

## CHARISMATIC RENEWAL IN BRITAIN: ROOTS, INFLUENCES AND LATER DEVELOPMENTS<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

Any serious account of 'charismatic' Christianity in Britain needs to look back a good deal further than the modern 'Charismatic Renewal Movement'. Towards the end of this paper, we shall see that this movement began in the UK in early 1960s. We shall also see that it was in turn consciously indebted to Pentecostalism, whose influence had been felt significantly on British soil from 1907. Yet the very names 'Pentecostal' and 'Charismatic' themselves imply a 'pre-history' dating from the New Testament era. In what follows I shall devote considerable space to this pre-history before moving on to trace its continuity with full-blown British Pentecostalism and Charismatic Renewal. Those wishing to pursue this modern phase of the story in more detail are well served by a number of fine studies, including those produced by David Bebbington, Peter Hocken, Andrew Walker and Nigel Scotland.<sup>2</sup>

The root Scriptural paradigm for Pentecostal and Charismatic spirituality is the experience of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, when 'all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability' (Acts 2:4). While Pentecostals today advocate this same 'filling' or 'baptism' with the Spirit as a 'second' blessing subsequent to conversion, the ability to speak in other recognised languages (*xenolalia*) is less central for present-day Pentecostalism than the more general gift of 'speaking in tongues' (*glossolalia*). In practice, this is taken to include unknown 'tongues of angels' and various other utterances 'too deep for words' (1 Cor. 13:1; 14:2-19; Rom. 8:26). While Pentecostals typically regard glossolalia as normative for individual Christians, the use of other 'supernatural' or 'extraordinary' spiritual gifts like prophecy, healing and deliverance is assumed for each Pentecostal congregation, if not for each church member (cf. 1 Cor. 12:4-11). Although the Charismatic Movement takes its name from the Greek word for the same gifts emphasised in Pentecostalism (*charismata*), it has tended to be less insistent on the need for glossolalia, and has regarded 'baptism with the Holy Spirit' in a less programmatic way. These distinctions will become clearer when we come to look more closely at these two movements. However, given their shared claim to biblical and apostolic origins, it is important to consider at some length those streams of renewal which flowed before they themselves came into being - streams which also claimed the power and blessing of the Holy Spirit, and which can fairly be seen as precursors of both.

## 1 Pre-Pentecostalist Renewal in Britain

### 1.1 *The Celtic Tradition*

The sacred songs, prayers and art produced by the Celtic Christian communities which existed in the British Isles from second century onwards appear to have maintained a generally high view of the Holy Spirit, particularly in relation to the Trinity.<sup>3</sup> The great Trinitarian hymn 'St Patrick's Breastplate' is perhaps the best-known reflection of this - whether it was actually written by Patrick himself (c.370-460), or by a later Gaelic author. When depicted more specifically, the Spirit was most often portrayed as the dove of Jesus' baptism, and sometimes as the flame of Pentecost. Further on, it also appeared as a more indigenous wild goose, although the origins of this symbol are disputed and may in fact have been pagan.<sup>4</sup> An account of the ordination of a deacon called Samson records Bishop Dubricius and St Illtyd viewing a dove above the candidate's head,<sup>5</sup> while another bishop was said to have seen a tongue of fire on Brigid when professing her a nun. Patrick recounted a vision in which he saw the Holy Spirit praying both within and above him,<sup>6</sup> while Adamnan's biography of St Columba describes the famous Irish missionary to Scotland being 'visited' by the Spirit for 'three whole days and nights'.<sup>7</sup>

If these testimonies suggest an openness to ecstatic experiences of the Spirit, the Celtic Christian tradition seems also to have taken the use of supernatural gifts as read. Ninian's mission to Galloway in the late fourth century was apparently made possible by his healing of a local king's blindness.<sup>8</sup> Columba was said to have called water from a rock and to have turned water into wine,<sup>9</sup> and the Life of Brendan features routine resurrections, healings and exorcisms.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, the great chronicler Bede assigns various miracles to the early bishops of Lindisfarne - Aidan and Cuthbert.<sup>11</sup> Even allowing for a degree of hagiographic embellishment, such accounts assume a context in which manifestations of the Spirit and the presence of supernatural charismata are widely recognised and accepted.

By the end of the sixth century, however, this situation had changed.

### 1.2 *The Influence of Rome*

Between the first major Anglo-Saxon incursions of the early 500s and the arrival of Pope Gregory's emissary Augustine from Rome in 597, the whole spiritual landscape of Britain altered dramatically. For one thing, the invaders ensured that the heartlands overwhelmingly reverted to paganism, forcing Celtic Christian traditions back into Wessex, Wales and Cornwall. At the same time, the use of extraordinary spiritual gifts was significantly waning within the life and worship of the Church world-wide. Where earlier continental leaders like Justin Martyr (d. 165), Irenaeus (d. 202), Novatian (d.257) and Ambrose (340-398) had described the persistence of prophecy, tongues, miracles and deliverance,<sup>12</sup> successors like John Chrysostom (347-407) and Pope Gregory himself wrote of their relative absence, and surmised either that such 'signs and wonders' were no longer necessary to confirm a Gospel now well established within Christendom, or that they had been sidelined because of their abuse, and their liable confusion with ungodly phenomena.<sup>13</sup> Certainly Monasticism - a controversial

and widely-condemned movement based in Phrygia during the late second century - had made glossolalia central to its worship, attracting the famous apologist Tertullian to its ranks in the later years of his life. While it is hard in retrospect to define exactly what was heretical in Montanist doctrine, its perceived extravagance and emotionalism was enough to earn it censure from a Roman hierarchy grown increasingly fixed in its view of liturgical and ecclesiastical order.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, as time progressed and the medieval era unfolded, charismatic spontaneity would become ever more associated with fringe groups and sects like the Messalians, the Albigenses and the Cathars, rather than with mainstream, catholic Christianity.<sup>15</sup> Likewise, once the Celtic church in Britain resolved to submit to Roman authority at the Synod of Whitby in 664, it, too, became less recognisably 'charismatic'.

None of this is to imply that the 'supernatural' or the 'miraculous' *as such* were suppressed or denied in the Roman church, but rather that they became heavily institutionalised - for example, around the sacraments, the cult of the saints and the veneration of relics. Hence while Augustine of Hippo (354-430) remained content to list a whole host of miracles in his early fifth century magnum opus *City of God*, they were typically associated with infant water baptism, holy communion, the dedication of saints' bones, priestly anointing with oil and the like.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the phenomenon of 'speaking in tongues' was reduced to common xenolalia and recast as a facility of the Church as a whole, rather than remaining as a spontaneous, individual, supernatural charism. Specifically, where the early Church had needed miraculous tongues to spread the Gospel, Augustine suggested that as its mission had touched an ever greater range of ethnic groups, it could itself be said to have acquired the ability to 'speak different languages' in the normal course of its life.<sup>17</sup> Besides, on analogy with 1 Corinthians 13:10, the completion of the canon of Scripture was reckoned by Augustine to have 'perfected' the revelation of God, such that personal glossolalia and other forms of ecstatic and prophetic utterance had 'passed away'.<sup>18</sup> This view, which would very much later be applied to all the extraordinary gifts in the formal doctrine of 'Cessationism', came to define mainstream Roman understanding, and with it, the ethos of the medieval British church. By the thirteenth century, it had found thoroughgoing expression in the writings of the great scholastic theologian Thomas Aquinas (c.1225-1274). Again, it is important to stress that at this stage, things were still very far from any kind of generic 'anti-supernaturalism': miracles continued to be linked with the lives, relics and tombs of the saints, as were healings and exorcisms. It is just that the validation of such ministries was now tightly regulated within the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and more verbally-based charismata such as tongues, prophecy and words of knowledge were typically eclipsed by set rites and forms of prayer.

Despite all this, there do seem have been exceptions, and it is to these that we shall now turn.

### 1.3 *Medieval 'Charismatics'*

In the twelfth century, the German Benedictine abbess Hildgegard of Bingen (1098-1179) testified to having sung 'concerts in the Spirit' - that is, musical praises to God couched in 'unknown' words. These outpourings seem to have combined her own German dialect uniquely with Latin - a fact borne out by the special glossary codex

she produced as a means to translating them. While not pressing their relationship to biblical glossolalia as such, it is clear that Hildegard viewed these events as extraordinary signs of the Holy Spirit's 'anointing'.<sup>19</sup> In addition, documents on the Spanish-born St Dominic (d.1221) record him being empowered spontaneously to address an astonished German audience in their own language, while around the same time, an Augustinian Italian, St Clare of Montefalco, was reported to have spoken ecstatically in French.<sup>20</sup>

According to his biographer Bonaventure, Francis of Assisi's (1182-1226) renowned itinerant ministry was distinguished not only by powerful sermons but also by prophecy, deliverance and miraculous healing. Some sources indicate that St Francis also spoke in tongues.<sup>21</sup> Certainly, the order he founded does seem to have been open to a fuller range of charismata than most. In particular, St Anthony of Padua (1195-1231) was a prominent Franciscan leader who was known for his xenolalic inspiration, as well as for his exercise of other supernatural gifts.<sup>22</sup> Subsequently, many Franciscans were influenced by the apocalyptic teachings of the Cistercian abbot Joachim of Fiore (1132-1202), who had divided history into three overlapping dispensations aligned to the persons of the Trinity, and who had forecast the dawn of a final 'Age of the Spirit' around 1260, to be marked by a resurgence of charismatic activity.<sup>23</sup> Later, the Dominican missionary Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419) preached in Latin but was reputed to have been understood by 'Greeks, Germans, Sardinians, Hungarians and people of other nations'. He also gained renown for his prophetic gifts, and for the healings he performed regularly in the course of his ministry.<sup>24</sup>

By this stage, the Western church had officially split from its Eastern counterpart, but in the latter, the same basic pattern of mainstream formality and exceptional charismatic spontaneity pertained. Undoubtedly the Byzantine Rite bound different patriarchates into a common liturgical order; yet the writings and ministries of Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022), Athanasius of Constantinople (1230-1310) and Gregory Palamas (1296-1359) confirm that healing, exorcism, words of knowledge, tongues and a more general awareness of the Spirit's capacity to overwhelm the emotions, still featured in some quarters.

It is unclear how far these 'charismatic exceptions' on the continent affected the lives of medieval parishes and religious communities in Britain. What is plain, however, is that although the Protestant Reformation which spread to Britain from mainland Europe in the 1520s challenged Rome on numerous theological and ecclesiastical fronts, it maintained a similar approach to the supernatural charismata. In other words, it held that they had been necessary for the establishment of a world-wide Church, but with that Church in place, were no longer needed.

