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Wolfgang Vondey\*

# Corporate Embodiment as the Pedagogical Foundation of the Pentecostal Tradition

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**Abstract:** This article examines the pedagogical foundations of Pentecostal theology that are responsible for shaping and sustaining this theological tradition. The formative mechanisms of the Pentecostal tradition are found in the embodied logic of corporately embedded patterns of spiritual practices formed around the “full gospel” of Jesus Christ. The article traces how the Pentecostal tradition emerges from and yields practices associated with the apostolic experience of Jesus intensified with Pentecost by categorizing the dominant corporate forms of embodying the doctrines of salvation, sanctification, Spirit baptism, divine healing, and the expectation of God’s kingdom. This typology suggests that the corporate embodiment of faith identifies most closely the particular contribution of the Pentecostal movement to the Christian life.

**Zusammenfassung:** Dieser Beitrag untersucht die pädagogischen Grundlagen der pfingstkirchlichen Theologie, die primär für die Gestaltung und Aufrechterhaltung dieser theologischen Tradition verantwortlich sind. Die prägende Lebensweise der Pfingstkirchen entwickelte sich aus Formen einer verkörperten Logik, die in gemeinschaftlich erlebten spirituellen Praktiken gebildet wird und dogmatisch primär in einer Form des „vollen Evangeliums“ Ausdruck gefunden hat. Der Beitrag zeichnet nach, wie die pfingstkirchliche Tradition aus einer urchristlichen Erfahrung Jesu hervorgeht, die mit Pfingsten intensiviert wurde, und Ausdrucksformen hervorbringt, die als eine Verkörperung der Lehren der Erlösung, Heiligung, Geistestaufe, göttlichen Heilung und der Erwartung des Reiches Gottes kategorisiert werden können. Diese gemeinschaftliche Verkörperung des Glaubens kennzeichnet den besonderen Beitrag der Pfingstbewegung zur christlichen Grunderfahrung.

**Keywords:** Pentecostalism, tradition, corporate embodiment, theologizing, rituals, full gospel

**Schlagworte:** Pfingstbewegung, Tradition, gemeinschaftliche Verkörperung, Theologisieren, Rituale, volles Evangelium

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The shape of Pentecostal theology since the early twentieth century has seen dramatic changes in both Pentecostal self-understanding and its public and dogmatic articulation. Initial attempts to arrange the biblical texts in an order of doctrine were replaced by greater dependence on forms of Pentecostal spirituality and were shaped by dominant historical themes under the widening influence of philosophical and fundamentalist as well as shifting ecumenical and interdisciplinary concerns.<sup>1</sup> Yet, there still exists a widespread indifference to Pentecostal theology in the global Christian community, setting the movement principally in contrast to the established traditions and stereotyping Pentecostal theology often as no more than a sporadic assortment of supplementary doctrines derived from the spurious invention of beliefs and practices functioning primarily to preserve the longevity of a spiritual revival.<sup>2</sup> The gradual ecumenical reception of Pentecostalism has spent more time outlining *what* Pentecostals believe than identifying *how* Pentecostals arrive at and sustain their theology. The development of Pentecostal theology as an emerging tradition is fundamentally a pedagogical concern.

As a pedagogical enquiry, this essay examines the resources, methods, and intentions that together have formed, directed, and preserved the corporate identity of Pentecostal theology as a tradition. Attention is placed not primarily on the content of Pentecostal beliefs but on the mechanisms of theological formation, that is, on the corporate experiences and practices embodying the faith and spirituality of Pentecostal communities.<sup>3</sup> Put succinctly, as a theological tradition, Pentecostalism is interested in the materiality and physicality of spiritual practices and the sensory experiences which form their collective memory and identity.<sup>4</sup> However, Pentecostals have rarely articulated a conscious attention to their own corporate embodiment, and a shift from the exuberance of revival to the spiritual maturity of a renewal movement has emerged only gradually in the West. Nonetheless, in this study I argue that the formative mechanisms of the tradition are not arbitrary, but the embodied logic of Pentecostal theology follows corporately embedded patterns of spiritual practices formed around the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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1 Christopher A. Stephenson, *Types of Pentecostal Theology. Method, System, Spirit*. Oxford (Oxford University Press) 2013.

2 Wolfgang Vondey, *Pentecostalism as a Theological Tradition: An Ideological, Historical, and Institutional Critique*. In: *Pneuma* 42, no. 1 (2020), 521–535; Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition*. Sheffield (Sheffield Academic Press) 2000, 19–24.

