - 18 January—Thousand Oaks, CA GJ
 - 26 January—Orangevale, CA GJ
 - 27 January—Sacramento, CA GJ
 - 28 January—Corte Madera, CA GJ
 - 9 February and after—Sydney, Australia, Indonesia, Java, Djakarta, Surabaya, Semarang, Bandung, Nonkaddjadar GJ
 - 14 March—Perth, Australia GJ
 - 27 March—Johannesburg, Germisbon, and Pretoria, South Africa GJ
 - 3 April—San Diego, CA GJ
 - 4 April—San Bernardino, CA GJ
 - 5 April—Glendale, CA GJ
 - 10-12 April—Denver, CO GJ
 - 13-15 April—Benton Harbor, MI GJ
 - 16 April—Chicago, IL GJ
 - 18 April—Palo Alto, CA GJ
 - 24 April—Berkeley, CA GJ
 - 25-26 April—Riverside, CA GJ
 - 27 April—Apple Valley, CA GJ
 - 28-29 April—Chula Vista, CA GJ
 - 30 April—Escondido, CA GJ
 - 3-10 May—Glendale, CA GJ
 - 15-16 May—Cincinatti, OH GJ
 - 17 May—North Hollywood, CA GJ
 - 31 May-2 June—Minneapolis, MN TJ
 - 1-17 June and after—Minnesota, Cincinnati, OH GJ
 - 3-6 June—Ames, Iowa TJ
 - 6 June—*Sees Fr. Jim McCormick.* TJ
 - 7 August and after—Santa Cruz, Selma, Van Nuys, North Hollywood, San Bernardino, and Anaheim, CA GJ
 - 9 August—Selma, AL TJ
 - At Church of the Redeemer.* TJ
 - 10 August—Los Angeles, CA and North Hollywood, CA TJ
 - 11-12 August—*At camp.* TJ
 - 20 August and after—Glendale, CA, Amsterdam, Holland, Belgium, Paris, France, Madrid, Salamanca, and Avila, Spain GJ
 - 18-20 September—Des Moines, IA GJ
 - 21-25 September—Naperville, IL TJ
 - 21 September—*At Chicago Seminary, Evangelical Theological Seminary, and United Methodist Seminary.* TJ
 - 22 September—*With dean and college president.* TJ

- 23 September—“*Alienation and Reconciliation.*” TJ
- 25 September—Tucson, AZ GJ
- 26-27 September—Phoenix, AZ GJ
- 13-16 October—Omaha, NE GJ
- 17-20 October—McIntosh, MN GJ
- 21-25 October—Missoula, MT GJ
- 27-31 October—Minneapolis, MN GJ
- 1 November—Minneapolis, MN TJ
- 3-8 November—Dallas, TX GJ
 - 4 November—*With Rod Williams, Brick Bradford, Ralph Wilkerson and others.* TJ
 - 7-8 November—*At Pentecostal World Conference.* TJ
- 9-10 November—Connecticut. TJ
- 11-13 November—Rochester, NY TJ
 - Meetings at First Assembly of God.* TJ
 - 12 November—*At Roman Catholic St. Bernard Seminary.* TJ
- 13-16 November—Rochester, NY GJ
- 16-17 November—Lima, NY GJ
- 18-22 November—Walton, NY GJ
 - 22 November—*At First Baptist.* TJ
- 23-24 November—Boxford, MA GJ
 - 23 November—*At Gordon-Conwell in Hamilton and FGBM in Boston.* TJ
- 26 November—Ridgefield, CT TJ
- 27 November—Princeton, NJ GJ
 - At Knudsen’s prayer group.* TJ
- 28 November—Parkesburg, PA GJ
 - Sees Bill Olson (Lutheran); sees John Mackay.* TJ
- 10 December—Escondido, CA GJ
- 11-13 December—San Diego, CA GJ
- 17-26 December—Dallas, TX GJ
- 27 December—Sacramento, CA GJ
- 29-30 December—San Diego, CA GJ
- 31 December—Glendale, CA GJ