#### *1.4 The Reformation: Responses and Precedents*

##### *1.4.1 Luther*

As the pioneer of Reform, the German theologian Martin Luther (1483-1546) showed his Augustinian monastic training when surmising that 'new tongues' had been given miraculously to the apostles as a missionary sign and 'witness to the Jews', but had now effectively served their purpose.<sup>25</sup> However, rather than dismiss the relevance of

the gift altogether, Luther argued, against the more censorious Andreas Bodenstein von Carstadt, that a present-day form of 'speaking in tongues' could be discerned in the work of Bible translation and the writing of vernacular liturgies. Hence Paul's instructions on the use of tongues and interpretation in 1 Corinthians 14: 13-33 were glossed by Luther as follows:

Whoever comes forward, and wants to read, teach, or preach, and yet speaks with tongues, that is, speaks Latin instead of German, or some unknown language, he is to be silent and preach to himself alone. For no one can hear it or understand it, and no one can get any benefit from it. Or if he should speak with tongues, he ought, in addition, to put what he says into German, or integrate it one way or another, so that the congregation may understand it.<sup>26</sup>

Using similar reasoning, Luther championed medical physicians as contemporary practitioners of the gift of healing, calling them 'our Lord God's menders of the body'. This did not mean that he abandoned prayer for healing; rather, he saw it as complementing the efforts of doctors. Hence, he prayed for his companions Myconius and Melancthon when they were close to death, and rejoiced at their recovery.

#### *1.4.2 The Waldensians*

As well as challenging Rome, Luther saw his task as resisting what he took to be sectarian excess among fellow advocates of Reform. Even in the pre-Reformation period, certain groups had developed radical, enthusiastic spiritualities which in retrospect might be described as 'charismatic'. One such were the Waldensians - named after the Lyons-born preacher Peter Waldo (c.1140-c.1215) and dedicated to the simplification of worship, to evangelism, and to rigorous asceticism. Waldensian spirituality was marked by a strong attachment to visions, prophecies and demonology, while some have also claimed evidence for glossolalia among the Waldensian churches which clustered and grew in the Southern Alps.<sup>27</sup> Although the Waldensian Church would eventually align itself with mainstream Reformation theology, its earlier, more maverick tendencies influenced the so-called 'Zwickau Prophets' - a trio of radical German preachers at whom many of Luther's 'anti-charismatic' barbs were aimed. Nicholas Storch, Thomas Dreschel and Marcus Stubner rejected infant baptism and opposed clericalism, insisting on a direct personal relationship with the Spirit unmediated by church institutions. Like the Waldensians, they emphasised dreams, visions and prophetic utterance, and in doing so, resembled an increasing number of separatist, Anabaptist groupings.

#### *1.4.3 Anabaptists, Radicals and Separatists*

Anabaptism itself sought quite consciously to restore apostolic patterns of discipleship and spirituality, stressing the importance of conversion, believers' baptism, the separation of church and state, and the pursuit of a holy lifestyle through sanctification. The leading Dutch Anabaptist Menno Simons wrote in his *Treatise on Christian Baptism* that the experience of Cornelius and his associates in Acts 10 showed speaking in tongues to be evidence of having received the Holy Spirit, while the historians George Hunston Williams and Michael Hamilton record certain Anabaptist groups as having practised glossolalia in their meetings - most notably in the Swiss congregation of St. Gall.<sup>28</sup>

The influence of continental Anabaptism on radical Baptist and Separatist groups in Sixteenth-Century Britain has long been a matter of dispute among scholars,<sup>29</sup> and it must certainly be conceded that documentary evidence of glossolalia within these groups is lacking. More generally, however, their worship can be seen to have prefigured the extemporaneity, spiritual fervour and enthusiasm now synonymous with Pentecostal and Charismatic services.<sup>30</sup> Granted, the term 'prophesying' in this context was applied to lengthy expositions of Scriptural texts by various members of the congregation rather than to the sort of ecstatic oracular 'words' more associated with the 'gift of prophecy' today. Still, the oft-asserted claim of the radical Reformers that truly 'spiritual' worship was worship which eschewed set forms and liturgical orders in favour of spontaneous prayer and praise finds a clear echo in most modern Pentecostal and Charismatic settings.<sup>31</sup>

#### 1.4.4 *John Calvin*

If Martin Luther was scathing about the potential for licence and excess in Anabaptist worship and spirituality, the French reformer John Calvin (1509–64) was equally strong in his opposition, linking Anabaptism to libertinism and charging that it confused the plain sense of Scripture with a subjectivist 'fantasy of the brain'.<sup>32</sup> Despite this, it can hardly be said that Calvin neglected the importance of the Holy Spirit in his writing and teaching; indeed, he paid the Spirit significant attention partly in order to correct what he perceived to be the misunderstandings of the Anabaptists. It was with some justification, in fact, that the Nineteenth Century Princeton scholar Benjamin Warfield dubbed Calvin a 'theologian of the Holy Spirit'.<sup>33</sup> Certainly, Calvin stressed that the Christian life originates in, and is continually renewed by, the Spirit's power.<sup>34</sup> Likewise, he viewed the Spirit as the source of all that is good, true and beautiful, even among pagans and atheists.<sup>35</sup> The authority of Scripture, for Calvin, is validated and mediated by the Holy Spirit,<sup>36</sup> and the Spirit is nothing less than 'the bond by which Christ links us effectually to himself'.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, as John Hesselink points out, Calvin implies that without the Holy Spirit all that has been accomplished by Christ would count for nothing.<sup>38</sup> More distinctively, Calvin presented the Holy Spirit as the motor of regeneration among those being saved, and was very concerned to highlight the role of the Spirit in providing assurance of salvation to those who already profess Christ.<sup>39</sup> As Hesselink underlines, such assurance of faith is 'the very thing so earnestly desired by charismatics'.<sup>40</sup>

Notwithstanding this generally high theology of the Spirit, Calvin does appear to have believed that the 'extraordinary' gifts had ceased some time after the age of the apostles. In his commentary on the Book of Acts, he suggests in particular relation to the gift of tongues that whereas it had once served as an 'adornment and honour of the gospel itself', it soon became 'corrupted' by human pride. Indeed, Calvin sees the problems occasioned by this gift in 1 Corinthians 14 as a sign that such corruption had set in quite early. On this basis, indeed, Calvin proposed that God had intervened to remove glossolalic utterance from the Church's life, rather than allowing it 'to be vitiated with further abuse'.<sup>41</sup> In similar vein, when discussing the full range of extraordinary gifts in his magnum opus, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Calvin expresses sympathy with Augustine's view 'that the natural gifts were corrupted in man through sin, but that his supernatural gifts were stripped from him'.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, while justification by grace through faith meant that Christians could experience

some restoration of natural gifts like love of God, charity towards neighbours and zeal for holiness, Calvin does not envisage any similar restoration of the supernatural charismata to believers. Rather, he argues that 'the gift of healing, like the rest of the miracles, which the Lord willed to be brought forth for a time, has vanished away in order to make the new preaching of the gospel marvellous forever'.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, inasmuch as preaching has thus superseded charismatic ministry, Calvin concludes that the latter 'has nothing to do with us, to whom the administering of such powers has not been committed'.<sup>44</sup>

There remains some debate about whether this stance implies an absolute confinement of supernatural charismata to the early church, or whether Calvin leaves any room for their possible resurgence in some future renewal or revival. Warfield, for one, developed Calvin's thinking along the former line in his two volume work *Counterfeit Miracles*, and thereby consolidated a Cessationist theology which tied the extraordinary gifts much more exclusively to apostolicity – that is, to the unique and irrecoverable status enjoyed by those who had witnessed the risen Christ and founded the first generation of churches.<sup>45</sup> While Warfield's position proved influential in Reformed circles on both sides of the Atlantic for several decades afterwards, the rise of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements has latterly prompted many in the same tradition to challenge it on both experimental and exegetical grounds.<sup>46</sup> Meanwhile, others have been led to re-examine the history of the Reformed faith in the light of more recent witness to the work of the Spirit. In particular, this has led to a reappraisal of the life and thought of the English Puritans.

#### 1.4.5 *The Puritans: Richard Sibbes and Thomas Goodwin*

As their name suggests, the Puritans sought to purify the worship, doctrine and discipline of the English church by expunging from it those anti-biblical and extra-biblical accretions which they attributed to the influence of Rome. As distinct from the Separatists, who broke away to pursue what one of their leaders, Robert Browne, called 'Reformation without tarrying for any', the Puritans worked from the 1550s for change from within the structure of the established Church of England. This quest attracted considerable opposition and often proved painstaking, but the Puritans' cause was championed by Oliver Cromwell and many of their goals were realised during the Commonwealth. However, the return of Charles II in 1660 and the re-imposition of the Book of Common Prayer in 1662 saw many of them leave to form their own 'Dissenting' churches. In pursuing their reforming agenda, the Puritans drew substantially on the work of Calvin, and broadly reflected his view of the extraordinary gifts. Even so, as Michael Eaton has shown, this did not mean that their understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit lacked dynamism or emotive force, and in these more general respects certain Puritans could be said to have anticipated modern Pentecostal and Charismatic concerns.<sup>47</sup> Two such Puritans were the Cambridge scholars Richard Sibbes (1577–1635) and Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680).

Calvin's emphasis on the role of the Spirit in assurance was clearly reflected in the work of Sibbes. However, whereas Calvin had tended to present the Spirit as effecting silent, internal confirmation of the work of Christ within the heart of a believer, Sibbes interpreted the 'sealing' of the Spirit described in Ephesians 1:13 as a more overt process – one which might have conscious, outward and 'sensible' effects: 'When God has heard us cry a while', he wrote, 'until we be thoroughly humbled, then he

takes us up in his arms and dandles us, making his Spirit after a sensible manner unto us the assurance of our salvation'. Then follows 'joy unspeakable and glorious, and in such measure that the soul is wonderfully pleased.'<sup>48</sup>

If Sibbes opened the way to a more experiential understanding of assurance, this was extended significantly by Goodwin. Goodwin led an Independent congregation which met in various locations around the City of London in the early 1640s before settling at St Dunstan's in the East. This church is widely thought to have been the first manifestation of what would later be called the City Temple. Since, as we shall see, the City Temple would go on both to foster and embrace charismatic renewal in the late twentieth century, Goodwin's pneumatology takes on added interest.