3 R. J. Boone, *Community and Worship: The Key Components of Pentecostal Christian Formation*. In: *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 4 (1996), 129–142.

4 John Brahinsky, *Pentecostal Body Logic. Cultivating a Modern Sensorium*. In: *Cultural Anthropology* 27, no. 2 (2012), 215–238.

The aim of this article is to trace the dominant embodied practices and rituals among Pentecostals in their pedagogical function for their theological tradition. It has been suggested that the corporate embodiment of Pentecostals follows the so-called “full gospel” that proclaims Jesus as savior, sanctifier, Spirit baptizer, healer, and soon-coming king.<sup>5</sup> However, a narrative focus identifying the fivefold patterns of the full gospel as a liturgical hermeneutic for Pentecostal theology can mask the historical originality, creativity, and fragility of corporate embodied action. Pedagogically, it is more accurate to say that the Pentecostal tradition emerges from and yields embodied practices along the experience of Jesus that was intensified with Pentecost, so that the formative mechanisms of the Pentecostal tradition are more closely recognized as those of the apostolic community. The following typology should be read primarily for its intention to identify those mechanisms and seen only as indicative of the content of global Pentecostal thought and praxis.

## 1. Salvation: The Entrance to the Redeemed Life

The worship of Pentecostals typically echoes the testimony of being ‘saved, sanctified, filled with the Spirit, healed and delivered, and on the way to heaven.’<sup>6</sup> Signifying a Pentecostal *ordo salutis*, the individual and communal experience of salvation, conversion, or the new birth, marks the entrance to the Christian life and the starting point for Pentecostal theology. Salvation is embodied in various forms among Pentecostals in a foundational rite typically labeled the “altar call.”<sup>7</sup> The altar call and response represents the primary pedagogical space for the traditioning of Pentecostal soteriology, although there is no physical altar in the assembly, neither in the sacrificial sense of the biblical writings nor in the sacramental sense of the liturgical traditions. The call to the altar (typically tied to a catechetical or evangelistic message) is a pastoral invitation to an encounter with God summoning the congregation to personal and corporate responses including confession, repentance, prayer, worship and ministry.<sup>8</sup> The call of the pastor embodies the call of Jesus in the Gospels to leave behind the former life, to follow him, and to pursue the kingdom of God.

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5 Wolfgang Vondey, *The Full Gospel: A Liturgical Hermeneutic of Pentecost*. In: Wolfgang Vondey (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Pentecostal Theology*. New York (Routledge) 2020, 173–82. See Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*. Peabody (Hendrickson), 1987.

6 Dayton, *Theological Roots*, 173–179.

7 Daniel Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit. A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality*. Sheffield (Sheffield Academic Press) 1999, 165–70.

8 R. Alan Streett, *The Effective Invitation*. Old Tappan (Fleming H. Revell) 1984.

The altar call may be a general invitation or follow a specific emphasis or may not be voiced explicitly but erupt spontaneously through a tongue, prophecy, or revelation in the congregation.<sup>9</sup> The response to the call is visible and audible in various forms of physical and charismatic manifestations accompanying a gathering at the altar space. The most observable responses include a momentous procession by the entire congregation, the gradual reorientation of a majority, or a jumping and running of the aisle by various individuals to the designated place. Responses fluctuate from a sense of corporate unanimity to some lingering in the pews or falling on their knees in the aisle or stretching out their hands toward the perceived presence of God. The response to the altar call may be a singing of the congregation into the presence of God, a public manifestation of praise, or individual groaning in the spirit, the eruption of tongues and prophecies, prayers and songs, that in a manner of speaking bring the altar to the people.<sup>10</sup> The intensity of the response reflects a perception of the validity and urgency of the call of Jesus. The divine call to salvation is in this sense qualified and affirmed by the hearing and responding of the community. Yet, the response to the invitation manifests only the beginning of the corporate expectation of God's grace interrupting individual circumstances and destinies. Soteriological embodiment is perhaps best described as an "initial participation in salvation,"<sup>11</sup> an "entry level"<sup>12</sup> or "first work" of grace to be followed by others as possible manifestations of the redemptive acts of God.

