

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT: ITS FOUNDATION, ITS INFLUENCE, AND ITS DANGERS.

WEEK 2: HISTORY AND INFLUENCE ON MODERN DAY CHURCH PART I

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

- Our schedule will look like this:
 - Week 1: Introduction and The History of the Pentecostal movement
 - **Week 2: From Pentecostal to Charismatic and its influence in the modern-day church. Part 1**
 - Week 3: How has this movement influenced the modern-day church? Part 2
 - Week 4: What are the dangers facing the church from this movement?

INTRODUCTION

- After the Azusa Street revival, **it is almost impossible to follow all the various movements which took over the U.S. and other countries.** The influence of John Wesley's *Christian perfectionism* or *complete sanctification* had taken root in the minds and teachings of many and now was spreading everywhere.
- What began as one man's wrong interpretation of Scripture (namely 1 Thess. 5:23), had become an influence throughout millions and millions of people who called themselves Christians.
- My hope is that we will be able to identify the main source of all this teaching and then identify some of the major offshoots that are still common today.
- We will also begin to look at the influence their teachings have in modern-day evangelicalism.

CONTINUING PENTECOSTAL INFLUENCE THROUGH SEMINARIES¹

- It was not until 1955 that the denomination (A of G) opened its first liberal arts college, Evangel College, located in Springfield, MO.
- In the early days, many Pentecostals feared liberal arts education as a possible Trojan horse that might eventually cool the fires of revival ardor that had produced the movement. But by the fifties and sixties, no efforts were being spared in the upgrading of denominational schools and having them gain regional accreditation.
- One event that seemed to promise much for the future of Pentecostalism was the creation of a school billed as the first distinctly Pentecostal university in the nation—Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

¹ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*, Second Edition. (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 214-215.

- Founded by two Pentecostal Holiness preachers, **Oral Roberts** and R. O. Corvin, the institution began classes in 1965 with plans for a hundred-million-dollar campus that would house a first-rate university, offering, in time, doctoral programs in several fields. One of its first schools was the Graduate School of Theology, headed by Corvin, which was accepted as the first Pentecostal seminary to offer postgraduate degrees.
- Symbolic of increasing acceptance by the traditional churches of the Pentecostals was the fact that Billy Graham assisted in the act of dedication in April of 1967.
- Soon after the dedication of the new university, however, Roberts shocked the religious world by joining the Methodist Church in March 1968. He also transferred his ordination vows as an ordained minister.
- The world's best-known Pentecostal since Aimee Semple McPherson, Roberts had since 1947 built a tremendous faith-healing empire from his headquarters in Tulsa.
- The overwhelming source of his support during his earlier years had been the Pentecostals.
 - But by the 1960's a larger share of his income came from people in the more traditional churches.
- These people, most of whom had experienced speaking with other tongues, were dubbed "neo-Pentecostals" by old-line members of the Pentecostal movement.
- Roberts's defection from the church in which his parents had been pioneer ministers, and from the Pentecostal movement which had brought him to prominence, puzzled many.
- At any rate, the dream of Roberts's university becoming an intellectual center for the Pentecostal world seemed shattered by this event.

THE LATTER RAIN MOVEMENT²

- Although few would recognize it, by the end of World War II (1945) the American Pentecostal movement needed a renewal.³
- The Latter Rain Movement is an influence *within* Pentecostalism which teaches that the Lord is pouring out His Spirit again, as He did at Pentecost, and using believers to prepare the world for His Second Coming.
- The Latter Rain Movement is anti-dispensational and amillennial, and many leaders of the movement embrace aberrant teachings.
- The term "latter rain" was first used early in the history of Pentecostalism, when David Wesley Myland wrote a book called Latter Rain Songs in 1907.
 - Three years later, Myland wrote The Latter Rain Covenant, a defense of Pentecostalism in general.

² <https://www.gotquestions.org/latter-rain-movement.html>

³ Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*, Second Edition. (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 212.