A native of Suffolk, Goodwin entered Christ's College, Cambridge, aged just 12. He had wept over his sins when a boy of six, and while a student, was moved by Sibbes' preaching. Despite disappointment at being deemed too young to receive communion at 14, he subsequently gained a Fellowship and was ordained, later serving both as a member of the Westminster Assembly and as Chaplain to Cromwell, in addition to pastoring his City congregation. A prolific writer, Goodwin produced a monumental two-volume work on the Holy Spirit, which remains one of the most substantial treatises on the subject written before the twentieth century. Here, he developed Sibbes' view that the 'sealing' of the Spirit was a distinct action of God apart from the imputation of saving faith. Further, and of particular significance in respect of present-day Pentecostal and Charismatic understandings, he related this act of sealing to the biblical concept of 'baptism in the Spirit'.<sup>49</sup> As J.I. Packer describes it, he thus construed sealing as 'a new conversion, which will make a man differ from himself in what he was before he was converted. There is a new edition of all man's graces... Assurance increases faith, and this invigoration of faith results in a new release of energy at every point in one's life.'<sup>50</sup> As Packer suggests, Goodwin's notion of sealing or baptism in the Spirit is decidedly tangible and demonstrable, and in this sense it is not surprising that while based in Arnhem, Holland, in the late 1630s, he participated in an English-speaking church which practised anointing with oil and laying on of hands for healing, solo singing, and (possibly) the exchange of the holy kiss - all then quite unusually expressive ministries for a Puritan congregation.<sup>51</sup>

#### *1.4.5 The Huguenots, the French Prophets and the Camisards*

Just as Goodwin's understanding of the Holy Spirit was enhanced by his time on the Continent, so members of certain Continental European Christian groups brought fresh perspectives on the Third Person of the Trinity to Britain. One of the most important such influences was exerted by the French Protestants, who after 1560 became known as Huguenots. Initially persecuted by the French Catholic establishment, the Huguenots were granted religious liberty by the Edict of Nantes in 1598, but when this was revoked by Louis XIV in 1685, thousands sought exile across the English Channel. Among these was a contingent from the region of Cevennes in southern France who spoke a distinct regional language of their own but who, because of their emphasis on the direct inspiration of the Spirit, had become known as the 'French Prophets'. Young children were reported as having prophesied fluently in their meetings, which featured people falling, twitching, hyperventilating and entering trances.<sup>52</sup> Holding that the Bible nowhere presented God as suspending the supernatural gifts, the French Prophets also characteristically used tongues and visions

in worship.<sup>53</sup> One of their number who escaped to England was John Vernet. A native of Bois-Chastel, Vernet recalled that when seized by the power of the Spirit his mother spoke French, which she had never learnt.<sup>54</sup> Meanwhile, the aristocrat Sir Richard Bulkeley was converted by French Prophets who were resident in England, and recalled how one of their leaders, John Lacy, would repeat 'long sentences in Latin, and another refugee speak in Hebrew, neither of whom could speak a single word in these languages when not in spiritual ecstasy.'<sup>55</sup>

Later, the French Prophets who had remained in the Cevennes were persecuted by government forces, and mounted an armed defence. This was put down in 1711, but it subsequently gained them the name 'Camisards', probably after the characteristic shirts they wore as part of their uniform. Some decades further on, their impact was sufficiently well known that the great English revivalist John Wesley could cite them when challenged to adduce instances of post-apostolic glossolalia.<sup>56</sup>

#### 1.4.6 *The Quakers*

While the Puritans were seeking to reform the Church of England from within, a radical extension of the Separatist agenda emerged in the 1650s in the form of the Quakers. Officially called The Religious Society of Friends in reference to Jesus' having dubbed his disciples 'friends' in John 15:15, Quakers owed their more popular name to their habit of trembling in prayer and worship.<sup>57</sup> They were founded by the Leicestershire visionary George Fox (1624-91). As a young man, Fox struggled hard to develop an intimate, personal relationship with God, but in doing so found the national church more of a hindrance than a help. In the midst of a spiritual crisis, however, he heard a voice tell him, "There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition."<sup>58</sup> Thereafter, he began to emphasise the witness of the 'Inner Light' (Jn. 1:9) – that is, the authority of 'Christ within' (Col. 1:27) as distinct from the authority of the established church and its liturgies, canons and hierarchies. Deeply opposed to clericalism, Fox and his followers evolved a corporate approach to worship, in which 'meetings' of the faithful would proceed in silent prayer until any member of the congregation was moved to 'minister' to others – whether through a 'word' of biblical exposition or insight, a prayer, or a prophetic utterance. The accent was firmly on spontaneous response to the 'leading of the Spirit', with an expectation that the presence of this Spirit might be manifest in quite dramatic ways. In his *Autobiography*, Fox himself recalls leading a meeting in which 'the Lord's power was so great that the house seemed to be shaken.' Alluding to the Day of Pentecost he then adds: 'When I had done some of the professors said it was now as in the days of the apostles, when the house was shaken where they were.'<sup>59</sup> What Fox called 'the Lord's Power' was often 'so mighty upon' him that he 'could not hold but was made to cry out'.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, glossolalia was reported to have occurred in some Quaker meetings. Edward Burroughs, a close associate of Fox, once again invoked Pentecost when he testified that 'we received often the pouring down of the Holy Spirit upon us...and our tongues were loosed and our mouths opened, and we spake with new tongues as the Lord gave us utterance, and as His Spirit led us, which was poured down upon us, on sons and daughters.'<sup>61</sup>

It also appears that George Fox exercised a personal ministry of healing. In his *Book of Miracles* he recounts how a crippled boy was able to play in the street after he had ministered to him, and how he laid hands on the paralysed arm of his disciple John

Banks and saw it recover.<sup>62</sup> Additionally, Fox claimed to possess an acute gift for discernment, 'by which I many times saw the states and conditions of people, and could try their spirits'.<sup>63</sup>

Although Quakerism today is usually much less charismatic in spirituality and far more liberal in theology, Richard A. Baer suggests that some continuity persists between its 'free', extemporary approach to worship and that found in modern-day Pentecostal and Charismatic settings. At its best, he proposes, Quaker worship involves 'a kind of letting go, a lack of strain or effortful attention, a willingness to "flow" with the leading of the Spirit and with the larger movement of the entire meeting.' Moreover, 'as in the case of glossolalia, the process of speaking out of the silence and of listening in the silence involves a resting of the analytical mind, a refusal to let deliberative, objective thinking dominate the meeting.'<sup>64</sup> In these respects, it may be no coincidence that both the progenitor of modern-day Pentecostalism, Charles Fox Parham, and the influential charismatic leader John Wimber had Quaker backgrounds. (Parham and Wimber are discussed more fully below).

### 1.5 *The Moravians*

If the Quakers represented a radical separatist exploration of the inner life, one Continental movement which somewhat more resembled the gradualist reforming instincts of the Puritans was Moravianism. Drawing on the work of the Prague-based proto-Reformer Jan Hus (1373–1415), the Moravians saw Hus's early emphasis on justification by faith and the supremacy of Scripture as having anticipated Lutheranism by more than a century, and when the Catholic Counter-Reformation forced large numbers of them to flee their home region in the 1720s, many found refuge in the strongly Lutheran area of Saxony. Here, they were given support from Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–60), whose Berthelsdorf estate became home to a Moravian community known as *Herrnhut* ('under the Lord's watch' or 'on the Lord's watch').

Zinzendorf was by this stage emerging as a key figure in Pietism – a new wave of renewal set on redressing what it saw as the intellectual and spiritual desiccation of Lutheranism. Under Zinzendorf's stewardship, the Moravians held extended prayer meetings which were far more emotional in tone than the often staid services of the surrounding churches. Already characterised by fervent supplication, weeping and singing, these meetings became even more intense following a gathering on 10 August 1727 at which the entire congregation was so overwhelmed that it sank to the floor.<sup>65</sup> Following this, extraordinary charismata began to feature, with reports of prophecy, physical cures and ecstatic, if not definitely glossolalic, speech.<sup>66</sup> Zinzendorf himself marvelled at the 'apostolic powers' which were being manifested, and emphasised 'the undeniable proofs thereof in the unequivocal discovery of things, persons and circumstances which could not humanly have been discovered, in the healing of...cancers [and] consumptions, when the patient was in the agonies of death, all by means of prayer, or a single word.'<sup>67</sup>

Within a short time, such zeal was directed towards missionary work, and Moravians spread the gospel with remarkable speed across Europe, North and South America,

Asia and Africa. Perhaps the greatest single impact of this evangelistic endeavour, though, was its effect on a young Anglican clergyman called John Wesley (1703–91)

### 1.6 *John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield*

While studying at Oxford, Wesley and his brother Charles founded a Christian group, the 'Holy Club', whose rigorous spiritual disciplines earned them the nickname 'Methodists'. Their father Samuel Wesley was Rector of the parish of Epworth, and in 1728, aged 25, John himself was ordained to ministry in the Church of England. For the next few years, however, he struggled to develop a sense of spiritual purpose. Part of his exploration of possible ways forward included a trip to Georgia alongside a party of Moravian missionaries. Although this journey would itself prove a personal disappointment for Wesley, he continued his restless spiritual search back in England, and at a meeting in Aldersgate Street, London on 14 May 1738 famously found his heart 'warmed' when listening to a reading from Luther's *Preface to Romans*. This experience proved to be a turning point in Wesley's ministry, spurring him to join his fellow priest and Oxford contemporary, George Whitefield, in travelling throughout Britain and preaching to many who had become alienated from formal church life. Whitefield was a Calvinist whose theology emphasised the eternal decrees of God in salvation and the cessation of supernatural charismata, whereas Wesley espoused an Arminian view which placed more stress on human freewill and ongoing devotional experience as contributory to salvation. While these differences would lead to serious division later in their ministries, both men's preaching aroused similarly startling spiritual reactions in many of those who heard them. Whitefield recalled a typical response in one meeting he led, at which 'most were drowned in tears', some 'were struck pale as death' and others were found 'wringing their hands, others lying on the ground, others sinking into the arms of their friends, and most lifting up their eyes to heaven and crying out to God.'<sup>68</sup>

As his own evangelistic work led to full-scale revival, however, Wesley more distinctively acknowledged the influence of the Moravians' stress on the importance of sanctification and personal holiness as a distinct 'phase' of Christian experience beyond regeneration and conversion. Theologically, this emphasis was expressed in his doctrine of 'Christian Perfection' – the teaching that a disciple might become so dedicated to God over time that they could be freed from committing wilful sins of the heart. Practically, however, Wesley often saw evidence of this subsequent work of grace in the various manifestations which occurred in his meetings, and in his own devotional life. At both Newgate and Fetter Lane in the City of London, Wesley reported members of the congregation crying out in deep confession or joy, with several so overcome that they fell to the ground.<sup>69</sup> Once, when seized with a severe fever, he recalled the biblical promise that supernatural signs would 'follow those that believe', invoked Christ in prayer, saw the fever leave him, and felt his bodily strength return in an instant.<sup>70</sup>

As for speaking in tongues, while Wesley himself does not seem to have exercised this gift, he appears to have been open to its contemporary use by others. One of his friends, the early Methodist leader Thomas Walsh, records that on 8 March 1751 'the Lord gave me a language I know not of, raising my soul to Him in a wonderful manner'.<sup>71</sup> When challenged on this and other modern-day instances of glossolalia by

the sceptical theologian Conyers Middleton, Wesley argued that far from ceasing with the apostles, 'many may have spoken with new tongues, of whom this is not recorded', adding that in fact 'it had been heard of more than once, no farther off than in the valleys of Dauphiny' – a reference to the use of tongues by the French Prophets. He then went on to quote 1 Corinthians 12:11, declaring 'He who worketh as He will, may, with your good leave, give the gift of tongues where he gives no other; and may see abundant reasons to do so, whether you and I see them or not.'<sup>72</sup>

It is true that Wesley remained committed to good order in worship and prayer, and that not all purported manifestations of the Spirit met with his approval: uncontrollable laughter, for instance, was either seen as a human weakness or, in certain cases, as a work of Satan intended to distract the faithful from proper focus on God.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, both his and his brother Charles' contacts with exiled French Prophets led them on occasion to condemn their excessive emotionalism.<sup>74</sup> It must also be admitted that Wesley did not regard the continuity of charismata through every age as a primary issue.<sup>75</sup> All the same, he did clearly view the extraordinary gifts, when used responsibly, as a legitimate mark of holiness, and rebutted dogmatic Cessationism in no uncertain terms: 'I do not recollect any Scripture', he wrote, 'wherein we are taught that miracles were to be confined within the limits either of the apostolic age or the Cyprian age, or of any period of time, longer or shorter, even till the restitution of all things.'<sup>76</sup>

Given Wesley's emphasis on the work of the Spirit after regeneration, his encouragement of a more overt personal experience of that work in the believer, and his openness to supernatural charismata, it is hardly surprising that when it emerged in the early 1900s, the Pentecostal movement would do so largely out of the Wesleyan 'holiness' tradition. Indeed, the Pentecostal historian Vinson Synan has on this basis called Wesley the father of modern Pentecostalism.<sup>77</sup> Before we trace this connection more closely, however, we need to consider another leading 18<sup>th</sup> century revivalist whose ministry is associated with phenomena as dramatic as those witnessed by Wesley, but who by contrast maintained a cessationist position on the extraordinary gifts.