1971

- January-March—San Diego, Los Angeles, Thousand Oaks, Costa Mesa, Palo Alto, Yuba City, Marysville, Pinole, Stockton, Sacramento, and Oakland, CA, Chattanooga, TN, Boyton Beach, Miami, and Bradenton, FL, Atlanta, GA, Greenville, SC, Richmond and Norfolk, VA, Washington, DC, Montreal, Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, Canada GJ
- 10-11 January—Thousand Oaks, CA TJ
- 12-13 January—Glendale, CA TJ
- 14 January—*At chapel in the canyon.* TJ
- 15-17 January—Costa Mesa, CA TJ
 - At Prince of Peace Lutheran.* TJ

- 18 January—"Home" TJ
- 14 February—Chattanooga, TN TJ
- 15-16 February—Florida TJ
 - 16 February—*At St. Vincent de Paul Seminary.* TJ
- 17-18 February—Boyton Beach, FL TJ
 - 18 February— *At St. Vincent de Paul Seminary.* TJ
- 1-3 April—Chico, CA GJ
- 12-15 April—Washington, DC GJ
- 15 April—Pittsburgh, PA GJ
- 17-18 April—Scottsdale, PA GJ
 - 18 April—At Mennonite church. TJ
- 19-21 April—Notre Dame/South Bend, IN TJ
 - 19 April—*Meets with Dorothy Ranaghan.* TJ
 - 20 April—*Lunches with Ed O'Connor; meets students.* TJ
 - 21 April—*Speaks at seminary; prayer group.* TJ
- 22-23 April—Ann Arbor, MI TJ
- 24-26 April—Oklahoma City, OK GJ
- 1-2 May—Reno, NV GJ
- 7-8 May—Fresno, CA GJ
- 9-16 May—Glendale, CA GJ
 - 16 May—*At Faith Center.* TJ
- 18 May—St. Louis, MO GJ
 - With Missouri Synod Lutherans.* TJ
- 20 May—Evanston, IL GJ
- 21-22 May—Chicago, IL GJ
- 23-25 May—New Castle, PA GJ
- 26-31 May—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 5 June—Santa Rosa, CA GJ
- 6 June—San Jose, CA GJ
- 7 June—Seattle, WA GJ
- 8-9 June—Collegeville, MN GJ
- 12-16 June—Copenhagen, Denmark GJ
- 21-23 June—Rome, Italy GJ
- 24-28 June—Geneva, Switzerland GJ & TJ
 - At WCC; sees Predervand, Hollenweger, and others.* TJ
- 29 June—La Porte Ouverte TJ
- 30 June—Taize, France TJ
- 4 July—Chalon, France GJ
- 6-10 July—Paris, France GJ
- 12-17 July—Guildford, England GJ
- 27-30 July—Germany GJ
- 1 August—Luxembourg TJ
- 2-6 August—Louvain, Belgium TJ
 - 2 August—*At Faith and Order.* TJ
 - 5 August—*With Walter Hollenweger.* TJ
- 13-15 August—Syracuse, NY GJ

- 5 September—Glendale, CA TJ
- 6-10 September—Dallas, TX TJ
 - 8 September—*At FGBMF Regional Conference.* TJ
 - 9 September—*Kathryn Kuhlman is mentioned.* TJ
- 24 October—Nymegen-Driebergen (Holland?) TJ
- 25 October—*Travels from Amsterdam to Rome.* TJ
- 26 October—Rome
 - Meetings with the secretariat.* TJ
- 27 October—*Travels from Roma to Geneva.* TJ
- 28 October—Lausanne, Switzerland. TJ
- 12-14 November—Helena, MT GJ
- 15 November—Santa Fe, NM GJ and Albuquerque, NM TJ
- 16-18 November—Rocky Mount, NC GJ
 - 17 November—*At a Presbyterian church.* TJ
- 19-21 November—Raleigh, NC GJ
- 22-24 November—Charlotte, NC GJ
- 26-29 November—Hamilton, Bermuda GJ
- 7-10 December—Twin Falls, ID GJ
- 11-15 December—Champaign, IL GJ
- 17 December—Cincinnati, OH GJ
- 18 December—Dayton, OH GJ

