

Assemblies of God Theological Seminary  
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY  
**PTH 907 Theological Issues Facing Pentecostals and Charismatics**  
Core 3, October 11-15, 2004  
Gary B. McGee

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of theological issues and challenges facing Pentecostals and charismatics. Topics include the nature of Pentecostal/charismatic identity in the broader evangelical community, Spirit baptism and initial evidence, and current popular teachings circulating in churches.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

*Cognitive Outcomes:*

1. The student will examine key issues of theology and spirituality facing Pentecostal and charismatic ministers.
2. The student will become acquainted with selected writings that discuss the distinctives of Pentecostal doctrine and practice.
3. The student will integrate pneumatological emphases in the ongoing formation of their theological beliefs.

*Character/Attitude Outcomes:*

1. The student will analyze their belief structure in regard to the ministry and activity of the Holy Spirit.
2. The student will proceed in ministry with a better-informed understanding of contemporary issues, as well as an enhanced appreciation of the unity and diversity within the Pentecostal and charismatic movements.
3. The student will be able to articulate their theology of the Holy Spirit and renewal.

*Skill Outcomes:*

1. The student will be able to integrate insights on Pentecostal and charismatic pneumatology into their activities in ministry.
2. The student's understanding of the unique Pentecostal dimensions of Christian spirituality will be increased in their daily life.
3. The student will be better able to teach about the values of excellence from the Pentecostal heritage in the local church or related ministries.
4. The student will more effectively address the issues facing Pentecostal and charismatic churches.

## COURSE OUTLINE

1. **Presentation of the historical context**
  - A. Decline in emphasis on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit from the ancient church to the 18th Century.
  - B. 19th-Century developments
    1. Restorationist movements
    2. Holiness movement
    3. Healing movement
    4. Rise of premillennial eschatology
  - C. The "Crisis in Missions"
    1. Radical evangelicals
    2. The "Radical Strategy" in mission
  - D. Theories about the origins and nature of modern Pentecostalism
  - E. The "surprises" of God in the 20th Century
  - F. How revivals foster the expansion of missions and church growth
  
2. **Pentecostal and charismatic distinctives--Values from the Pentecostal Heritage**
  - A. Biblical authority
  - B. "Presence" of the Holy Spirit
    1. In the individual: Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the classical Pentecostal doctrine of Initial Evidence
    2. In corporate worship: The ideal of Pentecostal worship
  - C. Gifts of the Spirit
  - D. Holiness
  - E. Missions/evangelism: Pentecostal adaptation of Missio dei--The mission of God in the world
  - F. John 17 and Christian unity: Can we live with a measure of ambiguity with other Pentecostals and charismatics? Relationships with other Christians.
  - G. Pragmatism and the success of the Pentecostal movement
  
3. **Contemporary popular Pentecostal and charismatic issues and challenges**
  - A. Impact of North American culture on Pentecostals. Whither "prophetic witness?"
  - B. Longstanding issue of balancing Scripture and experiential piety in Pentecostal spirituality
  - C. The enduring influence of Latter Rain teachings
  - D. The problem of new "waves" of the Spirit's blessing
  - E. Strategic level prayer mapping
  - F. Recent renewals (Toronto, Brownsville, etc.) and the "problem of wineskins"--Can renewal take place without "splits?"
  - G. The "charismatic" leader and the problem of "power" in the Pentecostal tradition

- H. The decline in emphasis on the baptism of the Holy Spirit--Are Pentecostals now simply evangelicals who emphasize the ministry of the Holy Spirit more than others?
  - I. Facing the "Pentecostal identity" problem head-on: We've changed . . . and so have the evangelicals. How will we proceed from here?
  - J. The new "Evangelical/Pentecostal" paradigm: It is already influencing us. Will we influence it?
4. Biblical and theological syntheses with practical applications
- A. The pastor as theologian
    - 1. The joy of teaching on the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
    - 2. The agony and ecstasy of doing "remedial" theology
    - 3. The problem of physical manifestations? How they fit into renewal.
  - B. The "questions" change with each generation