### 1.7 *Jonathan Edwards and the Great Awakening*

Jonathan Edwards (1705–58) was a prodigious theologian who pastored the Congregational Church in Northampton, Massachusetts during the so-called 'Great Awakening' – a period of intense spiritual ferment along the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. During 1730, and again between 1740–42, virtually the whole town of Northampton was engaged in dramatic revival, with Edwards' church witnessing a whole range of physical manifestations, from weeping and shouting for joy, to trembling, falling and fainting.<sup>78</sup> As a committed Calvinist, Edwards was concerned to ensure that all this activity should be centred on the Word of God, and it was his own erudite but passionate sermons which typically prompted outbreaks of extraordinary physical phenomena. Keen also to teach biblically about the phenomena themselves, Edwards wrote three classic texts on what was happening in his meetings: *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God*, *Thoughts on Revival* and *A Treatise on the Religious Affections*. Here, Edwards was careful to distinguish genuine 'religious affections' from mere 'passions'. Affections, he opined, are more than merely

emotional: instead, they entail the stimulation of the mind and commitment of the will. Indeed, Edwards was scathing about sheer emotionalism in preaching and worship. Thus, while refusing to denounce the physical manifestations which accompanied revival, he maintained that they could not alone establish the authenticity of someone's encounter with God. The only true test of the Spirit's work in this context was, he argued, the behavioural change in a person's life which might follow from their experience of extraordinary manifestations.

In *Distinguishing Marks*, Edwards influentially advanced five 'tests' to determine whether a spiritual experience is genuine and godly. All are related to the longer-term effects of that experience in terms of devotion and discipleship. First, he writes, it must 'raise the esteem' of Christ in the life and witness of the believer. Secondly, it must work 'against the interests of Satan's kingdom, which lies in encouraging and establishing sin, and cherishing men's worldly lusts'. Thirdly, it must cause 'a greater regard to the Holy Scriptures' and should establish people more deeply in 'truth' and 'divinity'. Fourthly, it should lead others into truth, as it overflows into evangelism. Fifthly, it should issue in love of both God and fellow human beings.<sup>79</sup> As a cessationist, Edwards might not have viewed supernatural charismata as even qualified for such testing, but the more important point was that *any* outward physical responses to the work of the Spirit should never be treated as ends in themselves.

In the United States, a 'Second Great Awakening' followed between 1800 and 1840, starting once again on the East Coast, but this time spreading to Kentucky before widening to touch much of frontier America. In Britain, a similar outpouring occurred in Ulster in 1859. From a specifically charismatic point of view, however, the most significant British episode of the nineteenth century was probably that which centred on the later ministry of the Scottish Presbyterian, Edward Irving

### 1.8 *Edward Irving, the Albury Circle and the Catholic Apostolic Church*

After working alongside Thomas Chalmers at St John's, Glasgow, in 1822 Edward Irving (1792-1834) was called to the Church of Scotland's Caledonian Chapel in London. Initially based in Cross Street, the Chapel soon relocated to a larger building Regent Square when Irving's celebrated preaching began to attract large crowds, including prominent members of parliament and the aristocracy. One leading society figure with whom Irving became friendly was the wealthy banker Henry Drummond (1786-1860). Drummond took a particular interest in millenarian ideas, and in the imminent outpouring of the Holy Spirit which he understood would precede the apocalypse. Drummond sponsored a group for the study of these and other spiritual concerns at his estate in Albury, Surrey, and Irving soon became a prominent member of this 'Albury Circle'. 1827, Irving preached a series of sermons on baptism at Regent Square in which he suggested that Peter's reference to the Spirit's gift of power in Acts 2:38 was not limited to the age of the apostles, but might still be available.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, while accepting that aspect of Calvin's Cessationism which held that the extraordinary charismata had faded due to unbelief, Irving diverged from traditional Reformed understanding in suggesting that they had not gone for good:

If they ask for an explanation of the fact that these powers have ceased in the Church, I answer, that they have decayed just as faith and holiness have

decayed; but that they have ceased is not a matter so clear. Til the time of the Reformation, this opinion was never mooted in the Church; and to this day the Roman Catholics, and every other portion of the Church but ourselves, maintain the very contrary.<sup>81</sup>

From 1828–1830 Irving and his assistant Alexander Scott undertook a series of preaching tours to Scotland, in which the interests and emphases of the Albury Circle were widely promulgated. In the spring of 1830, a revival duly broke out in the Gareloch and Port Glasgow. On 18 March, in the town of Fernicarry, a young woman called Mary Campbell was visited by the Spirit while dying of tuberculosis, and was reported to have spoken 'at great length, and with superhuman strength, in an unknown tongue'.<sup>82</sup> The next month in Port Glasgow, James McDonald was filled with the Spirit and on commanding his terminally ill sister to rise from her deathbed, saw her miraculously healed.<sup>83</sup> Having heard about Mary Campbell, he also wrote to her, and on reading his letter she, too, was made well. Then on 18 April, both McDonald himself and his brother George began to speak in tongues.<sup>84</sup> Within weeks, the whole region was caught up in a new spiritual fervour, and began to attract visitors from far afield.

Back in London, Irving's interest in Spirit-baptism was deepened by reports of what was happening in Gareloch and Port Glasgow. After interviewing both eyewitnesses and those who had experienced the new blessing for themselves, he began to tell the Regent Square congregation that this was an authentic work of the Spirit. Irving himself did not speak in tongues, but in April 1831 Mrs. Cardale, the wife of a leading lawyer, did so at a home prayer meeting, and on 30 October, a Miss Hall used the same gift in the Regent Square vestry. The next Sunday, both tongues and prophecies were being offered by various members of the congregation in public worship.<sup>85</sup> Early the next year, Irving was censured by Church of Scotland authorities for allowing non-ordained persons to minister in these ways. On 26 April, he was formally expelled from the pastorate and on 4 May, was locked out of the church.<sup>86</sup>

Around 800 Regent Square members left with Irving to form the first congregation of what would become the Catholic Apostolic Church. The break was then completed with a heresy trial on another point. Irving had taught for some time that although personally sinless, Christ had taken on sinful human flesh in the incarnation. In 1833, he was charged for this by his home Presbytery of Annam, and was removed from the Church of Scotland ministry altogether.

The freedom afforded by his new denomination consolidated Irving's commitment to baptism in the Spirit, and strengthened his conviction that the 'standing sign' of such baptism was speaking in tongues.<sup>87</sup> However, Irving's own failure to practise glossolalia ironically led to his being somewhat marginalized by more obviously 'charismatic' figures in the new church – figures like Drummond himself, and J.B. Cardale. Indeed, in September 1834 Irving was seconded from London to Glasgow to set up a new congregation, but died there of consumption before the year was out.<sup>88</sup>

Despite this somewhat anticlimactic end, Irving is now widely credited by Pentecostal theologians with having provided a crucial precedent for their own tradition.<sup>89</sup> Indeed, Eddie Hyatt sums up this view when he remarks that 'seventy years before the modern Pentecostal revival began, Irving had already formulated the classic Pentecostal

doctrine'.<sup>90</sup> Furthermore, as Pentecostal thought and experience has increasingly influenced mainstream church life through the Charismatic movement, so many non-Pentecostals have come to re-evaluate Irving's legacy. Perhaps most tellingly of all, the Panel on Doctrine of the Church of Scotland suggested in 1995 that those still sceptical of charismatic ministries might 'do well to consider whether the loss of Edward Irving to the Church of Scotland was not in fact the loss of a potentially healthy influence on the thought, life, liturgy and doctrine of our Church.'<sup>91</sup>

### 1.9 *Nineteenth Century Holiness: Keswick, Charles Finney and D.L. Moody*

Despite his eventual exclusion from the Church of Scotland, Irving had shown how charismatic experience could affect Reformed church life. Indeed, as his own and the Albury Circle's stress on personal holiness became more popular during the Nineteenth Century, so more leaders from Presbyterian, Congregationalist and Calvinistic Baptist backgrounds began to assimilate it into their ministries. Here in Britain, many of them converged on the Keswick Convention – an annual revivalist meeting in the Lake District which promoted what Presbyterians increasingly came to call the 'higher Christian life' and Baptists the 'rest of faith'.<sup>92</sup> In America, the New York based revivalist Charles Finney (1792-1873) also reflected this trend. Initially Presbyterian and then Congregationalist, Finney maintained a characteristically Reformed emphasis of expository preaching, and refrained from exercising an explicit healing ministry. Nonetheless, he introduced a range of 'new measures', like the altar call and the 'anxious seat', which were designed to elicit an emotional response from his hearers and prompt them to public displays of repentance. The practical implication was that overt demonstrations of commitment to Christ, from unconverted and converted alike, were seen to play a part in the process of regeneration and sanctification. Certainly, Finney's meetings were replete with people falling, swooning, weeping and crying out.<sup>93</sup> Later, indeed, Finney would formally embrace the concept of baptism in the Spirit as a distinct work of grace, and would link it to a transformative experience of his own, in which he 'wept aloud with joy and love' and 'literally belled out the unutterable gushings of my soul'.<sup>94</sup>

Another American from a Reformed background who embraced a 'holiness' approach was the Chicago evangelist Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899). Moody is especially pertinent for our context here because he had a significant impact in Britain. In 1871, two women in his congregation resolved to pray that he might receive what was by then increasingly coming to be called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Shortly, he underwent an encounter with God which he described in the following terms:

I was crying all the time that God would fill me with His Spirit. Well, one day, in the city of New York – oh, what a day! – I cannot describe it, I seldom refer to it; it is almost too sacred an experience to name. Paul had an experience of which he never spoke for fourteen years. I can only say that God revealed Himself to me, and I had [such] an experience of His love that I had to ask Him to stay His hand. I went to preaching again. The sermons were not different; I did not present any new truths, and yet hundreds were converted. I would not be placed back where I was before that blessed experience for all the world – it would be as the small dust of the balance.<sup>95</sup>

Fired by this new energy, Moody travelled to Britain in June 1873 with his singer and co-evangelist Ira Sankey, to undertake a preaching campaign. This trip was so successful that Moody and Sankey stayed until August 1875, having set up a base at Priory Street Baptist Church in York. In his role as Priory Street's pastor, the leading British evangelical F.B. Meyer was fascinated to discover in Moody and Sankey's ministry a new, expansive approach to evangelism – an approach that eschewed conventional forms of worship in favour of a more informal, extemporaneous, populist approach. Later Meyer was to describe how, through Moody, he saw 'a wider, larger life, in which mere denominationalism could have no place'.<sup>96</sup>

### *1.10 The Coalescence of 'Pentecost' Language in the later Nineteenth Century*

The ecumenical mood that the holiness movement inspired was demonstrated in a growing acceptance of 'Pentecost' language across denominational divides. A wide variety of activities, from camp meetings to choirs, were by now routinely described as 'Pentecostal' in holiness circles, and there was increasingly common spirit of 'primitivism' – that is, an expectation that God would restore to the Church her original commitment and power, whether glossolalia or other extraordinary gifts were taken to feature in this or not.<sup>97</sup>

By the turn of the century, these sentiments had spread to Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas and more dramatically still, to 312, Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California.