- The name comes from Joel 2:23, “Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.” Pentecostals interpreted the “rain” in this verse as an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. **The “latter rain” (the end-times outpouring) would be greater than the “former rain.”**
- **In 1948, a “revival” broke out in Saskatchewan, Canada, and the teachings of the Latter Rain movement were clarified.** Those involved in the revival were convinced that they were on the verge of a new era, one in which the Holy Spirit would demonstrate His power in a greater way than the world had ever seen. **Not even the age of the apostles, they said, had witnessed such a movement of the Holy Spirit.**
- **Latter Rain teaching is characterized by a highly typological hermeneutic.** That is, the Bible is interpreted in a symbolic, extremely stylized manner. An emphasis is placed on extra-biblical revelation, such as personal prophecies, experiences, and directives straight from God.
- **Latter Rain proponents saw Pentecostalism as spiritually dry in the post-war period and in danger of slipping into a dry or mental formalism like many of their evangelical peers.** Latter Rain doctrines addressed this formalism with a series of doctrinal and practical changes. These changes made the Latter Rain Movement distinct from the Pentecostal context from which it arose. Church life in Latter Rain influenced the development of church congregations significantly different from traditional Pentecostal ones.
- **Latter Rain doctrine includes the following beliefs:**
 - the gifts of the Spirit, including tongues, are *received through the laying on of hands*
 - Christians can be demonized and require deliverance
 - **God has restored all the offices of ministry to the Church, including apostle and prophet**
 - divine healing can be administered *through the laying on of hands*
 - praise and worship will usher God into our presence
 - women have a full and equal ministry role in the Church
 - denominational lines will be destroyed, and the Church will unify in the last days
 - **the “latter rain” will bring God’s work to completion; the Church will be victorious over the world and usher in Christ’s kingdom (See Next Heading)**
 - Many “apostles” in the Latter Rain Movement also teach the doctrine of “the manifest sons of God.” This is a heretical doctrine which says that the Church will give rise to a special group of “overcomers” who will receive spiritual bodies, becoming immortal.
- It is important to note that the Assemblies of God deemed the Latter Rain Movement to contain heresy from the very beginning. On April 20, 1949, the Assemblies of God officially denounced Latter Rain teaching, nearly splitting the denomination in the process.
- Other established Pentecostal groups have passed similar resolutions.

- Today, the term “latter rain” is rarely used, but the theology of Latter Rain continues to exert an influence. Most branches of the Charismatic Movement adhere to Latter Rain teaching.
- Modern movements such as the Brownsville/Pensacola Revival, the Toronto Blessing, and the “holy laughter” phenomenon are a direct result of Latter Rain theology.

Kingdom Now Theology⁴

- Kingdom Now theology is a theological belief within the Charismatic movement of Protestant Christianity, mainly in the United States. Kingdom Now proponents believe that God lost control over the world to Satan when Adam and Eve sinned. Since then, the theology goes, God has been trying to reestablish control over the world by seeking a special group of believers—known variously as "covenant people," "overcomers," or "Joel's army"—and that through these people, social institutions (including governments and laws) would be brought under God's authority.
- The belief is that, since believers are indwelt by the same Holy Spirit that indwelt Jesus, we have all authority in heaven and on the earth; we have the power to believe for and speak into existence things that are not, and thus we can bring about the Kingdom Age.
- Kingdom Now theology sees the second coming of Jesus in two stages: **first** through the flesh of the believers (and in particular the flesh of today's apostles and prophets), and **then** in person to take over the kingdom handed to Him by those who have been victorious (the "overcomers").
- Prior to the second coming, overcomers must purge the earth of all evil influences. **Kingdom Now claims that Jesus cannot return until all His enemies have been put under the feet of the church.**
- Kingdom now theology, in various forms, dominates much of the eschatology of the new Pentecostals.

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT⁵

- Pentecostals are charismatics in that they pursue and report experience of the charismatic gifts.
- “Just when things seemed to be settling down, the charismatic renewal came upon the scene in the early 1960's. Many Pentecostals regretted this because for one thing they did not know how to relate to Lutherans and Episcopalians who spoke in tongues as well as drank beer; and for another, they could not understand how God could baptize Roman Catholics in the Holy Spirit. To complicate matters more, the charismatics began giving signs and wonders and slaying in the Spirit the high profile that Pentecostals once did.”⁶
- The modern global charismatic movement exploded in the 1970s among Roman Catholics and within Protestant denominations as “the gifts” prized by Pentecostals appeared among them.

⁴ <https://www.gotquestions.org/kingdom-now.html>

⁵ <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/where-did-all-these-pentecostals-and-charismatics-come-from/>

⁶ C. Peter Wagner, *The Kingdom and the Power*, 15-16.