1972

- 1 January—Glendale, CA GJ
- 2 January—Norco, Riverside, and Redlands, CA GJ
- 4-15 February—Washington, DC GJ
- 2-11 March—Bradenton, FL GJ
- 12-19 March—Jacksonville, FL GJ
 - 12 March—*At Grace Episcopal Church.* TJ
 - 16 March—*At St. Peter's Episcopal.* TJ
- 20-26 March—Maitland, FL GJ
- 14 May—*At Faith Center.* TJ
- 15 May—San Bernadino, CA TJ
- 16-17 May—Fresno, CA TJ
 - At Peoples Church.* TJ
- 18 May—"Home" TJ
- 31 May—Ridgefield, CT TJ
- 1 June—To Notre Dame. TJ
 - With Catholic Pentecostals.* TJ
- 2-4 June—Notre Dame, Indiana GJ
 - 3 June—*With Kevin Ranaghan.* TJ
- 20-24 June—Zurich, Switzerland GJ
- 6-7 August—Minneapolis, MN TJ
- 8-12 August—Minneapolis, MN GJ
 - 8 June—*At Lutheran Conference; with Dennis Bennett in the evening.* TJ
 - 9 June—*Ed O'Connor Workshop.* TJ

- 13 August—St. Cloud, MN TJ
 - At St. Benedict's Mass; Presbyterian Church of St. Cloud.* TJ
- 14-15 August—Minneapolis, MN TJ
 - At Minneapolis Assembly of God.* TJ
- 16 August—"Home" TJ
- 17 August—Santa Clara, CA TJ
 - At Roman Catholic meeting (?).* TJ
- 18 August—"Home" TJ
- 1-4 October—Rome GJ
- 5-8 October—Copenhagen, Denmark GJ
- 9 October—Stockholm, Sweden TJ
- 10-15 October—Stockholm, Sweden GJ
 - 13 October—*At a Baptist church.* TJ
- 16-22 October—Helsinki, Finland GJ
- 23-24 October—Oslo and Bergen, Norway GJ
- 1-3 November—Toronto, Canada GJ
- 3 November—Montreal, Canada GJ
- 8-12? Washington, DC GJ
- 10-11 November—Oklahoma City, OK GJ
- 14 November—Spartansburg and Columbia, SC GJ
- 15 November—Greenville, SC GJ
- 17-19 November—Valdosta, GA GJ
 - 19 November—*At Thomasville Presbyterian.* TJ
- 18-21 November—Thomasville, GA GJ
- 21 November—Albany, GA GJ
- 22 November—Tallahassee, FL TJ
 - At Pentecostal-Holiness church.* TJ
- 23 November—Atlanta, GA GJ
- 24 November—Tallahassee, FL GJ
- 24-25 November—Atlanta, GA TJ
 - 24 November—*At Episcopal church.* TJ
 - 25 November—*At Catholic church.* TJ
- 26 November and after—Atlanta, GA and Knoxville, TN GJ
- 4 December—Berkeley, CA TJ
- 7 December—Fairfield, CA TJ
 - At Trinity Lutheran Church.* TJ
- 9 December—Lafayette, CA TJ
 - With Roman Catholics.* TJ
- 27 December—Harborville, CA GJ
- 28 December—Escondido, CA GJ
- 29 December—Bonita, CA GJ
- 30 December—San Diego, CA GJ
- 31 December—Glendale, CA GJ

