

Theological, Practical, and Missional Implications of Lukan Pneumatology

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Abstract

This article addresses the theological, practical, and missional implications of Lukan pneumatology within a local Kenya Assemblies of God (KAG) church. The author addresses the theological implications from the historical debate of hermeneutical approach looking at the pertinent issues including evidential tongues, and the doctrine of subsequent to and separate from conversion/initiation. He presents the Pentecostal responses and implications for future Pentecostal theology and missiology. He concludes with application to his ministry as a pastor and Bible School educator.

Introduction

I serve as pastor in a Kenya Assemblies of God (KAG) church that upholds the Pentecostal doctrines and practice. Her belief in the Holy Spirit is espoused in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.¹ This paper addresses the theological, practical, and missional implications of Lukan pneumatology within my ministry context.

Theological Implications of One's Hermeneutical Approach

Background and History of Theological and Hermeneutical Debate

Various movements in the 19th Century contributed to the formation of Pentecostalism.² Loder notes that “many of the concepts present in the Classical Pentecostal doctrine of Spirit-baptism were being used by others long before the movement came into existence”.³ It is

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remarkable that Pentecostalism “was birthed out of dynamic experience rather than a theological discovery”.⁴

Lee asserts that modern Pentecostal movement started with a “theological Bible study” and not an experience.⁵ Menzies and Menzies affirm that students who were studying the book of Acts concluded, “Baptism in the Holy Spirit is accompanied by speaking in tongues”.⁶ This same example was experienced in the Azusa Street Revival meetings carried out by William J. Seymour.⁷ This period marked an unprecedented move of the Spirit in the world.⁸ Anderson records that other parts of the world like Asia and Africa were also experiencing a move of the Spirit at about the same period.⁹

Holiness roots and Fundamentalism shaped the values of early Pentecostals.¹⁰ The former emphasized a new experience after salvation.¹¹ Fundamentalism, on the other hand rose to oppose Modernism that emphasized liberalism.¹² They regarded the Word of God as supreme and emphasized its historical accuracy.¹³ The two though viewed separately had an overlap since they both employed the language of baptism in the Holy Spirit.¹⁴

Menzies and Menzies conclude by saying that, “When the Pentecostal revival came, the Pentecostals borrowed heavily from both the Holiness and Fundamentalist camps, from both the methodologies and the theological values of these groups”.¹⁵ These early Pentecostals were characterized by “Baptism in the Holy Spirit, commitment to evangelism and missions, strong faith, expectancy, reality, enthusiastic worship, rich fellowship, [and] biblical authority”.¹⁶

The Pentecostal movement kept growing and soon budded into denominations like the Assemblies of God and Church of God.¹⁷ What started then has continued to grow exponentially and ranks as the fastest growing in Africa.¹⁸ Charismatic movements also arose as a contemporary tradition to Pentecostalism. These movements mostly function within the mainstream churches.¹⁹ Menzies and Menzies observe that Pentecostals focused on evangelization of the world while Charismatics regarded their role as “revitalizing influence within their own tradition”.²⁰

Menzies and Menzies record about the uncertain relationship between the Pentecostals and Evangelicals.²¹ Although they reach out to one another, there remains significant differences in the understanding of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. To the Pentecostals Jugaru stated, “Spiritual baptism is not the same with the experience of conversion, baptism in the Spirit may occur simultaneously or after conversion but is not identical with conversion”.²² In contrast, the

Evangelicals “consider that the baptism in the Holy Spirit happens in the moment of conversion, simultaneously with the new birth”.²³ This profound distinction between the two groups has been core to the hermeneutical debate.

Pertinent Issues in Addressing the Theological and Hermeneutical Debate

The key issues revolved around the infilling of the Holy Spirit as normative and as subsequent but separate from conversion/initiation. In my understanding the questions are: (1) Is the Holy Spirit for soteriological or empowerment purposes? and (2) does one have to speak in tongues after being filled with the Holy Spirit?

Miller defines subsequence or separability as “The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a universal Christian experience separate from and subsequent to (if not always chronologically, and least theologically) the new birth.”²⁴ On normative tongues, he regards it as “The experience of Spirit baptism is always accompanied by the ‘initial physical evidence’ of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.” He refers to the latter as “normative missional sign.”²⁵

How the issues are handled will determine the full application of Luke-Acts. Subsequently, the missional mandate of the church will be affected depending on the understanding of the importance of the Holy Spirit and his purpose. If Luke-Acts is viewed as a mere historical narrative, the church will miss Luke’s theological intention.²⁶ I contend that Luke wrote so that the believers can learn from history and apply his writings paradigmatically.²⁷ He gave a timeless pattern for the followers of Christ.