- These new Pentecostals called their movement the “Charismatic Movement” to distinguish themselves from the older mainline Pentecostals.
- **The Vineyard Church is widely viewed as the first charismatic denomination.**
- John Wimber, in 1982, began teaching at Fuller Theological Seminary a class called *Signs, Wonders and Church Growth*. That is where ideas like *power evangelism* and *power healing* made their way into the broader and mainstream evangelical church.
 - ‘Power evangelism’ is the term coined by the founder of the charismatic Third Wave Movement, John Wimber, to distinguish his evangelistic method from traditional evangelism, or what he disparagingly refers to as ‘programmatically evangelism’. According to Wimber, ‘power evangelism’ is evangelism which “comes with a demonstration of God’s power through signs and wonders,” and “is preceded and undergirded by demonstrations of God’s presence, and frequently results in groups of people being saved.”⁷
 - These demonstrations consist of words of knowledge – which bear more resemblance to clairvoyance – healing, prophecy, and deliverance from evil spirits. Traditional gospel centered evangelism, it is argued, may result in conversions, but since these new believers do not experience dramatic signs, there is something missing from their conversion experience, resulting in incomplete, weak, and powerless Christians.
- **This is obviously a false gospel, he has added to the gospel and made it unbiblical. If signs and wonders become the focus of sharing the gospel, then the true gospel of repentance has lost its power.**
- **This is, once again, from the seeds planted that our experience is what we should be looking for, not simply believing the truth of Scripture.**
- The charismatic movement emerged apart from Pentecostalism, but these communities cross-pollinated with their gift-practicing siblings in significant ways.
- **Some charismatics adopted the prosperity gospel, Oral Roberts being the most spectacular example of such merging of and bridging between Pentecostalism and charismatic renewal.**
 - Until 1947, Roberts struggled as a part-time preacher in Oklahoma, but when he was 29, Roberts said he picked up his Bible and it fell open at the Third Epistle of John, where he read verse 2: “**I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.**”⁸ **The next day, he said, he bought a Buick and God appeared, directing him to heal the sick.**
 - Roberts resigned his pastoral ministry with the Pentecostal Holiness Church to found Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association (OREA). He conducted evangelistic and faith healing drives across the United States and around the world, claiming he could raise the dead.

⁷ <http://glorybooks.org/what-is-power-evangelism/>

⁸ Christopher, Reed (December 15, 2009). “Oral Roberts obituary”. *The Guardian*. London.

- In November 1947, he started Healing Waters, a monthly magazine as a means to promote his meetings. Thousands of sick people waited in line to stand before Oral Roberts so he could pray for them. He appeared as a guest speaker for hundreds of national and international meetings and conventions. Through the years, he conducted more than 300 "crusades" on six continents, and personally laid hands in prayer on more than 2 million people.⁹

- Thus, with Oral Roberts, came the beginning of the health, wealth, and prosperity gospel.

- **He did not stop there; he is also the founder of *seed-faith*.**

- “To realize your potential, to overcome life’s problems, to see your life become fruitful, multiply and provide abundance (i.e., health, prosperity, spiritual renewal, in the family or oneself), you should decide to follow the divine law of the sower and the harvest. Sow the seed of His promise in the ground of your need” (from “Principles of the Seed”). In the July 1980 edition of Abundant Life, Roberts wrote, “Solve your money needs with money seeds” (page 4).

- **But wait, there’s more**...he also pioneered televangelism. He began in 1947 and by 1957 he had over 80% of the U.S. population watching his revivals live. He started Golden Eagle Broadcasting in 1996.¹⁰
- Because of all this, the modern charismatic movement provided an unexpected and fairly astonishing validation of Pentecostal theology as practice of the gifts spread within the established, non-restorationist Christian world.
- But these new charismatics also posed a challenge to Pentecostals, who seemed to have something of a corner on both teaching and experience where the gifts were concerned.
 - Significantly, the new charismatics rarely treated tongues or any other outward manifestation as the necessary sign of Spirit baptism, making them immediately more compatible with others inside and outside their denominations who did not manifest the gifts.

THE JESUS PEOPLE MOVEMENT

- Also in the late 1960’s there was a movement away from the mainline denomination and from the occult, which had taken over in many areas.
- The hippie movement and counterculture revolution was in full swing, but young people were still finding themselves empty and wanting something more.
- **The Jesus Movement was a counterculture Christian youth revolution that emerged in the United States during the late 1960s and early 1970s. This change in the American religious landscape corresponded with a period of social upheaval in the youth culture of these two decades, which was a time of protest, uncertainty, and rebellion against societal norms.**¹¹

⁹ Arnett, David (December 15, 2009). "Oral Roberts Dies". Tulsa Today.

¹⁰ Schneider, Keith (December 15, 2009). "Oral Roberts, Fiery Preacher, Dies at 91" (PDF). *The New York Times*.