1973

- 1 January—Santa Monica and North Hollywood, CA GJ

- 9-12 January—Santa Rose, CA GJ
- 14 January—Pleasant Hill, CA TJ
 - At a Baptist church.* TJ
- 15 January—*At St. Elizabeth Roman Catholic Church.* TJ
- 21 January—Watsonville, CA GJ
- 22 January—“Home” TJ
- 23 January—San Jose, CA TJ
- 28-29 January—Anaheim, CA GJ
- 1-4 February and after—Hawaii, Dallas, TX, Valparaiso and Santiago, Chile, Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil GJ
- 17 March—Johannesburg, Durban, Capetown, and Wynberg, South Africa GJ
- 22 March—Stellenbosch, South Africa GJ
- 1-8 April—Lyndhurst, South Africa and elsewhere GJ
- 16 April—East London GJ
- 17 April and after—Cardiff, Wales, Dublin, Ireland, Gormanstown GJ
- 27 May—Glendale, CA TJ
 - At St. Bartholemew Presbyterian.* TJ
- 28 May—Burbank, CA TJ
- 29-30 May—“Home” TJ
- 31 May-1 June—South Bend/Notre Dame TJ
 - 1 June—*At Roman Catholic Conference.* TJ
- 1-3 June and after—Notre Dame, IN, Rome, Wetzhausen, Wurzburg, West Germany, Aberystwyth, Wales, Nottingham, Kolding, Denmark, Jonkoping, Stockholm Ovik, Umea, Helsinki, Finland, Saalem, Watford, England, and Minneapolis, MN GJ
- 5 August—Helsinki TJ
- 6-8 August—Minneapolis, MN TJ
 - 6 August—*At Lutheran Charismatic Conference.* TJ
- 24-26 August—Rockford, IL GJ
- 27-30 August—Appleton, WI GJ
- 30 August—Escondido, CA GJ
- 1-2 September—Glendale, CA GJ
- 3 September—Burbank, CA GJ
- 5 September—Coos Bay, OR GJ
- 6 September—DePoe Bay, OR GJ
- 8 September—Seoul, Korea GJ
- 16-22 September—Seoul, Korea TJ
 - 18-21 September—*At PWC.* TJ
 - 18 September—*Zimmerman gives keynote address.* TJ
- 24 September—Hong Kong GJ
- 26 September—Paris, France GJ
- 7 October—Helsinki, Finland GJ
- 8-12 October—Rome GJ
 - Notes an “audience.”* TJ
- 13-19 October—Lausanne, Biel, Zofingen, Zurich, Basel, Switzerland GJ
- 13 October—Zurich, Switzerland TJ

- 2 December—Miami, FL TJ
- 3 December—Sao Paulo, Brazil TJ
- 4 December—Carapicuíba, Brazil TJ
- 5 December Sao Paulo, Brazil TJ
 - Mentions “Senate of Priests.” TJ
- 6 December—Campinas, Brazil TJ
 - At Presbyterian Seminary (?) TJ
- 7 December—Osasco, Brazil TJ

1974

- 13 January—Oakland, CA TJ
 - At First Church. TJ
- 14 January—At First Church A/G. TJ
- 15 January—At Park Avenue Presbyterian Church. TJ
- 16 January—At St. Paul Episcopal. TJ
- 17 January—At St. Paul’s Lutheran. TJ
- 27 January—Decatur, GA TJ
- 28 January—Newark, NJ TJ
 - At LOGOS offices; stays with Malachuks. TJ
- 29 January—Plainfield, NJ TJ
- 30 January-1 February TJ
 - 1 February—Speaks to NCC staff.
- 17-22 February—In the hospital. TJ
- 2 March—Jerusalem TJ
 - At World Conference; delivers keynote address? TJ
- 17-19 March—“Home” TJ
 - 18 March—Does letters regarding “Dialogue.” TJ
- 20 March—Canada TJ
- 19-22 May—Cincinnati, OH TJ
 - 19 May—At St. Leo’s Roman Catholic Church. TJ
 - 20 May—At Episcopal Conference. TJ
- 4-9 August—Minneapolis, MN TJ
 - 6 August—Delivers keynote message at Lutheran meeting (?) TJ
 - 8 August—Attends Roman Catholic prayer group. TJ
- 15 September—Des Moines, IA TJ
- 16-18 September—Lubbock, TX TJ
 - At First Church—Southern Baptist. TJ
- 20 September—Hightstown, NJ TJ
 - Sees John Mackay. TJ
- 21 September—Lancaster, PA TJ
- 29 September-1 October—“Home” TJ
- 2-6 October—Boise, ID TJ
 - 2 October—At First Presbyterian. TJ
- 14-19 October—Springfield, MO TJ
 - 17 October—Visits A/G headquarters. TJ
- Before October 22—Monett, West Plains, and Carthage, MO, Harrison, AK GJ