## 2. Sanctification: Waiting for the Divine Encounter

With salvation marking the entrance to the Christian life, the pursuit of sanctification manifests a transitional rite of passage from the initial stage of departure of the believers from their familiar world to a new phase of waiting for the divine presence. The altar is recognized as a sanctified space for tarrying, "a temporary 'container' of sorts for the sacred, for the human to engage the sacred."<sup>13</sup> In its pedagogical function, sanctification is (literally and figuratively) an active remaining

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9 Daniel Tomberlin, *Pentecostal Sacraments. Encountering God at the Altar*. Cleveland (CPT Press) 2012, rev. ed., 74–181.

10 Wolfgang Vondey, *Soteriology at the Altar: Pentecostal Contributions to Salvation as Praxis*. In: *Transformation* 34, no. 1 (2016), 223–238.

11 Douglas Jacobsen, *Thinking in the Spirit. Theologies of the Early Pentecostal Movement*. Bloomington (Indiana University Press) 2003, 174–179.

12 Cheryl J. Sanders, *Saints in Exile. The Holiness-Pentecostal Experience in African American Religion and Culture*. New York (Oxford University Press) 1996, 58.

13 Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit*, 133.

at the altar and waiting for the encounter with Christ through an immersion into the sacred presence of the Holy Spirit. “Lingering” or “tarrying” and “laying” or “giving yourself”<sup>14</sup> at the altar are dominant theological metaphors for the corporate embodiment of sanctification in Pentecostal communities.

The waiting at the altar represents the continuing presence of the believer before God, a personal and communal commitment to both worship, in response to conversion, and expectation that the work of grace goes even further. The theology of sanctification embraces an active participation in the divine presence through the human waiting, lingering, travailing, prostrating, and submitting to the holiness of God in the expectation that Christ would impart his holiness through the Holy Spirit to the life of the believer.<sup>15</sup> In this sense, sanctification is not limited to an altar experience but aims at the transformation of the whole life of the believer. The corporate embodiment of sanctification recapitulates the apostles’ tarrying in the upper room at Pentecost, reiterating the church’s reception of the promise of the Holy Spirit through a seeking of and yielding to the presence of Jesus. The embodiment of sanctification is a form of participation in the humility and forgiveness of Jesus.<sup>16</sup> In this sense, the anticipation of the Holy Spirit is a waiting for both the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of holiness.<sup>17</sup> For some Pentecostals, this waiting evident in prayer, fasting, and seeking God requires consistent ascetical practices that form the indispensable conditions for lifelong spiritual growth.<sup>18</sup> Others view sanctification as the more dramatic expression of “an *active* waiting, anticipating the Spirit’s intervention and activity”<sup>19</sup> manifest during the community’s worship. Again others view these practices as contemplative modes of “deep receptivity and a sense of openness to God”<sup>20</sup> intensified during the altar call and response as a pattern for the sanctified life. Pentecostal tarrying services, soaking prayer, and other embodied activities of waiting mark the corporeality of the entire moral life. Sanctification functions as an umbrella term for a scope of embodied experiences associated with seeking the divine presence ranging from the assurance of for-

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14 David D. Daniels, “Until the Power of the Lord Comes Down:” African American Pentecostal Spirituality and Tarrying. In: Clive Erricker (ed.), *Contemporary Spiritualities. Social and Religious Contexts*. London (Continuum) 2001, 173–191.

15 Daniel Castelo, Tarrying on the Lord. Affections, Virtues, and Theological Ethics in Pentecostal Perspective. In: *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13, no. 1 (2004), 50–56.

16 Cheryl Bridges Johns, *Transformed by Grace. The Beauty of Personal Holiness*. In Kevin W. Mannoia/Don Thorsen (ed.), *Holiness Manifesto*. Grand Rapids (Eerdmans) 2008, 152–165.

17 Hollis Gause, *Living in the Spirit. The Way of Salvation*. Cleveland (Pathway Press) 1980, 59–72.

18 Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, 77.

19 Peter Neumann, *Pentecostal Experience. An Ecumenical Encounter*. Eugene (Pickwick) 2012, 115–116.

20 Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit*, 183–184.

givenness to immediate deliverance, gradual purification, dramatic transformation, and the experience of life-long renewal.<sup>21</sup> As a threshold practice, sanctification is not an isolated ritual but an underlying foundation and preparation for engaging further in the experience of salvation.