¹¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Jesus-Movement.html>

- In protest of traditional religious music, the sound of the Jesus Movement was solidly rock and roll. A direct legacy of the movement was the contemporary Christian music industry, which exploded in the following decades. Worship services were typically charismatic, informal, and emotional. An intense interest in end times and apocalyptic prophecy pervaded the Jesus Movement, primarily inspired by Hal Lindsey's book *The Late Great Planet Earth*. A popular message of the movement was "Repent! Get ready! Jesus is coming back soon!"¹²
 - Other outcomes of the Jesus Movement that reflected the influence of the larger secular counterculture were events like beach baptisms and open-air Jesus concerts. Jesus people coffee houses featuring live music, prominent periodicals such as *Right On!*, and religious bumper sticker slogans were all trendy elements of the movement.
- By the late 1980's, the movement settled down and really broke off into two main directions.
- The Calvary Chapel movement started by Chuck Smith was the conservative charismatic branch. They were instrumental in starting CCM and formal training for anyone to be a church leader. Today there are over 1800 Calvary Chapel's worldwide.
- The other arm was with John Wimber and the Vineyard Church. There are over 2400 Vineyard Churches worldwide who are considered neo-Pentecostal.
- Like most sporadic movements which are a reaction to the culture, the Jesus Movement was relatively short-lived. While that is true, it has left its mark on Christian history, rejuvenating a portion of the body of Christ through its music, informal worship style, and appeal to young people.
- It was through this movement that words of songs were put on projectors for people to read, people came to church "just as they were" to hear the Word preached, 1000's were baptized in the ocean, etc. Much of the non-traditional way of church we have today is traced back to this movement.

THE THIRD WAVE AND THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

- "Third wave" people encourage the equipping of all believers to use NT spiritual gifts today, and believe that the proclamation of the gospel should ordinarily be accompanied by "signs, wonders, and miracles," according to the NT pattern. They teach, however, that baptism in the Holy Spirit happens to all Christians at conversion, and those subsequent experiences are better called "filling" with the Holy Spirit.
- The most prominent representative of the "third wave" was John Wimber, senior pastor of the Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Anaheim, CA, and leader of the Association of Vineyard Churches."¹³
- In 1996, C. Peter Wagner spoke at a conference with over 500 spiritual leaders about the post denominational church. It was at this convention that he introduced the term New Apostolic Reformation.

¹² Ibid

¹³ [http://thebibleforstudents.com/i-corinthians/lesson-17-\(c14\)](http://thebibleforstudents.com/i-corinthians/lesson-17-(c14))

- This movement (NAR) seeks to distinguish itself from traditional Pentecostal denominations and the Charismatic movement. They have diverged from traditional Pentecostal and Charismatic theology in advocating for the restoration of the lost offices of church governance, namely prophet and apostle.
- NAR is not a denomination nor is it something that you have a membership to, but something that one has an association with and teaches their beliefs.
- In was in 2001 that C. Peter Wagner says the Lord restored the offices of prophet and apostle and it started the second apostolic area.
 - Al Jazeera called the NAR "America's Own Taliban" in an article highlighting NAR's dominionism as bearing resemblance to Islamic extremism as seen in groups such as the Taliban because of the NAR's language concerning spiritual warfare.¹⁴
- The NAR is a mixture of everything that we have been talking about up to this point. They find their roots from the early 1900 Pentecostal movement and also with the Charismatic movement of the 1960's and 70's.
- Wagner listed the differences between the NAR and other Protestant denominations and Pentecostals.
 - **Apostolic governance** – Jesus appoints apostles within his church up to this day.
 - **The office of the prophet** – there is in the church a role and function for present-day "prophets".
 - **Dominionism** – Christians have the authority and duty to reclaim the earth for God.
 - **Theocracy** –to have "kingdom-minded people" in all areas of society...religion, family, education, government, media, arts & entertainment, and business.
 - **Relational structures** – church governance has no formal structure but rather is by relational and voluntary aligned to apostles.
- **Similarities with traditional Pentecostalism:**
- Supernatural signs and wonders and also supernatural revelations – There is available to all believers the ability to hear from God. "The one major rule governing any new revelation from God is that it cannot contradict what has already been written in the Bible. It may supplement it, however."¹⁵

WHAT DO CHARISMATICS / PENTECOSTALS THINK OF NAR?

- This is, by in large, the top critique of the continuationists movement. While the Pentecostals and Charismatics may not hold to the restoration of the 5-fold ministry, and they may not believe that one can have face to face communion with Christ...they are not speaking out against it.
- The issue is that because they see the “church growth” happening all over the world, people are afraid to speak out against it. They do not want to be culpable of blaspheming the Holy Spirit.

¹⁴ Rosenberg, Paul (28 July 2011). *America's Own Taliban*. Al Jazeera.

¹⁵ Wagner, Peter (2011). "[The Truth About The New Apostolic Reformation](#)".