## **2 Pentecostalism**

### *2.1 Charles Fox Parham and Bethel Bible College*

In 1900 an itinerant American evangelist called Charles Fox Parham (1873–1929) was so keen to explore developments in the holiness movement that he left his home base of Topeka, Kansas to investigate various ministries which had been emphasising the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Parham himself had been shaped by Methodist and Quaker holiness traditions, and while he recognised in the work of leaders like Alexander Dowie, A.B. Simpson and A.J. Gordon an 'anointing that abideth', he returned to Topeka convinced that 'a great outpouring of power' was still to come.<sup>98</sup> In order to seek this outpouring more earnestly, he founded Bethel Bible College with his Quaker wife Sarah and sister-in-law Lillian Thistlethwaite. By late December 1900 the first intake of 40 or so students had completed their courses, but were encouraged by Parham to stay on and look further into the baptism of the Holy Spirit while he went away to preach in Kansas City. When he returned on New Year's Eve, they reported to him that their respective analyses of Scriptural teaching on the issue had yielded a strong consensus – namely that the definitive proof of Spirit baptism was speaking in tongues. While we have seen that this emphasis on tongues as 'initial evidence' had already been promulgated by Edward Irving seven decades earlier, J. Roswell Flower

hardly exaggerates when he comments that it was this which 'made the Pentecostal Movement of the twentieth century'.<sup>99</sup>

At a special Watchnight service held later on 31 December, Agnes Ozman, a female student at the college, asked Parham to pray for her that she might receive the baptism of the Spirit. When Parham obliged, she began to speak in a language he recognised as Chinese, and, according to Sarah, 'was unable to speak in English for three days'.<sup>100</sup> By 3 January 1901, the whole student body was singing harmoniously in tongues, and Parham himself 'began to worship God in the Swedish tongue, which later changed to other languages and continued so until morning.'<sup>101</sup> Subsequently, Parham and his students engaged in evangelistic campaigns in various locations, the most successful of which took place in Zion City, Illinois in 1906.<sup>102</sup> Shortly before this, however, a party from Bethel College led a series of revival meetings in Houston, Texas and opened a short-term Bible College there. One of those who enrolled was the pastor of a local black Holiness congregation called William Joseph Seymour (1870-1922). Seymour's contact with Parham and his followers would prove momentous for the future not only of Pentecostalism, but also for modern Christianity as whole.

### 2.3 *William Joseph Seymour and the Azusa Street Revival*

Although southern segregation laws meant that Seymour could not learn alongside white students in Houston, Parham arranged for him to sit in an adjoining room, and listen to lectures through an open door. As a result, Seymour became convinced of the 'pentecostal' doctrine of Spirit baptism, despite the fact at this stage, he had not yet experienced it for himself.<sup>103</sup> However, before he completed his studies in Texas, Seymour accepted a call to another black Holiness congregation in Los Angeles. Parham paid his train fare, and he arrived at his new charge in February 1906.

Seymour's first sermon at his new church was based on Acts 2:4, and immediately broached the subject of tongues as 'initial evidence'. When he returned for the evening service, though, he discovered that this new-found theology was unacceptable to the lay leadership: the doors were padlocked, he was out of a job, and was forced to lodge with a sympathetic family called the Asberrys, on Bonnie Bray Street. Here, he and other members of the family received the baptism of the Spirit and began to speak in tongues. Soon, the Asberrys' household became a magnet for spiritual seekers, and following a few overcrowded meetings they rented a former Methodist Episcopal Church, latterly converted into a warehouse, at 312 Azusa Street. From the first service there on 14 April 1906, intense charismatic activity was the norm. Meetings were long and unstructured, with Seymour himself spending much of the time in prayer, rather than seeking to lead events in a proactive way. As one eyewitness, Frank Bartleman, described it, 'Someone might be speaking. Suddenly the spirit would fall upon the congregation. God Himself would give the altar call. Men would fall all over the house, like the slain in battle, or rush to the altar *en masse* to seek God...We simply prayed. The Holy Spirit did the rest.'<sup>104</sup>

The Azusa Street revival progressed phenomenally through to 1909, but after that, internal divisions led to its gradual decline. One of the most significant features of the fellowship in its first years had been its interracial character: the original board of directors, for instance, comprised seven whites and three blacks, together with the

black pastor Seymour. (In addition, seven of the board were women). Sadly, with time, race became a point of conflict rather than integration, and several whites left to form their own churches and missions.<sup>105</sup> As Harvey Cox has pointed out, Pentecostalism still has some way to go to recover the racial harmony of the early Azusa Street meetings.<sup>106</sup> Despite this, the fact that Pentecostalism now accounts for around 15% of the world's Christians across a whole range of nations and cultures<sup>107</sup> is due in no small part to the point that what happened early on in Azusa Street was so powerful that it spread quickly across the state, the country and the world. Indeed, such was the long-term global impact of the revival there that it can effectively be regarded as the wellspring of modern Pentecostalism.

#### *2.4 Thomas Ball Barratt, Alexander Boddy and the Spread of Pentecostalism to Britain*

One of the first Europeans to be affected by the events at Azusa Street was the Norwegian Methodist Episcopal minister Thomas Ball Barratt (1862-1940). Barratt had originally journeyed to America to fundraise for missions, but on hearing about Seymour and his fellow-revivalists, sought out baptism in the Spirit. In 1907, he duly found himself singing and speaking for the first time in tongues. Barratt returned to Oslo transformed by this experience, and began to preach a Pentecostal message. His meetings soon attracted large numbers from different denominations, who in turn 'took the fire with them to the towns round about'.<sup>108</sup> Swiftly, visitors began to flock to hear him from overseas. One such was Alexander Boddy (1854-1930), Rector of the Church of England parish of All Saints, Sunderland. Boddy was deeply touched by Barratt's ministry, and on his return, All Saints and its vicarage became a focus for those pursuing baptism in the Spirit from all over the British Isles. A memorial plaque in the entrance of the parish hall famously reads: 'September 1907. When the fire of the Lord fell it burned up the debt' – a reference both to the cleansing of sin experienced by many who went there, and to the fact that the 'Sunderland Revival' allowed the church to pay off a substantial building deficit in remarkably quick time.

Just three years previously, in 1904, Evan Roberts (1878-1951) had led a major revival in Wales, which anticipated much of what occurred at Sunderland. However, whereas this 'Welsh Revival' had harked back to the more general awakenings inspired by Edwards, Wesley and Whitefield in the Eighteenth Century, and to the Ulster Revival of 1859, All Saints was distinctive in that placed Spirit baptism and glossolalia at the very heart of its ministry.

Among the many who were inspired by events in Sunderland, the most influential was almost certainly Smith Wigglesworth.

#### *2.5 Smith Wigglesworth and the Rise of British Pentecostalism*

When Smith Wigglesworth (1859-1947) visited Sunderland in the autumn of 1907, it was Mrs Boddy who laid hands on him and led him into the baptism of the Spirit. 'The fire fell and burned in me', he later wrote, 'till the Holy Spirit revealed absolute purity before God...when I could not find words to express then an irresistible power filled me and moved me till I found to my glorious astonishment I was speaking in other

tongues clearly.’<sup>109</sup> Smith went on to develop a major international preaching and healing ministry of his own. As he did so, he found a welcome in the wide variety of Pentecostal churches and denominations which were now springing up in the wake of Azusa Street. Indeed, Smith’s own Bowland Street Mission would in time merge with the Elim Alliance – a body formed in 1915 by another Pentecostal pioneer, George Jeffreys (1889–1963). Elim took its name from Exodus 15:27, the fresh water of the twelve springs described there serving as a symbol of the new outpouring of the Spirit which it sought to promulgate. Over the next few decades, Elim would establish itself as one of the two main Pentecostal denominations in Britain – the other being the less centralised, more congregationalist Assemblies of God. Later, in the 1950s and ‘60s, large numbers of first and second generation Pentecostals from the Caribbean arrived as immigrants to Britain, and formed black-majority branches of other Pentecostal churches such as the New Testament Church of God and the Church of God of Prophecy.

For all these developments, however, Pentecostalism was never wholly content to limit its influence to dedicated Pentecostal groups. As a beneficiary of the All Saints revival, Smith Wigglesworth especially recognised the ecumenical potential of the movement, and longed to see it transform other such historic, mainline churches. Towards the end of his life, he would begin to see this aspiration realised.

