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**A Kaleidoscope of Pentecostalism:
The Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements**

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Planning for the project began in 1984 to provide an introduction to the complex and fascinating mosaic of groups, individuals, and theological perspectives that together constitute the Pentecostal and charismatic movements of the twentieth century. This article describes the friendships and circumstances that brought the book to publication in 1988, as well as the process of selecting topics and choosing contributors. It then assesses limitations and strengths. Finally, the Dictionary reflects the emergence of a self-confident and academically sophisticated Pentecostal scholarship.

McSalty's Pizza at 1141 East Delmar in Springfield, Missouri, hardly qualifies as a location where one would expect a major reference work to be conceived, indeed one that would fill a "huge lacuna in contemporary Church history" (Erdel 1991:386). But that is where it began. The reflection that follows traces the story of the *Dictionary of Pentecostalism and Charismatic Movements* (hereinafter, the *Dictionary*), its development, features, limitations, and strengths, from that unlikely setting.

From Pizza to Proposal

Stanley M. Burgess and I have been close friends for many years. Early in the 1980s, we often met for lunch at McSalty's, a popular restaurant never lacking patrons at noon. His pilgrimage had taken him from being a "missionary kid" of pioneer Assemblies of God missionaries in South India to a distinguished career as professor in religious studies at Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield. My journey in ministerial training had most recently taken me to the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in the same city. The bond of our friendship proved indispensable to achieving the success of the project.

We chatted about many things over pizza and deli sandwiches. One in particular, however, repeatedly surfaced, namely, that of a Pentecostal dictionary. Nothing of this nature existed, yet rapid growth and complexity of the Pentecostal and charismatic movements called for such an endeavor. We already had enough on our plates: Burgess was working on a book, and I was preparing my recently finished dissertation for publication.

Unexpectedly, something happened that rapidly changed our agendas. Stanley N. Gundry, an executive of Zondervan Publishing House, visited the university and several colleges in Springfield in spring 1984 looking for potential writers and manuscripts. During his stop, we talked for the first time, but the idea of a dictionary did not come up.

Several weeks later, he phoned me for an opinion about a book project. Near the end of the conversation, he asked me the same question he had asked in our first conversation, "Do you have any projects on the back burner?" I thought for a moment and then replied that Burgess and I had often considered the possibility of editing a dictionary. I then hastily added, "But that wouldn't interest you," because I did not think Zondervan had ever published a book by or about Pentecostals. Much to my surprise, Gundry jumped at the suggestion and advised that we submit a proposal, which we did in late summer 1984.

Zondervan approved it, even though it had little familiarity with the Pentecostal/charismatic market. Would the book sell more than a couple thousand volumes? Would the investment be lost? Despite the risk, Gundry and Ed van der Maas, Regency Reference Library editor, were a constant source of encouragement and support.

New challenges subsequently arose: We had no grant money, no cash advance on royalties, and no experience in book editing. Until its publication in 1988, we relied on the good will of our academic institutions to cover telephone, mailing, and copying expenses. Yet our enthusiasm never flagged. Burgess and I understood the potential of the market and knew the time had come. We also felt keenly that the project had been prompted by the Holy Spirit. During the next four years, working lunches—many of them impromptu—took place from one to three times a week, in spite of our other responsibilities.

Guidelines and Philosophy

In regard to editorial guidelines, Zondervan provided helpful assistance. This was augmented when the circle of friends

widened to three with the addition of Patrick H. Alexander as associate editor. He was a recent graduate of Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts, then living in Springfield. His contribution began with the preparation of the 21-page "Handbook of Philosophy and Guidelines" that each contributor received. Alexander's editorial and exegetical expertise lightened the load and balanced the responsibilities of the team. (He later became senior academic editor of Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Massachusetts.)

As to philosophy, we designed the *Dictionary* to be as inclusive as possible with each article having up-to-date bibliographies. As one reviewer stated, "Where else would one look for a sympathetic account of the Marian apparitions at Medjugorje?" (Erdel 1991:386). It would encompass classical Pentecostals and Roman Catholic charismatics, Mennonites and Messianic Jews, snake handlers and Presbyterians.

Originally, we called it the *Dictionary of the American Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, but later deleted "American" to shorten the title. "Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements" seemed preferable to the more generic "Dictionary of Pentecostalism." In the marketplace, the term charismatic had become familiar to a wide audience, and many *charismatics* chose to identify with this term over *Pentecostal* or *Neo-Pentecostal*.