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES

### **Pre-Session**

1. Completion of approximately 1800 pages of assigned readings. See pre-session reading list below. (NOTE: It is a violation of academic policy to claim credit for books read in prior courses. If you have previously read any book on the list for credit, you must substitute another book from the list of recommended reading or the selected bibliography.)
2. Based on the assigned pre-session readings, students should be prepared to discuss the required readings. They should also be able to analyze the author's thesis of each book or reading.
3. On the first day of class, each student should present a two-page analysis and reflection on the thesis of Grant Wacker's *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*. The paper should be double-spaced and carefully proofread.
4. Students should reflect on the following questions when reading:
  - a. How does our past shape who we are as Pentecostals and charismatics today?
  - b. Why the relative silence about the baptism in the Holy Spirit in many of our churches?
  - c. How should worship in a Spirit-filled congregation be more than an evangelical liturgy?
  - d. Why does revival/renewal pose a threat to contemporary Pentecostalism?
  - e. How can we effectively transmit Pentecostal values to our parishioners and co-workers?
  - f. What is the future of classical Pentecostal theology?

## **During Session**

1. Classroom interaction
3. Discussion, small groups, lectures

## **Post-Session**

Preparation of a major reflective essay (20 pages): **DUE NO LATER THAN (POSTMARKED BY) JANUARY 14, 2005.**

### PRE-SESSION REQUIRED READING LIST

*Suggested order of reading:*

Vinson Synan. *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997. Best overview of the movements by a leading Pentecostal historian.

Ethel E. Goss. *The Winds of God: The Story of the Early Pentecostal Movement (1901-1914)*. Hazelwood, Mo.: Word Aflame Press, 1977. Eyewitness account of early Pentecostalism by a founder of the Assemblies of God.

Frank Bartleman. *Azusa Street: The Roots of Modern Pentecost*. S. Plainfield, N.J.: Bridge Publishing, 1980. Eyewitness account of the Azusa Street revival that provides insights into the dynamics of early Pentecostalism.

Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001. A social history of early Pentecostalism, not designed to examine the divine dimensions of the movement, but the kind of people who forged it into the most dynamic religious movement of the twentieth century.

Douglas Jacobsen. *Thinking in the Spirit: Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003. The first major study of early Pentecostal published theologies.

Richard M. Riss. *Latter Rain: The Latter Rain movement of 1948 and the Mid-Twentieth Century Evangelical Awakening*. Mississauga, Ont.: Honeycomb Visual Productions, 1987.

Margaret M. Poloma. *Main Street Mystics: The Toronto Blessing & Reviving Pentecostalism*. New York: AltaMira Press, 2003.

*In the event that the student has read one or more of the required books listed above, they may substitute one or more of the following:*

- Edith L. Blumhofer. *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993.
- Edith L. Blumhofer, Russell P. Spittler, Grant A. Wacker, eds. *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1999.
- Edward J. Cleary and Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino, eds., *Power, Politics, and Pentecostals in Latin America*. Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1997.
- Harvey Cox. *Fire from Heaven: The Rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the Reshaping of Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1994.
- Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, Douglas Petersen, eds. *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel*. Irvine, Calif.: Regnum Books, 1999.
- David J. Du Plessis. *The Spirit Bade Me Go*. Oakland, Calif.: By the Author, n.d.
- Daniel Mark Epstein. *Sister Aimee: The Life of Aimee Semple McPherson*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace and Co., 1993.
- James R. Goff, Jr. *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism*. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1988.
- Nancy A. Hardesty. *Faith Cure: Divine Healing in the Holiness and Pentecostal Movements*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003.
- David Edwin Harrell, Jr. *All Things Are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Oral Roberts: An American Life*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985.
- Peter Hocken. *The Glory and the Shame: Reflections on the 20th-Century Outpouring of the Holy Spirit*. Guildford, Surrey, U.K.: Eagle, 1994.
- Walter J. Hollenweger. *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997.
- David Martin. *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002.
- Gary B. McGee. *People of the Spirit: The Assemblies of God*. Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Initial Evidence: Historical and Biblical Essays on the Pentecostal Doctrine of Spirit Baptism*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991.
- Margaret M. Poloma. *The Assemblies of God at the Crossroads: Charisma and Institutional Dilemmas*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989.
- Richard M. Riss. *Latter Rain*. Mississauga, Ont.: Honeycomb Visual Productions, 1987.
- Darrin J. Rodgers. *Northern Harvest: Pentecostalism in North Dakota*. Bismarck, N.D.: North Dakota District Council of the Assemblies of God, 2003.
- Everett A. Wilson. *Strategy of the Spirit: J. Philip Hogan and the Growth of the Assemblies of God Worldwide, 1960-1990*. Irvine, Calif.: Regnum Books, 1997.

SPECIFIC DATA:

Syllabus prepared by Gary B. McGee, April 12, 2004.