### 3 The Charismatic Movement

#### 3.1 *From Pentecostalism to Neo-Pentecostalism: Renewal in the Historic Denominations*

In 1936, Smith Wigglesworth was visiting South Africa when he had a startling vision. As Smith later recounted, he was led to share what he had seen with a young local Pentecostal pastor called David du Plessis (1905-87):

I have been sent by the Lord to tell you what he has shown me this morning. 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...Then the Lord said to me I am to give you warning that he is going to use you in this movement.<sup>110</sup>

Du Plessis took this charge seriously, becoming Secretary of the World Pentecostal Fellowship and raising the profile of Pentecostal churches considerably at the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1954, and in other ecumenical forums. Hitherto, Pentecostalism had met with often hostile reactions from historic Christian churches: famously, the Gnadau Alliance of German Evangelicals had denounced it as demonic in its 'Berlin Declaration' of 1909. Although such hostility would persist in certain quarters, by the late 1950s several leaders in mainline churches began to take Pentecostalism more seriously, investigating both baptism in the Spirit and the supernatural gifts. Some found this leading them away from their existing situations – either voluntarily or at the insistence of those who did not appreciate their new turn. Others, however, managed to remain in post and integrate charismatic spirituality with established patterns of liturgy and church polity. One who did this was James Brown, Pastor of Upper Octoroa Presbyterian Church near Parkesburg, Pennsylvania. On being baptised in the Spirit and speaking in tongues, Brown was initially uncertain how to proceed. However, Du Plessis himself advised that he should stay in post and renew the congregation, and Brown managed this by maintaining a standard Reformed service on Sunday mornings while turning the evening meeting over to Pentecostal-style worship. Hundreds at a time flocked to these meetings from elsewhere, and thousands experienced baptism in the Spirit.<sup>111</sup>

Robert C. Whitaker's ministry at First Presbyterian Church, Chandler, Arizona, was likewise transformed after he was baptised in the Spirit in 1962. Later, Whitaker successfully resisted opposition and in doing so, secured for every Presbyterian minister in his denomination protection from arbitrary removal on the grounds of involvement in charismatic renewal, or what was by then coming also to be called 'neo-pentecostalism'.<sup>112</sup>

A similar pattern of ministry to those pioneered by Brown and Whitaker was developed by Dennis Bennett (1919-1992). On Passion Sunday 1960, while serving as Rector of St Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California, Bennett surprised his congregation by relating that he had been filled with the Spirit and had spoken in tongues in the manner of the disciples on the Day of Pentecost. Although

subsequently pressured by traditionalists to leave, Bennett continued to assimilate charismatic ministry with Episcopal forms at St Luke's in Seattle.<sup>113</sup> By 1963, *Christianity Today* magazine was estimating that some 2000 Episcopalians in southern California alone were practising glossolalia.<sup>114</sup> By now, neo-pentecostalism was pervading a range of historic denominations all across North America. Soon, it would spread to the United Kingdom.

While Bennett was still there, St Mark's, Van Nuys began to attract curious visitors from other Anglican provinces, including the Church of England. One of these was Philip Hughes, editor of the conservative evangelical journal *Churchman*. Steeped in the Reformed tradition of Anglicanism, Hughes might not have been expected to embrace what he saw. On returning to England, however, he reflected constructively on what he had witnessed and asked his readers: 'Dare we deny that this is a movement of God's sovereign Spirit?'<sup>115</sup> . Among an increasing number of mainline denominational Christians who answered 'No' to Hughes' question was Michael Harper (b. 1931). Harper was serving as Curate to the renowned evangelical Anglican leader John Stott at All Souls, Langham Place in London when, in September 1962, he attended a conference in Farnham, Surrey and was 'filled with all the fullness of God and had to ask God to stop giving more'. Like many others who resisted neo-pentecostal theology, Stott maintained that 'baptism in the Spirit' should not be treated as a distinct work of grace apart from conversion, and Harper left All Souls in 1965 to found the Fountain Trust – an interdenominational organisation dedicated to fostering local church renewal. By now, corporate charismatic ministry had taken root in a number of parishes, including St Paul's, Beckenham in SouthEast London, and St Mark's, Gillingham in Kent.<sup>116</sup>

Over the next 15 years, the Fountain Trust would encourage many Christians in a range of historic church streams to assimilate charismatic worship, spirituality and theology. Indeed, several of those who attended its conferences went on to form their own denominationally specific organisations. Thus, Anglican Renewal Ministries networked the influential charismatic outreach of St Michael-le-Belfrey in York under the leadership of David Watson, the evangelistic work of St Andrew's, Chorleywood led by David Pytches, the New Wine festival, Soul Survivor and other initiatives. It was also linked with a significant number who would go on to hold high office in the national church, including Archbishop George Carey, Bishop Graham Dow and Bishop Cyril Ashton. In 1970, Charles Clarke and other Methodist charismatics founded the Dunamis Renewal Group, which later merged with a similar network, Headway. Benefiting from the support of the training centre Cliff College in Derbyshire, Headway continues to promote renewal among British Methodists. Similar priorities characterise Mainstream – the charismatic group for the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Indeed, of all the mainline Christian traditions in the UK, Baptists seem to have welcomed charismatic renewal in the greatest proportions. Writing in 1997, the leading Baptist charismatic Douglas McBain could observe that 'the majority of Baptist ministers in Britain who began their ministry in the middle to late 1970s onwards appear to be willing to identify themselves with whatever they perceive as the positive attributes of renewal.'<sup>117</sup>

Just as significant early instances of charismatic renewal in America arose in Reformed church contexts, so this tradition was also impacted by the rise of renewal in Britain. The early British charismatic movement here was encouraged by several visits from

Dennis Bennett and two of his parishioners, Don and Jean Stone. As editor of the American Episcopal magazine *Trinity*, Jean Stone did much to disseminate stories of renewal. An effective communicator, she was asked to speak at the first large-scale charismatic meetings to be held in the UK. These took place in London – at Caxton Hall, and at the famous Congregational church founded three centuries previously by Thomas Goodwin, the City Temple.<sup>118</sup> The City Temple congregation itself would be significantly touched by charismatic renewal in the late 1970s, and would become a major London centre for Pentecostal and neo-pentecostal meetings. When the Congregational Union merged with the Presbyterian Church in England to create the United Reformed Church in 1972, renewal streams from the two original denominations came together and, in 1974, launched GEAR – the Group for Evangelism and Renewal within the URC. As well as nurturing its own leaders – including Bob Gordon, who would go on to pursue a significant global ministry – GEAR's conferences and quarterly newsletter regularly featured voices from other renewal contexts. John Hall, who chaired GEAR through most of the 1990s, fostered interchange with African Reformed charismatics through the Romans 1:11 Trust, and towards the end of the decade, GEAR began to partner the American-based umbrella body Presbyterian Renewal Ministries International (PRMI) in an extensive programme of charismatic theological education and discipleship.

While all these developments were taking place in British Protestant churches, charismatic renewal also touched Roman Catholics in the United Kingdom. At the epochal Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), Pope John XXIII had called the Roman church to revive itself 'as by a new Pentecost'. Although this did not specifically refer to the burgeoning charismatic movement, Cardinal Suenens of Belgium in particular did much to champion charismatic ministry as a legitimate response to this more general challenge.<sup>119</sup> Influenced by renewals at Duquense and Notre Dame Universities in the USA in the late 1960s, the Catholic charismatic movement reached Britain via the European continent, and was consolidated by major conferences at Roehampton and Guildford in 1972–3.<sup>120</sup> By 1980, a high proportion of delegates to a National Pastoral Congress of Catholics in Liverpool were reported as 'either actively involved in' or possessed of 'more than a passing contact' with charismatic ministry.<sup>121</sup>

### 3.2 *Restorationism and the 'New Churches'*

Although charismatic renewal was successfully incorporated into many mainline denominational congregations, some who experienced it were unwilling to accept the compromises which often went with such rapprochement. Others who went through the baptism of the Spirit and began using the extraordinary gifts found that they were unwelcome in their mainline fellowships. In the early-mid Seventies, leaders of both groups joined forces with a number of independent evangelicals from Brethren roots who, since the late 1950s, had been seeking to restore their congregations to the pattern of ministry found in the New Testament church. The chief spokesman of this latter group was Arthur Wallis, who articulated its neo-primitivist ethos in a series of books, culminating in his definitive manifesto, *The Radical Christian*.<sup>122</sup> By 1974, Wallis had become something of a mentor to denominationally disenfranchised charismatics, and together they formed a loose movement which came to be known as Restorationism.

Because many started by meeting in homes, Restorationist groups were initially identified by the term 'House Churches'. However, as they expanded and acquired their own dedicated properties, the description 'New Churches' became more common.

In his seminal 1985 study of these New Churches, *Restoring the Kingdom*,<sup>123</sup> Andrew Walker observed that Restorationism had by then sub-divided into two key streams, both of which featured personalities with strong, singular leadership styles. 'Restoration 1' churches remained somewhat closer in ethos to Wallis' rigorous model of discipleship, and were clustered around the Bradford-based ministry of Bryn Jones. Jones developed a closely structured network of churches under the 'Harvestime' banner, which expanded into Christian merchandising and high-profile Bible Weeks in the Yorkshire Dales and Sussex Downs. These Bible Weeks also attracted both classical Pentecostals and denominational charismatics, some of whom persuaded their churches to join the Harvestime network. For a period in the late 1970s, Jones worked alongside the former Baptist Terry Virgo, who oversaw a set of churches centred on Brighton and Hove. Together, they founded the periodical *Restoration*, which articulated the core doctrines of the network, including the controversial teaching that Pentecostal and neo-pentecostal renewal had helped to revive the office of 'apostle' – traditionally limited to the first generation of Jesus' disciples, but now, apparently, entrusted to those, like Jones and Virgo, who founded and led church groupings which practised the full range of spiritual gifts.

Virgo later separated from Jones' network and renamed his organisation 'New Frontiers International'. This grouping has continued to attract and partner charismatic congregations from mainline churches – most notably Baptists, whose congregationalist polity allows them to form such links quite readily. It also runs an annual Bible Week at Stoneleigh, and has expanded significantly overseas. In Britain, it currently has around 150 churches with 25,000 members.<sup>124</sup> Meanwhile, in 1990, Jones moved his headquarters to Nettlehill near Coventry, and subsequently re-named his network New Covenant Ministries International. Under this heading, he appointed a number of 'apostles' to develop the work, including his brother Keri, Michael Godward, Alan Scotland, Andy Owen and Paul Scanlon. Bryn Jones died in 2003, but these men maintain his legacy, and today the New Covenant organisation numbers around 7000 members. Scanlon has attracted particular attention as pastor of Abundant Life church in Bradford – a large, high-tech operation which has experienced dramatic growth.

Although they were originally close to Wallis and Jones, another group of Restorationist leaders, including Gerald Coates and John and Christine Noble, moved in a different direction from 1976, forming what Walker called the 'Restoration 2' stream. This group took a more open view of cinema, popular music and other aspects of 'secular' culture, which Wallis and R1 had tended to regard as incompatible with radical holiness. It was also generally less separatist in ecclesiology, and through the 1980s contributed significantly to the resurgence of the Evangelical Alliance. In addition, it has encouraged the leadership ministries of women, whereas R1 churches have reserved pastoral and teaching offices for men. As well as Coates' Surrey-based Pioneer network and the Noble's 'Team Spirit' ministry, this R2 stream includes the Ichthus Fellowship in SouthEast London. Founded by Roger and Faith Forster, and enhanced by the prodigious songwriting of Graham Kendrick, Ichthus has combined tireless evangelism and innovative worship with a range of social projects, including

literacy training programmes and job centres. Today, Pioneer and Ichthus together comprise around 10,000 members, but R2 also includes a variety of smaller groups, among which are Barney Coombs' Salt and Light network and Cornerstone, led by Tony Morton.<sup>125</sup>

### 3.3 *John Wimber, the Vineyard Churches and 'Third Wave' Renewal*

Although the modern renewal movement is routinely presented as a two-pronged phenomenon consisting of 'classical Pentecostalism' on the one hand and 'charismatic' or 'neo-pentecostal' Christianity on the other, some more recent taxonomies have begun to acknowledge another, distinct mode of ministry associated with the use of extraordinary gifts. This is identified with John Wimber (1934–97), with the network of 'Vineyard' fellowships which he led, and with the influence of the Vineyard approach on a number mainline evangelical churches, not least in Britain.