- 22-27 October—Albany, OR GJ
- 1-2 November—Grand June Lion and Glenwood Springs, CO GJ
- 7 November and after—Escondido, CA, Buffalo, NY, Denver, CO GJ
- 1 December—Denver, CO TJ
- 2-4 December—“Home” TJ
- 5-17 December—Los Angeles, CA GJ
 - 6 December—Glendale, CA TJ
 - At Society for Pentecostal Studies meeting.* TJ
- 20-22 December—Baltimore, MD GJ
- 27 December and after—Boston, MA, Columbia and Greenville, SC GJ

1975

- 1-10 January—Bradenton, Lakeland, Tampa, and Naples, FL GJ
- 11-15 January—Decatur, GA GJ
- 15-19 January—Beckley and Charleston, WV GJ
- 27 January—Agnas, Buenas, Puerto Rico, Cayamo GJ
- 16 February—Glendale, CA GJ
- 21-23 February—Atascadero, CA GJ
- 28 February—Concord, CA GJ
- 3 March—Santa Rosa, CA GJ
- 7-9 March—Dallas, TX GJ
- 20-23 March—Denver, CO GJ
- 24 March—Johannesburg, South Africa GJ
- 7 April—Bethlehem, OPS, Durban, Umtat, East London, Uitenhage, Capetown, Stellenbosch, Kimberley, South Africa GJ
- 10-21 May—Rome GJ
 - At Congress on the Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Church.* (?) MP
- 4-8 June—Glendale, CA GJ
- 9-12 June—San Antonio, TX GJ
- 13-15 June—Wichita, TX GJ
- 16-18 June—Lansdale, PA GJ
- 19-21 June—Marriottsville, MD GJ
- 21 June—Parkesburg, PA GJ
- 23 June—Spokane, WA GJ
- 26-29 June—Houston, TX GJ
- 3-5 July—Fort Wayne, IN GJ
- 6-8 July—Green Lake, WI GJ
- 10-13 July—Lincoln City, Depoe Bay and Banks, OR GJ
- 18-21 July—Albuquerque, NM GJ
- 6 August—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 7 August—Minneapolis, MN GJ
- 12-16 August—Nairobi, Kenya GJ
- 21-23 August—Montreat, NC GJ
- 25 August—Greenville, SC GJ
- 29 August—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 5-8 September—Grand Junction, CO GJ

- 9-11 September—Pueblo, CO GJ
- 12-13 September—Chicago, IL GJ
- 14-17 September—Naperville, IL GJ
- 18 September—Norfolk, VA GJ
- 21-23 September—Santa Cruz, CA GJ
- 3-5 October—Yuba City, CA GJ
- 7-30 October—Emmetten, Geneva and Zurich, Switzerland GJ
- 31 October—Jerusalem GJ
- 27 November—Nairobi, Kenya GJ
- 16-18 December—Ann Arbor, MI GJ
- 30 December—Bradenton, FL GJ