From the beginning, we insisted that articles had to be written as objectively as possible. Controversial issues were to be approached with journalistic discretion. Many readers noted the *Dictionary's* non-defensive posture. Sharing this sentiment, the U.S. Navy Chief of Chaplains ordered a copy sent to every Navy chaplain, commenting, "The dictionary addresses doctrine, the role of scripture, worship, spirituality, and the devotional practices of those associated with Pentecostal and charismatic faith groups. I believe it to be a usable resource that will assist us in providing inclusive ministries to the sea services" (Koeneman 1989).

Selection of Entries

Choosing topics and biographical entries began with the scrutiny of the indexes of several magisterial works, including *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* (1979) by Robert Mapes Anderson; *All Things Are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (1975) by David Edwin Harrell Jr.; and *The Pentecostals* (1972) by Walter J. Hollenweger.

A ten-page preliminary list emerged from the indexes and hours spent in brainstorming. Copies then went to 29 academics and church leaders across the nation for their perusal and recommendations. However, many more ideas came from the contributors once they were in place. Indeed, the interaction between editors and many contributors created a *de facto* editorial board. The diversity of their backgrounds and expertise made this arrangement quite productive.

In one instance, Leonard Lovett, a social ethicist and member of the Church of God in Christ, recommended an article on Black theology written from a Pentecostal perspective. It was soon added, and Lovett was assigned to write it, much to the praise of reviewer Walter J. Hollenweger (1989: 182). But the process was not foolproof: We failed to include an article on the Eucharist prayer of the ancient church, the invocation that recipients of the Eucharist might be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Determining the size of articles led us to opt for large articles ranging upwards to 18,000 words for in-depth coverage of some topics (e.g., "Charismatic Movement"). Shorter ones with hundreds or several thousand words include "Hispanic Pentecostalism"; "Glossolalia"; "Lutheran Charismatics"; "Missions"; "Prayer Towers"; and "Youth With A Mission."

Several hundred biographical entries, varying from 150 to 3,000 words, introduce readers to Daniel Berg and Adolf Gunnar Vingren, Swedish-American pioneer missionaries to Brazil; Episcopalian Dennis Bennett, whose testimony of speaking in tongues signaled the emergence of the charismatic renewal; David J. Du Plessis, known worldwide as "Mr. Pentecost"; Ralph Martin, co-founder of the Word of God community in Ann Arbor, Michigan; evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson; and William J. Seymour, father of the Azusa Street Revival.

Not surprisingly, questions later arose about the criteria of selection. In a few cases, readers wondered why favorite pastors or church leaders had been left out. A reader from Garland, Texas, anxious to preserve the memory of "Brother and Sister Hibbert," expressed shock at finding "nothing on these very well known husband and wife preachers."

Contributors

To simplify the project and financial arrangements, Zondervan originally asked for 12 writers. Nonetheless, to insure the required expertise the number finally reached 66, with most of

them coming from Pentecostal/charismatic ranks. They included archivists, biblical scholars, bibliographers and librarians, editors, historians, theologians, missiologists, denominational and renewal leaders, and sociologists. Given the scope of the *Dictionary* and the variety of its writers, one reviewer nominated it as "the most ecumenical volume ever published by an evangelical press" (Erdel 1991:386). Wayne E. Warner, director of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center in Springfield, Missouri, very capably searched for photographs.

Contributors received financial remuneration in two ways: payment by the word and royalty percentage for those who wrote a substantial number of articles. With the *Dictionary* now in its eleventh printing and 38,500 copies in print, the writers with royalty percentages have done especially well.

Judging the Entree

Since the *Dictionary* focuses primarily on North America and to a lesser extent on Europe, regions where Pentecostalism initially appeared, some reviewers have lamented this limitation, but still applauded the array of material it provides (Hollenweger 1989: 182; McDonnell I 991: 83). Coverage of Third World Pentecostals and charismatics, who represent the vast majority, must await the forthcoming edition being prepared by Stanley Burgess.

If we had it to do over, more entries on African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and charismatics would have been added, along with an index and substantially more cross-referencing.

The book's accomplishments include its handy and reliable presentation of recent research, demonstrating that Pentecostal scholarship has come of age: Pentecostals now possess the self-confidence and academic sophistication to reflect on their heritage. Combined with the intellectual vigor of charismatic scholars, the volume informs and dispels myths in an unusually readable fashion for a reference work.

The *Dictionary* also depicts how the religious landscape has changed: In this growing wing of Christianity, there exists an ecumenicity in the spirit shared by millions of Pentecostals and charismatics across conciliar and theological barriers that is unique to the twentieth century. Reviewer Timothy P. Weber detects an unplanned "thesis of sorts running throughout the book: the Pentecostal and charismatic movements are authentic products of the Holy Spirit within the churches and deserve to

be given their rightful place in the wider worlds of religious scholarship and Christian fellowship" (Weber 1991:31).

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