A former rock musician and producer from California, Wimber and his Roman Catholic wife Carol were converted in 1963, whereupon they joined a Quaker congregation at Yoruba Linda. From 1970–73, Wimber took a degree in Biblical Studies at Azusa Pacific College while co-pastoring at the same church. In 1975, he and Carol moved to Pasadena, where he enrolled on a church growth course at Fuller Seminary. This course was taught by Prof. Peter Wagner, who would become a close friend. Wagner's 1973 study, *Look Out! The Pentecostals are Coming!* had a major influence on Wimber at this time.<sup>126</sup> Wimber had previously inclined towards Cessationism, but Wagner's work led him into a significant exploration of spiritual gifts. This also included study of work by the English Pentecostal Donald Gee and the Episcopalian charismatic Morton Kelsey. As a result of all this, Wimber became convinced that effective preaching and evangelism depended as much on demonstration as declaration. In the Gospels, he concluded, Jesus consistently matched his words with works of power such as healing, exorcism, resurrection and feeding the hungry; indeed, Wimber came to hold that the two ministries were inextricably linked. He concluded from further reading in missiology and anthropology that that this emphasis on 'signs and wonders' was still evident in many vibrant Third World church settings, but had been lost in the modern West. Sensing that a recovery of such 'power evangelism' and 'power healing' could transform American Christianity, Wimber sought to put his ideas into practice with a new fellowship, which started to meet in his home in 1977 and which linked with Chuck Smith's group of Calvary Chapels.

By 1981, Wimber's congregation had already grown impressively when a young man who had given testimony prayed the simple invocation, "Come, Holy Spirit". At this, hundreds fell to the floor, weeping, wailing and speaking in tongues. There then followed a period of even more rapid growth before Wimber moved his church's affiliation in 1982 to a small network of congregations formed in 1974, overseen by Ken Gulliksen, and called the Vineyards. Gulliksen had become known in the late seventies for encouraging the legendary singer-songwriter Bob Dylan to embrace Christianity.<sup>127</sup>

Also in 1982, Wimber was invited back to Fuller to teach a course entitled 'The Miraculous and Church Growth'. Listed in the Fuller School of World Mission Catalogue as MC 510, this course ran on Monday evenings and started with around

130 students. By 1985, when it was discontinued amidst theological dispute in the seminary, it had become the most popular course in Fuller's history. Wagner became one of its most enthusiastic supporters and contributed personally as a teacher on the course.<sup>128</sup> During the three years in which the course ran, Wagner developed the theory that it, and Wimber's church, were modelling a 'Third Wave' of modern renewal, which was dependent on, but distinct from, the first two 'waves' of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity. In contrast to classical Pentecostalism, Wagner wrote that the Third Wave defined baptism in the Holy Spirit as coincident with conversion, rather than with a 'second blessing'. He also stressed, over against Pentecostalism, that the Third Wave saw speaking in tongues as neither particularly important, nor as 'initial evidence' of Spirit baptism. Furthermore, whereas the Charismatic Renewal movement had often created friction with established structures and practices, Wagner followed Wimber in defining the new movement as dedicatedly assimilationist and ready to compromise on such things as the necessity of tongues, raising hands in worship and methods of prayer, in order to maintain harmony. Moreover, Wagner underlined that the Third Wave was thoroughly committed to a corporate, 'every member' style of ministry – one which diverged markedly from the more individualistic, 'anointed man' model practised in many Pentecostal and neo-pentecostal settings.<sup>129</sup>

By 1986, Wimber's church had accumulated around 5,000 members and had taken up residence in a large warehouse building in Anaheim. Wimber himself had been groomed by Ken Gulliksen to take over leadership of the Vineyard, and had developed an extensive itinerant ministry through the specially formed organisation, Vineyard Ministries International (VMI). In this context, he had already made his first main tour the UK (in October 1984), at the invitation of David Watson. As Vicar of the leading charismatic Anglican church, St. Michael-le-Belfrey in York, Watson had been in touch with Wimber since 1981, and had helped him make major impact on other Anglican congregations. These included St. Andrew's Chorleywood, St. Thomas, Crookes, in Sheffield, St. John's Harborne in Birmingham and Holy Trinity, Brompton, in London.<sup>130</sup>

Also in 1986, Terry Virgo's New Frontiers network invited Wimber to lead a four-day conference at the Brighton Pavilion. This attracted large numbers from a wide range of denominations, with a particularly large proportion of Baptist pastors being affected by events during the conference itself, or by gleaning its ministry model from friends and colleagues who attended.<sup>131</sup>

Wimber returned to Britain in September 1990 for a series of meetings at London's Docklands Arena. In the preceding period, Wimber had been deeply affected by the ministry of a group known as the 'Kansas City Prophets', which included Bob Jones, Mike Bickle and Paul Cain. Cain had predicted that revival would break out in the UK that autumn, and Wimber intended to be there at the start of it. Although the level of anticipation was high, the predicted outpouring did not appear to ensue. Initially, Wimber sought to account for this by explaining that revival comes in stages, and that the earliest 'tokens' of it, in the form of a deepened emphasis on signs and wonders, had in fact been evident. At the time, his Kansas City Prophet colleagues received backing in a signed statement from leading British Charismatics including Gerald Coates, Roger Forster, David Pytches, Terry Virgo, and Sandy Millar of Holy Trinity, Brompton.<sup>132</sup>

Despite all this, over the course of the next year, Wimber was forced to re-evaluate his relationship with the Kansas group, and by the summer of 1991, found himself on another London platform, apologising with Mike Bickle for their errors and excesses, while seeking to recover the original Vineyard emphasis on equipping and empowering church members for evangelism.<sup>133</sup>

This setback apart, Wimber's Vineyard network continued to exercise considerable influence among British charismatics. Its first actual congregation in the UK had been established in 1987 at Putney under the leadership of John Mumford. By the mid-1990s, there were over 40 Vineyard fellowships active across Britain.<sup>134</sup> However, at this time, both Wimber and the Vineyard faced another major challenge in the form of the 'Toronto Blessing'.

### 3.4 *The 'Toronto Blessing'*

In an article for the London *Times* on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June 1994, Ruth Gledhill reported that the phrase 'Toronto Blessing' was becoming a popular nickname for a 'religious craze' of 'mass fainting' which had 'crossed the Atlantic to cause concern in the Church of England'.<sup>135</sup> As it was, the 'craze' to which Gledhill alluded had several antecedents, involved rather more than 'mass fainting', and prompted debate and discussion well beyond the Church of England.

Gledhill's geographical reference was to the Toronto Airport Vineyard (TAV) – a church led by John and Carol Arnott, and overseen John Wimber's Association of Vineyard Churches (AVC). TAV had started as an independent congregation, but contact with Wimber in the late 1980s led the Arnotts to place it within the Vineyard network.

From at least 1986, significant instances of 'holy laughter' had been recorded in various Vineyard fellowships, along with already-established phenomena like slumping or falling to the floor, trembling and weeping.<sup>136</sup> Despite the growth and rising profile of the Third Wave/Vineyard movement, by the early 1990s, a number of its pastors and leaders appear to have been seeking fresh impetus and 'anointing'. Arnott had periodically pursued new sources of blessing and inspiration through his life and career, having previously drawn much from the healing evangelist Kathryn Kuhlman and the Israeli-born preacher Benny Hinn.<sup>137</sup> In late 1993, he and various colleagues visited key figures in the 'Argentinean Revival' – a significant wave of evangelical church growth centred on Buenos Aires.<sup>138</sup> While they were looking towards South America, another Vineyard leader, Randy Clark of the St Louis Vineyard in Missouri, was undergoing a radical personal transformation under the ministry of Rodney Howard-Browne.

Howard-Browne had come to the USA from his native South Africa in 1987, convinced that God was about to visit a 'mighty revival' on the nation. A child of devoutly Pentecostal parents, he testified to having been converted at the age of five, and to having been filled with the Holy Spirit at eight.<sup>139</sup> After an unremarkable beginning, Howard-Browne's American ministry gained considerable momentum in 1989, when laughter and 'slaying' or falling down in the Spirit became more prominent in his evangelistic meetings.<sup>140</sup> While such things were hardly unknown in Vineyard circles, Randy Clark found them occurring around Howard-Browne at a level of intensity

which deeply impressed him. Clark had been virtually burned-out by a demanding pastorate, and this condition appears to have prompted him to overlook doubts about Howard-Browne's style and theological background. Very much a classic 'front man' Pentecostal, Howard-Browne had also trained and ministered in the 'Rhema' and 'Word of Faith' constituencies – key engines of the so-called 'prosperity gospel' movement. Indeed, it was in Tulsa, Oklahoma – a major Word of Faith centre – that Clark first encountered Howard-Browne in August 1993, and duly ended up on the floor laughing.<sup>141</sup>

Subsequently, as Arnott and other Vineyard leaders returned from Argentina, Clark informed them of what had happened to him, and of the effect it had begun to have on his congregation, some 95% of whom had 'fallen under the power' on his return from Tulsa. At this same meeting, Arnott invited Clark to visit TAV in the New Year.<sup>142</sup> Clark accepted, and on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January 1994 he led a 'family night' at the airport church. As he called people forward for prayer, large numbers manifested a range of dramatic physical phenomena, from falling and then 'resting' in the Spirit, to laughing, shaking, prostration and healing. Such was the impact of this meeting that Clark extended his time in Toronto through until mid-March, leading meetings on a regular basis. By the time of his return to St. Louis, word had spread, visitors to TAV were increasing, and some had begun to fly in from overseas to investigate.<sup>143</sup>

Back in St Louis, during April and May Rodney Howard-Browne led a series of equally spectacular meetings, some of which were attended by Terry Virgo, then overseeing the work of his New Frontiers International network in the USA. Along with other Britons who had attended TAV during this period, Virgo reported what had been happening to his colleagues in the UK, and various outbreaks of 'Toronto-style' manifestations began to occur here.<sup>144</sup> Queen's Road Baptist Church and the Ichthus Fellowship had already started to experience such manifestations when John Mumford's wife Eleanor travelled from the Vineyard's Putney congregation, to meet with the leaders of Holy Trinity, Brompton, on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May.<sup>145</sup> After reporting a recent visit to TAV, Mumford saw key members of 'HTB's' leadership team rendered virtually immobile as they, too, fell, shook, rested and laughed.<sup>146</sup> The next Sunday, she preached at HTB with similar effect,<sup>147</sup> and news that hundreds of largely upper middle class Knightsbridge churchgoers were rolling around as if 'drunk' and 'helpless' at services soon caught the attention of the press. Hence the interest of the *Times*, and Ruth Gledhill's coinage of the term 'Toronto Blessing'.