### 3. Spirit Baptism: The Reception of Divine Power

The baptism in the Holy Spirit occupies a central formative position because it manifests the reception of Jesus' promise of power (Acts 1.8) among Pentecostals today. The theology of Spirit baptism is therefore patterned after the apostolic experiences narrated in Luke-Acts.<sup>22</sup> Dominant forms of corporate embodiment in these accounts are praying through, preaching, and the laying on of hands. For Pentecostals, prayer is generally enacted by a person longing for fulfillment of a petition or a response to God in praise and gratitude. Praying *through*, as a continued embodiment of sanctification, is in this sense an intensified affection carried out as much in a mode of longing as in contemplation, penitence, ceremony, ecstasy, celebration or spontaneous improvisation.<sup>23</sup> The transformation from praying for the Spirit to praying in and with the Spirit manifests the Spirit baptism for Pentecostals most clearly in the disciples' speaking with other tongues. Glossolalia are a verbal and oral manifestation that the prayer for the Spirit has been answered by the giving of the Spirit and the transformation (sanctification and empowerment) of the recipient.

Preaching plays a particular role in the corporate anticipation of Spirit baptism.<sup>24</sup> In the altar call and response rite, the message often precedes the call to salvation and sanctification. In the larger picture of Pentecostal spiritual formation, the immediate goal of preaching is an appeal to the affections and directing of the community's desire to seek the gift of God's Spirit.<sup>25</sup> This appeal to the affections marks a transformational practice in which Jesus' original promise of the Spirit, reiterated by the preacher and received by the contemporary audience, shifts in

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21 Edmund J. Rybarczyk, *Beyond Salvation. Eastern Orthodoxy and Classical Pentecostalism on Becoming Like Christ*. Milton Keynes (Paternoster) 2004.

22 See Frank D. Macchia, *Baptized in the Spirit. A Global Pentecostal Theology*. Grand Rapids (Zondervan) 2009, 11–18.

23 Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit*, 179–189.

24 Donald R. Wheelock, *Spirit Baptism in American Pentecostal Thought*. PhD. Diss. (Emory University) 1983.

25 Ian Stackhouse, *Charismatic Utterance: Preaching as Prophecy*. In: Geoffrey Stevenson (ed.), *The Future of Preaching*. London (SCM Press) 2010, 42–46; H. W. Steinberg, *Anointed Preaching*. In: *Paraclete* 24 (1990), 6–9.

the actual reception of the Spirit to a proclamation by those who have received the Spirit in tongues and exaltation.<sup>26</sup> Preaching is thus seen as a charismatic embodiment of the affections involving the joining of Word and Spirit evidenced in the transformation of the practice itself: beginning with the proclamation of the divine promise through the anointing of the preacher, directed to a re-experiencing of the biblical events, shifting to the anointing of the audience, the reception of the Spirit, and the response of the community of faith.<sup>27</sup>

The laying on of hands, a longstanding Christian ritual, demands the most intimate form of embodiment. The actual imposition of hands is exceptionally concrete in its material, physical, physiological, spiritual, and relational dimensions and represents for many Pentecostals the most expressive and efficacious rite to confer the baptism in the Holy Spirit.<sup>28</sup> Echoing the events of Pentecost, laying hands on others represents the physical promise of Jesus that the Spirit has been poured out indiscriminately on all flesh (Acts 2.17) and can thus be received by all believers.<sup>29</sup> In the embodied act, the hand of the believer is the hand of Christ, who baptizes with the Holy Spirit, and the touch of the hand imparts the Spirit. This embodiment is often accompanied by prayer, prophecy, speaking in tongues, and the use of anointing oil.<sup>30</sup> Spirit baptism is a transformative experience in which the sanctified and empowered believer becomes an active agent of the Spirit so that the one who has come to the altar is now equipped to leave the altar.<sup>31</sup>

## 4. Divine Healing: Equipment for Service

The experience of being healed by God functions as a theological extension of the experience of salvation, a physical consequence of the atonement attributed to the healing power of Christ made available to the church with the outpouring of the

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26 Jerry Camery-Hogatt, *The Word of God from Living Voices. Orality and Literacy in the Pentecostal Tradition*. In: *Pneuma* 27, no. 2 (2005), 225–255.

27 Vincent Leoh, *A Pentecostal Preacher as an Empowered Witness*. In: *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 9, no. 1 (2006), 35–58; Ian Stackhouse, *Charismatic Utterance. Preaching as Prophecy*. In: Geoffrey Stevenson (ed.), *The Future of Preaching*. London (SCM Press) 2010, 42–46.

28 William K. Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain*. Carlisle (Paternoster) 2001, 101.

29 Rudolph D. González, *Laying-on of Hands in Luke and Acts. Theology, Ritual, and Interpretation*. PhD diss. (Baylor University) 1999.