1976

- 1-3 January—Bradenton, FL TJ
- 4 January—Miami, FL TJ
- 9 January—Palm Beach, FL GJ
- 11 January—Melbourne and Winter Park, FL GJ
 - In Melbourne with Jamie Buckingham.* TJ
- 13-14 January—Jacksonville, FL GJ
- 18 January—Lakeland and Winter Haven, FL GJ
- 21-24 January—Augusta, GA GJ
- 24 January—Houston, TX GJ
- 25-26 January—Houston, TX TJ
- 28 January and after—Mexico City, Mexico and Covina, CA GJ
- 3-10 February—Cupertino, Palo Alto, Antioch and Modesto, CA GJ
- 29 February—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 5-7 March—Richmond, VA GJ
- 8-11 March—Oklahoma City, OK GJ
- 12-13 March—St. Paul, MN GJ
 - At Episcopal Conference.* TJ
- 16-18 March—Burlingame, CA GJ
- 19-21 March—Fresno, CA GJ
- 23-26 March—Santa Rose, CA GJ
- 2-4 April and after—Cincinnati, OH and Charlottesville, VA GJ
- 2 May—Lansing, MI GJ
- 6-7 May—Cedar Rapids, IA TJ
- 19 May—Cedar Rapids, IA GJ
- 23 May—Collegeville, MN GJ
 - Presented with the Pax Christi award by St. John's University.* LSK
- 27 May—Washington, DC GJ
- 29 May—*End of final phase of first RCP Dialogue.* (?) MP
- 1-2 June—Pasadena, CA GJ
- 4-5 June—Kansas City, MO
- 6-9 June—Anaheim, CA GJ
- 10 June—Escondido, CA GJ
- 13-16 June—Olympia, WA GJ

- 20-24 June—Naperville, IL GJ
- 25 June—Houston, TX GJ
- 26-28 June—Detroit, MI GJ
- 4-9 July—Dallas, TX GJ
- 11-14 July—Fremont, CA GJ
- 16-17 July—Winchester, VA GJ
- 19-20 July—Charlotte, NC GJ
- 21 July and after—Plainfield, NJ and Boise, ID GJ
- 10-12 August—Anaheim, CA GJ
- 13-15 August—Brockville, CA GJ
- 17-25 August—Rio de Janeiro, Brazil GJ
- 27 August and after—South Africa, Krugersdorp and Port Elizabeth GJ
- 8 September and after—Capetown, Kimberley, Pretoria and Johannesburg, South Africa GJ
- 17-22 August—Ardmore, OK GJ
- 26-30 September—London TJ
 - 27-29—*At PWC.* TJ
- 2 October—London GJ
- 3-10 October—Emetten, Switzerland GJ
- 10-12 October—Zofingen, Switzerland GJ
- 13-14 October—Berlin, Germany GJ
- 16-17 October—Karlsruhe and Pforzheim, West Germany GJ
- 23-24 October—Munich and Dusseldorf, West Germany GJ
- 25-31 October—Brussels, Belgium GJ
- 9-19 November—Israel GJ
- 21 November—Torrance, CA GJ
- 25 November—Burbank, CA GJ
- 28 November—Cupertino, CA GJ
- 1-5 December—Oklahoma City, OK GJ
- 6-19 December—Nairobi, Kenya GJ
- 25 December—“*Urbana 76: 11th Triennial Missions Convention.*” TJ
- 28 December—Bradenton, FL GJ

1977

- 2 January—Bradenton, FL GJ
- 18-20 January and after—Caracas, Venezuela and Charlottesville, VA GJ
- 2-3 February—Santa Cruz, CA GJ
- 7 February—“Home” TJ
- 8 February—Concord, CA TJ
- 9 February—“Home” TJ
- 10 February—Austin, TX TJ
- 11-12 February—Austin, TX GJ
 - At Northern Presbyterian Charismatic Conference.* TJ
- 18-20 February—Albuquerque, NM GJ
- 20 February—Louisville, KY TJ
- 21-26 February—Guatemala City, Guatemala GJ