Within weeks, the 'Blessing' had spread to hundreds of churches across the British Isles, and by the end of 1994, estimates were suggesting that between 2000 and 4000 congregations had embraced it.<sup>148</sup> It became one of the biggest stories covered by the British Christian media in recent times, and remained so through 1995 and into early 1996. It also appeared frequently as a subject of debate and discussion in the secular press – not only in the religious pages, but in the news sections, too. Between late 1994 and 1998 the Blessing prompted the publication of at least 30 books in the UK, not to mention a slew of papers, conferences, tapes, videos, web sites, radio features and TV programmes. Major studies of it were commissioned by the Methodist Conference, the Church of Scotland, the House of Bishops of the Church of England, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and numerous smaller bodies in Britain and elsewhere. Deeply controversial, and opposed by many conservative evangelicals and some Pentecostals and charismatics, the Toronto Blessing engaged the time, attention

and pastoral capacity of the Evangelical Alliance more than any unprogrammed issue for thirty years.<sup>149</sup>

While 'first wave' Pentecostalism had seemed striking and disturbing to many in the mainline churches and media, until the 1960s they were able to treat it largely as an exotic, sectarian religion with its own dedicated networks and institutions.<sup>150</sup> The 'second wave' of the charismatic/neo-Pentecostal renewal brought things more centre-stage, and as we have seen, certainly led to higher profile tensions and splits. But partly because so many of its leaders remained loyal their existing denominations, liturgies and spiritual traditions, and partly because no one episode or incident served to concentrate those tensions sufficiently to threaten really cataclysmic division, it was gradually absorbed and in some cases, actively welcomed into the mainstream as a positive force for growth.<sup>151</sup> By contrast, the Toronto Blessing seemed to many – not only liberals, traditionalists and conservatives, but also some established Charismatics – to represent a dangerously potent and fast-breeding strain of fanaticism which could seriously de-stabilise the Church.

Over the years, the majority of Pentecostals and Charismatics had readily identified with Evangelical Christianity's typically high view of Christ and Scripture, its commitment to conversion, its activism and its objective view of atonement. Not every Evangelical – and especially not those in more classically Reformed circles – had been happy confirm this identity, and a good deal of familiarly heated evangelical debate has arisen as a result. Even so, in all but the most separatist and fundamentalist quarters, a degree of tolerance and mutual co-operation developed in the British context during the 1970s and '80s. This was particularly evident in the diverse and growing membership of the Evangelical Alliance, the common organisation of Billy Graham missions, and the resurgence of that broad-based evangelical social concern which was both epitomised and boosted by the 1974 Lausanne Covenant.<sup>152</sup> With the rise of Toronto, however, old fault-lines were once again exposed, and concerns which had either been sublimated or suppressed for the greater cause of unity, were reiterated. Many of those who welcomed the emergence of 'Toronto' (mostly charismatic Evangelicals) were confirmed in their view that those who opposed it (mostly non-charismatic conservative Evangelicals) had an insufficiently dynamic understanding of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, opponents tended to present the Blessing as evidence of a long-held conviction that despite its protestations to the contrary, the charismatic movement in fact relied too much on experience, and not enough on Scripture.

If it initially recalled familiar conservative-charismatic divides, however, the disputatious potential of the Blessing was most tellingly realised by a cleavage within the very ground from which it had sprung. To widespread surprise, in December 1995 John Wimber's Association of Vineyard Churches formally expelled TAV from its membership. While Wimber's own ministry had long featured most of the eye-catching manifestations associated with the Blessing, the AVC Board judged that the Toronto church's focus on them had become excessive in comparison with established Vineyard priorities of evangelism, teaching and discipleship.<sup>153</sup> Although personal hurts were later addressed, and although the Toronto church continues to this day as an independent proponent of the Blessing, this very public and somewhat messy divorce effectively put paid to it as a major international movement. If the Blessing has continued as a force within global renewal at all, it has done so inasmuch as it has

transmuted into other initiatives – not least Holy Trinity Brompton's Alpha Course, which appears to have been gained considerable impetus from the Toronto outpouring.<sup>154</sup>

### 3.5 *Into the Future: Alpha and the Globalization of Renewal*

Alpha, a 13-session introduction to the Christian faith, has become one of the most successful initiatives ever produced by a charismatic church body. Though intended for use in a whole range of traditions, its focus on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and on the role of the extraordinary gifts, clearly reveals Holy Trinity Brompton's own commitment to a charismatic worldview with 'Third Wave' influences. The course has now been used by hundreds of thousands of people in over 100 countries, and is still expanding.<sup>155</sup>

On one level, this rapid growth illustrates what Murray Dempster, Byron Klaus and Douglas Petersen have called the modern-day 'globalization' of Pentecostal and neo-pentecostal spiritualities.<sup>156</sup> Then again, the survey presented here confirms that these forms of Christian faith have always to some degree been 'global' in character. In their referencing of the first outpouring on 'all flesh', and the promise it held for those both near and 'far away' (Acts 2:39); in their discerning of historical precedents from across the centuries and continents; in the pilgrims who flocked from various parts of the world to Azusa Street; in their debt to those who brought that flame back home and took it to the world in mission; in the transatlantic links which aided their acceptance by mainline churches; in the expansion of New Church ministries abroad – in these and other respects, Pentecostal and charismatic movements have in a very real sense been international from the outset.

Thus, edifying and instructive as it may have been to chart the British dimensions of this remarkable story, it is a story set to touch 'every nation under heaven', just as it was when it began (Acts 2:5).

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<sup>1</sup> This paper makes no great claims to original research. It is intended as a summary of the history of renewal movements in Britain for educational purposes, and as such is dependent on a range of more extensive studies in this field – studies which are referenced through the text and detailed in the following notes. With respect to the material on overseas influences and precedents in particular, Eddie L. Hyatt's *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edn) (Dallas: Hyatt International, 1998) has been an especially useful source, both in terms of its narrative structure and its guidance on primary sources. As I point out, however, the 'pre-history' of charismatic renewal is much contested, and if Hyatt strains to present a sanguine view of this pre-history, a considerably more sceptical survey is provided by the somewhat misleadingly titled *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal History, 200AD – 1900AD*, which appears online at <http://www.bible.ca/tongues-history.htm> Unashamedly anti-charismatic and polemical in approach, it nevertheless cites and quotes from a large number of key sources relevant to this topic, and I mention it as much as anything because of its accessibility. The exception in terms of primary research here is Section 3.4 on the 'Toronto Blessing', which is based on my own detailed chronology of this phenomenon in David Hilborn (ed.), *Toronto in Perspective: Papers on the New Charismatic Wave of the mid-1990s* (Carlisle: Paternoster/Evangelical Alliance, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin & Hyman, 1989); Peter Hocken *Streams of Renewal* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1986); Andrew Walker, *Restoring the Kingdom* (Revsd. Edn.) (Guildford: eagle, 1998); Nigel Scotland, *Charismatics and the New Millennium* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edn.) (Guildford: Eagle, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Ray Simpson, *Exploring Celtic Spirituality: Historic Roots for Our Future* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995), 117-119.

- <sup>4</sup> Ray Simpson, *Exploring Celtic Spirituality*, 121-23; Ian Bradley, *Celtic Christianity: Making Myths and Chasing Dreams* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999); Oliver Davies & Thomas O' Loughlin, *Celtic Spirituality*, (Mahwah, NJ, 2000).
- <sup>5</sup> Thomas Taylor (ed.). *The Life of Samson of Dol* (Llanerch, 1991).
- <sup>6</sup> *The Confession of St Patrick*, (Floris Books, 1993).
- <sup>7</sup> Adamnan, *Life of Saint Columba* (Llanerch, 1988), Book 3, Chapter 19.
- <sup>8</sup> John McQueen, 'The Miracles of Bishop Nynia', in *St Nynia* (Polygon, 1990).
- <sup>9</sup> Adamnan, *Life of Saint Columba* (Llanerch, 1988).
- <sup>10</sup> *The Voyage of St Brendan* (Floris Books, 1991).
- <sup>11</sup> Bede, *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1999), 167-71; 256-66.
- <sup>12</sup> Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 82, 88; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 5.6.1; Novatian, *Treatise Concerning the Trinity*, xxix; Ambrose, *Of the Holy Spirit*.
- <sup>13</sup> Chrysostom, 'Homilies in First Corinthians', in Philip Schaff (ed.), *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Vol. 12 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), 168;
- <sup>14</sup> D.F. Wright, 'Montanism', in Walter A. Elwell (ed.), *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Theology* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic/Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001), 790; C.G. Fry, 'Tongues: Speaking In', in Walter A. Elwell (ed.), *Evangelical Dictionary of Christian Theology* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic/Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001), 1207.
- <sup>15</sup> C.M. Robeck Jr., 'Prophecy: Gift Of', in Stanley M. Burgess (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1007-1009. On the Cathars in particular see Eddie L. Hyatt, *2000 Years of Charismatic Christianity: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look at Church History from a Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspective* (Revsd. Edn.) (Dallas: Hyatt International, 1998 [1996]), 69-72.
- <sup>16</sup> Augustine, *City of God*, Book 22, Chapter 8.
- <sup>17</sup> Augustine, 'Ten Homilies on the First Epistle of John', in Philip Schaff (ed.), *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Vol. 7 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 1956.
- <sup>18</sup> Augustine, 'Anti-Manichaeon Writings: Reply to Faustus the Manichaeon', Book XXXII, in Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson (eds.), *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. IV.
- <sup>19</sup> Hildegard von Bingen, *Wisse die Wege: Scivias* (Salzburg, 1954), 169ff.; Johannes May, *Die heilige Hildegard uan Bingen* (Munich, 1929), 129ff.
- <sup>20</sup> Francis C. Lehner (ed.), *St Dominic: Biographical Documents* (Washington DC, 1964), 52-53; Michael P. Hamilton, *The Charismatic Movement*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 70.
- <sup>21</sup> Stanley M. Burgess, (ed.), 'Timeline', *International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 1229; Bernard L. Bresson, *Studies in Ecstasy*, p.38.
- <sup>22</sup> Raphael Huber, *St Anthony of Padua* (Milwaukee, 1948).
- <sup>23</sup> Marjorie Reeves, *The Figure of Joachim of Fiore* (Oxford, 1972); Michael P. Hamilton, *The Charismatic Movement*, 1975, 70.
- <sup>24</sup> Stanley M. Burgess, 'Medieval Examples of Charismatic Piety in the Roman Catholic Church', in Russell P. Spittler (ed.), *Perspectives on the New Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), 14-26.
- <sup>25</sup> Martin Luther, *Lectures on Isaiah*, eds. Helmut Lehmann & Jaroslav Pelikan, *Works*, XVI, 302.
- <sup>26</sup> Martin Luther, *Against the Heavenly Prophets*, ed. Conrad Bergendorff, *Works* XL, 142.
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