30 Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals. The Charismatic Movement in the Churches*. Minneapolis (Augsburg) 1972, 330–341.

31 When the altar experience does not result in a clear reception of sanctification or Spirit baptism, Pentecostals often remain longer or return to the altar subsequently, so that it can be the summative experience of the encounter with God that shapes the spiritual journey.



Spirit. The corporate embodiment of divine healing is found most commonly in the vocal expression of faith, the laying on of hands, and the anointing with oil.<sup>32</sup> These practices are shaped by the biblical records of Jesus and the apostolic community and involve both the healer and those seeking to be healed. The utterance of faith is the most immediate expression of the desire for healing and at the most basic level functions as a vocalization of prayer extending from brief commands, simple requests, groaning or speaking in tongues, to testimonies, prolonged intercession, tarrying, fasting, and praying through at the altar.<sup>33</sup> The invocation of healing “in the name of Jesus” is a regular exclamation among Pentecostals.<sup>34</sup> It indicates confidence in the abiding presence of Jesus and the continuing and consistent availability of his healing power.<sup>35</sup> The vocalizing of this faith does not necessarily yield immediate results, and a longer process can involve repeated prayers.<sup>36</sup>

The corporal significance attached to the laying on of hands as both a means of sanctification and empowerment has led Pentecostals to extend its realm of influence also to the embodiment of healing. The immediacy of the touch itself is anticipated as the “remedy” where the Spirit of God engages the physical body of believers in the redemption and cleansing from sin and disease.<sup>37</sup> In the various contexts of global Pentecostalism, the imposition of hands ranges from short touches to long embraces to repeated and extended actions carried out by individuals to large groups, from healing evangelists and pastors to elders and entire congregations.<sup>38</sup>

The physical touch is regularly intensified through the use of oil applied to the skin, often directly on the place of illness as an exhibition of power and demonstra-

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32 See Candy Gunther Brown, *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*. Oxford (Oxford University Press) 2011.

33 Joseph W. Williams, *Spirit Cure. A History of Pentecostal Healing*. Oxford (Oxford University Press), 2013; Kimberly E. Alexander, *Pentecostal Healing. Models in Theology and Practice*. Blandford Forum (Deo) 2006.

34 Keith Warrington, *The Path to Wholeness. Beliefs and Practices Relating to Healing in Pentecostalism*. In: *Evangel* 21, no. 2 (2003), 45–49.

35 Keith Warrington, *Acts and the Healing Narratives: Why?* In: *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 14, no. 2 (2006), 189–217.

36 Eva Jansen/Claudia Lang, *Transforming the Self and Healing the Body through the Use of Testimonies in a Divine Retreat Center, Kerala*. In: *Journal of Religion and Health* 51, no. 2 (2012), 542–551.

37 Jonathan R. Baer, *Redeemed Bodies: The Functions of Divine Healing in Incipient Pentecostalism*. In: *Church History* 70, no. 4 (2001), 735–771.

38 See Pavel Hejzlar, *Two Paradigms for Divine Healing*. Fred F. Bosworth, Kenneth E. Hagin, Agnes Sanford, and Francis MacNutt in *Dialogue*. Leiden (Brill) 2010; Matthew Marostica, *Learning from the Master. Carlos Annacondia and the Standardization of Pentecostal Practices in and beyond Argentina*. In: Brown, *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*, 207–227.

tion of physical healing available to all Christians.<sup>39</sup> While performed in sometimes literal interpretation of biblical healing stories, Pentecostals have put few restrictions on developing practices of divine healing. The materiality of healing includes not just bodily cure but remedies for unemployment, family disputes, racism, marital discord, and other aspects of life in need of redemption.<sup>40</sup> The materiality and physicality of healing is sought as much for the human body as for the nation and the environment.<sup>41</sup> Divine healing thus functions as a soteriological metaphor for the restoration of the whole of life anticipating the renewal of all of creation.