- 22-24 February—Louisville, KY TJ
 - At *Southern Baptist Regional*. TJ
- 25-26 February—Marked as “*Presbyterian*.” TJ
- 27 February—Wichita, KS TJ
- 4-6 March—Houston, TX GJ
 - 4 March—At *Roman Catholic Renewal*. TJ
- 7 March—Forest Hill, MD GJ
 - At a *Roman Catholic Church in Bel Air*. TJ
- 8-13 March—Washington, DC GJ
 - 8 March—Mentions *FGBMF school*. TJ
- 25 March—Pleasant Hill, CA GJ
- 27-30 March—Redding, CA GJ
- 21 April—San Marcos, CA GJ
- 23 April—San Diego, CA GJ
- 23-24 April—Chula Vista, CA GJ
- 28-30 April—Emporia, KS GJ
- 2-5 May—“Home” TJ
 - 2 April—At *FGBMF*. TJ
- 8-11 May—St. Louis, MO GJ
- 12 May—Newark, NJ GJ
- 16-17 May—Stamford, CT TJ
 - At *First Methodist*. TJ
- 18 May—Ivoryton, Bristol, and Greenwich, CT GJ
- 24-28 May—Pittsburgh, PA GJ
 - 24 May—At *Duquesne (?)*. TJ
- 30-31 May—“Home” TJ
- 3-6 June—Detroit, MI GJ
- 7 June and after—Cedar Rapids and Davenport, IA GJ
- 12-14 June—Toronto, Canada GJ
- 15-17 June—Peterborough, Canada GJ
- 16-19 June—Brockville, Canada GJ
- 21 June—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 2 July—San Rafael, CA GJ
- 3 July—Benicia, CA GJ
- 4 July—Burbank and Corona del Mar, CA GJ
- 13 July—Vallejo, CA GJ
- 15-17 July—Los Angeles, CA GJ
- 20-23 July—Kansas City, MO GJ
- 24-28 July—Lausanne, Switzerland GJ
- 15 August—Nairobi, Kenya GJ
- 29 August—Johannesburg GJ
- 5 September and after—South Africa, Hereford, Shrewsbury, Worth Abbey, Guildford, Belfast, Ireland, Wellington Hall
- 2-7 October—Rome, Italy GJ
 - 3-8 October—At *Roman Catholic Dialogue for the beginning of second five year term*. TJ, MP

- 18-19 October—"Home" TJ
- 20-23 October—Atlantic Highlands, NJ GJ
- 1-6 November—Helena, MT GJ
- 7-13 November—Santa Cruz, CA GJ
- 14-22 November—Baton Rouge, LA GJ
- 23-26 November and after—New Orleans, LA and Singapore GJ
- 6-16 December—Indonesia, Java GJ
- 17-21 December—New Zealand GJ

1978

- 4 January—Albany, OR GJ
- 5 January—Salem and Portland, OR GJ
- 5-7 January—Lake Oswego, OR GJ
- 8-10 January—Spokane, WA GJ
- 15-18 January—Phoenix, AZ GJ
- 20 January—Saalem, Helsinki, Finland GJ
- 24-30 January—Stockholm, Sweden, Copenhagen, Denmark, and Oslo, Norway
- 19 February—Albuquerque, NM GJ
- 20-24 February—Charlotte, NC GJ
- 27-28 February—Norfolk, VA GJ
- 3-5 March—Rockville, MD GJ
- 6-7 March—Buffalo, NY GJ
- 8 March—Rochester, NY GJ
- 11 March—Philadelphia, PA GJ
- 12-13 March—Plainfield, NJ GJ
- 14 March—Berkeley, CA GJ
- 18 March—Napa, CA GJ
- 19 March—Los Gatos, CA GJ
- 20-26 March—Glendale, AZ GJ
- 7-12 April—Ardmore, OK GJ
- 17-21 April—Singapore GJ
- 23 April—Eureka, CA GJ
- 28-30 April—Edinburg, TX GJ
- 14 May—Lincoln, NE GJ
- 15-17 May—Gering, NE GJ
- 18-21 May—Minot, SD GJ
- 23 May and after—Portsmouth, VA and Toronto, Canada GJ
- 27 May—Santa Cruz, CA GJ
 - Awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by Bethany Bible College. LSK*
- 31 May—Jackson, Mississippi GJ
- 2-4 June—Detroit, MI GJ
- 6-8 June—Charleston, WV GJ
- 9-10 June—Fort Worth, TX GJ
- 12-18 June—Dublin, Ireland GJ
- 23-25 June—Ashland, OH GJ

