



Pentecostal Defences.

by

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We have noticed that some Pentecostal ministries are using particular methods to defend their extra-biblical teaching of unknown 'tongues' and the Pentecostal 'Baptism with the Spirit'. Even the historical roots of the movement are now being whitewashed.

Some of these ministries we have much in common with as they have well exposed the 'Toronto Blessing', the Pensacola 'revival' and many errors in the signs and wonders movement. However, with one voice they are sounding the alarm, but with another voice they are ignoring the extra-biblical teachings and historic roots of their own movement.

Recent material by these ministries states that their tongues today are a valid known languages after all, and not necessarily unknown or ecstatic utterances; they stretch the three historical cases of tongues (Acts 2,10,19) to 4 or 5 by including Paul's mention in the book of Corinthians; and they say the tongues can still be '*heavenly languages*' yet without any references to Scripture to prove this. In regard to the 'Baptism with the Spirit' the orthodox historical view of salvation is rejected for teaching that denies Scripture and history.

Most surprising of all is the whitewash of the roots of the Pentecostal movement itself. Some are now bypassing the Topeka and Azusa St. beginnings in the early Twentieth Century* and attempting to place their roots in the holiness movement of the century before.

Firstly, on the subject of tongues: Pentecostals today generally do *not* see their tongues as a valid known earthly human language, (as it was at Acts 2). It is not too difficult to test today's tongues movement linguistically and show that it is not the *glossais* of Acts 2 - known earthly human languages. The words '*language*' and '*tongue*' in verses 6 and 8 are the same Greek word '*dialecto*' meaning known earthly human *dialects*. There have been rare undocumented reports and *stories* that someone has spoken in a real language not understood by the speaker but understood by the hearers as was the case at Acts 2. However, these reports have as

much credibility as the reports of raisings from the dead - nil. The fact remains - today's tongues spoken in the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement are the same as they were at its inception in 1901 at Topeka, USA* - *unknown* and a counterfeit of Acts 2. As for today's tongues being '*heavenly languages*' - this is *totally* devoid of Scriptural support and an invention of the mid twentieth century.

In Matthew 6:7 Jesus spoke against babbling like pagans. The Greek word used in '**vain repetition**' is '*battalogo*' which means to '*utter in an incoherently or meaninglessly repetitious manner*', (*Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*); '*a making of sounds suggestive of speech but lacking the meaning, content, intelligibility, and articulateness of normal adult human speech*', (*Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms*). Would this not describe much of unknown tongues today?

There are only 3 (not 4 or 5) historic actual cases of speaking in tongues in the New Testament. They are Acts 2,10 and 19. Other references in the Epistles to tongues are *doctrinal* references but not historical recorded instances.

Secondly, on the subject of the Pentecostal 'Baptism with the Spirit': The book of Acts is an historic book which records the acts of the Holy Spirit. It clearly gives the *chronological* transition of the '*promise*' of the Holy Spirit *Himself*, (not a Pentecostal '*Baptism with the Spirit*'), coming to various groups of people and *indwelling* them for the *first* time - to the Jews in Acts 2, the Samaritans in Acts 8, the Gentiles in Acts 10, and to disciples of John the Baptist in Acts 19. These groups of people had *never* received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit before these events because the Holy Spirit could not come to earth to *indwell* until Jesus ascended and was glorified, (Jn.16:7). These events were unique operations of the Holy Spirit. This coming of the '**promise**' (Lk.24:29; Acts 1:4) was the *person* of the Holy Spirit, not any second experience. This '**promise**' of the 'Baptism with the Spirit' is historically documented in the book of Acts as the receiving of the indwelling Holy Spirit *at conversion* - to '**as many as the Lord**

our God shall call’ and *‘through faith...to them that believe’,* (Gal.3:14,22). Thereafter *‘the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call’,* (Acts 2:39).

The Pentecostal ‘subsequent’ experience is simply not found in the early church Fathers writings but was made ‘doctrine’ at the turn of the twentieth century!

Thirdly, this brings us to the question of the *roots* of the movement: Although there were *isolated* instances of unknown tongues down through the centuries, they were arguably all amongst Roman Catholics, mystics, pagan cultures or heretical and extreme Protestant groups. Although some extremes of the 19th Century sanctification/holiness movement became the seedbed for the Pentecostal movement, the fact is that the Pentecostal denominations are clearly rooted in the Azusa St ‘revival’ of Los Angeles (1906); and the experience of unknown tongues with the ‘Baptism with the Spirit’ is rooted in the Topeka, Kansas experience (1901).

At Topeka, Charles Parham exhorted his 34 students to receive the same experience as at Acts 2. He expected *Zenoglossalia* - known foreign languages for missionary purposes. It was later that he realised they had received a counterfeit unknown ecstatic utterances which he subsequently *denounced* at Azusa St as *‘babble’*. The book *‘Fields White Unto Harvest’* by James Goff Jr., a Pentecostal who was the grandson of a co-worker of Parham, is a devastating historical documentation of this 1901 deception that began the unknown tongues of the Pentecostal movement. Goff writes: *‘It was Parham who first formulated the theological definition of Pentecostalism by linking tongues with the Holy Spirit baptism...Parham was the recognised Pentecostal leader in the Midwest before and during the Azusa St. beginnings...He organised the first interstate Pentecostal meetings, and he issued the first ministerial credentials...Parham can chronologically be labelled founder.’***

Parham utterly denied Azusa St. was the work of the Holy Spirit. To his death he considered the tongues of the day a counterfeit. *It was from this movement that the Pentecostal churches of today have come.* The historical facts are irrefutable.

The reason why some Pentecostals seek to distance themselves from the roots of Parham, the 1901 Topeka experience and the Azusa St church, is because of the homosexual scandal, heresies and the sordid history of Parham and Azusa St.*

When discerning any movement, Scripture is the sword we must use to dissect. The historical roots are exposed, and it cannot bear good fruit. This is becoming more evident as the years pass. We urge our readers not to be swayed by those who would write against such things. ***‘Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?’*** (James 3:11)

* See our papers ‘Pentecostal/Tongues Roots - The Amazing Facts’ and ‘The Other Side of Azusa St’.

At http://taministries.net/?page_id=131

For a more in depth and well researched treatment see ‘Fields White Unto Harvest’ by Goff Jr. -

** P.11-15 ‘Fields White Unto Harvest’ by Goff Jr.

Notes

About the authors

Terry Arnold holds a Doctorate in Theology (Dth), a Masters degree (MABS) and several diplomas. He was founder and president of *South Pacific Bible Institute*, a Bible college training and equipping people for ministry. In addition he was the founder of Hervey Bay Bible Church in Queensland, Australia. He has for 25 years served as an elder and then pastor.

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