## 5. Living for the Kingdom: The Goal of Salvation

Eschatology has manifested in Pentecostalism primarily as a form of apocalyptic urgency extending the experience and expectation of salvation to the redemption of the entire cosmos.<sup>42</sup> All Pentecostal corporate practices are therefore eschatological in principle whenever they are enacted as the mission of the church, intended as a sign and confirmation of the imminent arrival of the kingdom of God. At the altar space, the eschatological embodiment of salvation points to a reordering and redirecting of the church by the Spirit in radical discontinuity from the world.<sup>43</sup> The eschatological embodiment of sanctification manifests this radical break as a testimony to the holiness of the coming kingdom in the transformation from a life of the flesh to a life in the Holy Spirit. The eschatological embodiment of Spirit baptism underscores the urgency of equipping the Christian for spiritual battle with the enemies of God and as witness to the lost.<sup>44</sup> And the eschatological embod-

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39 J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, "Unction to Function": Reinventing the Oil of Influence in African Pentecostalism. In: *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13, no. 2 (2005), 231–256.

40 Katharine L. Wiegele, *Investing in Miracles. El Shaddai and the Transformation of Popular Catholicism in the Philippines*. Honolulu (University of Hawaii Press) 2005; R. Marie Griffith, *Female Suffering and Religious Devotion in American Pentecostalism*. In: Margaret Lamberts Bendroth/Virginia Lieson Brereton (eds.), *Women and Twentieth Century Protestantism*. Urbana (University of Illinois Press) 2002, 184–208.

41 Marthinus L. Daneel, *African Earthkeepers. Wholistic Interfaith Mission*. Maryknoll (Orbis) 2001; Jill M. Wightman, *Healing the Nation. Pentecostal Identity and Social Change in Bolivia*. In: Timothy J. Steigenga/Edward L. Cleary (eds), *Conversion of a Continent. Contemporary Religious Change in Latin America*. New Brunswick (Rutgers University Press) 2007, 239–255.

42 See D. William Faupel, *The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Thought* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press) 1996.

43 Steven J. Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality. A Passion for the Kingdom*. Sheffield (Sheffield Academic Press) 1993, 82.

44 *Ibid.*, 91–93.

iment of divine healing celebrates the profound experience of encounter with the coming King already manifested in the physical life of believers. The eschatological expectations intensified by the corporate practices reshape them into eschatological actions that serve as signs to the power and legitimacy of the embodied altar experiences. Pentecostal theology both emerges from and leads to this “eschatological intensification”<sup>45</sup> manifested by the apocalyptic urgency attributed to the gifts of the Spirit, above all the dramatic oral gifts of prophecy, speaking with tongues, words of knowledge and wisdom, teaching, exhortation, and interpretation of tongues, which are seen as the eschatological experiences of the apostolic church revived in the Pentecostal movement.

Although the apocalyptic urgency of a world facing judgment has formed the dominant pedagogical motivation for Pentecostal eschatology, expectations of the imminent fulfilment of the divine promises have shifted the general focus of Pentecostal theology from the church to the redemption of the world. Corporate embodiment now includes not only ecclesial rituals but also social commitments to educational programs, economic development, medical assistance, emergency services, mercy ministries, counseling services, policy change, and services in the arts.<sup>46</sup> Eschatological practices have redefined the corporate embodiment of Pentecostal theology in terms of creation care, political activism, racial reconciliation, concerns for pacifism and economic justice.<sup>47</sup> The eschatological identity of the church is therefore found in its evangelistic, socio-critical and charismatic movement towards the kingdom of God which invites the full range of corporate practices available to the church.

## 6. Conclusion

Attention to corporate embodiment reveals that the formative mechanisms of Pentecostalism as a theological tradition have been embedded in global spiritual practices formed around the apostolic experience of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Pentecostalism is a tradition passed on most visibly through affections, experiences, and rituals that in their pedagogical function highlight the theological significance

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45 *Ibid.*, 94.

46 Donald E. Miller/Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism. The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. Berkeley (University of California Press) 2007.

47 See Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Mission, Spirit and Eschatology. An Outline of a Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology of Mission*. In: *Mission Studies* 16, no. 1 (1999), 73–94; Calvin L. Smith, *Revolutionaries and Revivalists. Pentecostal Eschatology, Politics and the Nicaraguan Revolution*. In: *Pneuma* 30, no. 1 (2008), 55–82.

of salvation, sanctification, Spirit baptism, divine healing, and the coming kingdom. The doctrinal tradition among Pentecostals must be evaluated carefully with regard to its appropriate expression of this embodied tradition. A sustained critical engagement with Pentecostal theology that has eluded the wider Christian community is principally possible through the interpretation and assessment of how theological articulations reflect the embodied convictions. From the observation of how the corporate embodiment forms a corporate Pentecostal theology, we can understand not only what motivates Pentecostal doctrines but also assess and anticipate the development of the Pentecostal life as a global tradition of the Christian faith.