- 27 June—Brooks, OR GJ
- 5-8 July—Luxembourg, Chalon, France GJ
- 10-11 July—Aberystwyth, Wales GJ
- 12-17 July—Canterbury, England GJ
- 28-30 July—Clawson, MI GJ
- 11-12 August—Michigan GJ
- 24-26 August—Santa Clara, CA GJ
- 1-7 September—Tokyo, Ozaka, Yokehama and Nagoya, Japan GJ
- 8-11 September—Seoul, Korea GJ
- 12-17 September—Singapore GJ
- 19-20 September—Toronto and Montreal, Canada GJ
- 30 September—Washington, DC GJ
- 5-6 October—Redding, CA GJ
- 8-14 October—Switzerland
- 26 October—Chicago, IL GJ
- 28 October—Anaheim, CA GJ
- 2 November—San Leandro, CA GJ
- 5 November—Vallejo, CA GJ
- 9 November—St. Louis, CA GJ
- 14-17 November and after—Buenos Aires, Argentina and La Paz, Bolivia GJ
- 19-22 November—Lima, Peru GJ
- 27-29 November—Glendale, RI GJ
- 4 November—Dublin, CA GJ
- 16 November—Richmond, VA GJ
- 26 November—Bradenton, FL GJ

1979

- Meets with Executive Presbytery of the A/G at Baltimore General Council.* T
- 14 January and after—Sydney, Australia GJ
- 20 January—Canberra, Australia GJ
- 21 January—Melbourne, Australia GJ
- 23 January—Hobart, Australia GJ
- 24 January—Adelaide, Australia GJ
- 25 January and after—Perth, Australia, Copenhagen, Jonkoping, Gothenburg, Linkoping, Vernamo, and Stockholm GJ
- 15-18 February—Dayton, OH GJ
- 19-20 February and after—Boston, MA and Plainfield, NJ GJ
- 3 March—Mill Valley, CA GJ
- 7 March—Whittier, CA GJ
- 9-11 March—Tulsa, OK GJ
- 2-6 April—Cairo, Egypt GJ
- 7-9 April—Amman, Jordan GJ
- 11-15 April—West Berlin, Germany GJ
- 20-28 April and after—London, England, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Manchester, Birmingham, Germany
- 3 May—Stockton, CA GJ

- 4 May—Modesto, CA GJ
- 6 May—Concord, CA GJ
- 18-19 May—Dayton and Cincinnati, OH GJ
- 22-25 May—San Bruno, CA GJ
- 19-27 June—Bradenton, FL

1980

- Restored to ministry in the A/G.* T
- 2 March—"Home" TJ
- 3-4 March—Waterville, MA TJ
- 5 March—Topsham, MA TJ
- 6 March—Reading, MA TJ
- 7 March—Woonsocket, RI TJ
- 8 March—*At East Greenwich Women Aglow and Salem Baptist.* TJ
- 4 May—"Home" TJ
- 5 May—Springfield, MO TJ
 - Sees Thomas Zimmerman.* TJ
- 31 August-2 September—Home TJ
- 4-6 September—Providence, RI TJ
 - At Roman Catholic Conference.* TJ
- 14 September—"Home" TJ
- 15-19 September—Mexico City

1987

- 2 February—*Dies in Pasadena, California.*¹

¹ "David du Plessis-'Mr. Pentecost'-Goes to Be With Christ," *The Pentecostal Evangel*, 15 March 1987, 27.

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