Nature and Content of the Hermeneutical Challenge

While the Pentecostal theologians taught about continuous manifestations of the Holy Spirit, the Fundamentalists argued that the era for miracles had ended. Warfield alleged that,

The power of working miracles was not extended beyond the disciples upon whom the apostles conferred it by the imposition of their hands. As the number of these disciples gradually diminished, the instances of the exercise of miraculous powers became continually less frequent and ceased entirely at the death of the last individual on whom the hands of the apostles had been laid.²⁸

Writing further on cessationism Lee asserted that some gifts like “speaking in tongues and prophecy were ceased and could not occur in the present time”.²⁹ I affirm Homoki’s view

which concludes that the charismata³⁰ offers great pneumatological richness and implication to the church.³¹ The Holy Spirit is still at work with no lesser power and ability.

Pentecostals derive these doctrines from the Book of Acts as captured in various outpourings of the Spirit.³² One of the opponents of doctrines of subsequence and normative tongues is Gordon Fee. He alleges that “there is in fact very little biblical support for the traditional Pentecostal position on this matter”.³³ He regards the classical interpretation as flawed with clear exegetical and hermeneutical weaknesses.³⁴ He asserts “speaking in tongues is normal but not normative”.³⁵ To him, both subsequence and normative tongues are a misrepresentation and misinterpretation of Scripture.

Another critic of the classical interpretation is James Dunn. In his study of Luke-Acts, he concludes that “Luke’s pneumatology does not support Pentecostalism’s key distinctive: its doctrine of subsequence”.³⁶ He further argues that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was initiatory in character and marked the dawn of a life in salvation.³⁷ It is difficult to comprehend how Dunn missed all the outpourings recorded by Luke in Acts.

Pentecostal Responses to the Hermeneutical Challenge

Various theologians have responded to the hermeneutical challenge posed by both internal and external forces. Miller recorded Roger Stronstad’s response to the hermeneutical challenge. Stronstad called “for the literary and theological homogeneity of Luke-Acts,” “for biblical interpreters to recognize the theological character of Luke’s historical method,” and [Luke’s] theological independence from Paul”.³⁸ He noted that Luke presents the Spirit’s work as vocational, charismatic, and prophetic.³⁹

Moreover, Stronstad argues, “Dunn’s interpretation of Luke has been highly colored by his understanding of Paul; and consequently, Dunn has misinterpreted the meaning of significant passages”.⁴⁰ He challenges Dunn by asserting that “Only those who resist the evidence can continue to interpret the gift of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts to be an initiation-conversion experience”.⁴¹ He stressed that transfer, sign, and vocational motifs shape Luke’s pneumatology.⁴²

Max Turner swayed between two positions. In 1980, he unintentionally agreed with Roger Stronstad’s view that Dunn used Pauline categories in his exegesis of Luke.⁴³ In 1996, Turner shifted closer to Dunn when he argued that the reception of the Spirit was

soteriological.⁴⁴ He says that “For Luke there is no sharp divide between soteriology and missiology: indeed, that is one of the cardinal contributions of his theology”.⁴⁵

Ervin Howard analyzes Dunn on three fronts: (1) His unfair and unbiased exegesis of the New Testament, (2) His lack of charismatic experience with the Spirit, and (3) His synthesis of biblical thought without first understanding the biblical author.⁴⁶ Atkinson notes that the first two are not convincing but the third view carries some weight.⁴⁷ Dunn did not understand the authorial intent of Luke. He read Luke through Pauline’s eyes.

David Petts disagrees with Dunn on his failure to connect the outpouring of the Spirit with mission’s work, his connection of reception of the Spirit with initiation/conversion, and his view that outpouring of the Spirit was “necessarily for contemporaneous faith”.⁴⁸ He acknowledged that it was possible to believe in Jesus Christ without first receiving the Holy Spirit.⁴⁹ The Cornelius Outpouring attests to his claim.

James Shelton’s response to Dunn is not significantly different from what others had to say.⁵⁰ “He agrees with Stronstad that Luke actually needs to be “contrasted” with Paul”.⁵¹ Their different approaches to pneumatology should be respected. He affirms that the main role of the Holy Spirit is to empower believers for witnessing.⁵² He played a significant role in the inception, implementation, and completion of God’s work.

To Shelton, Luke’s mention of tongues as initial evidence is not consistent, hence the Classical Pentecostals’ position of tongues is questionable.⁵³ He concludes that “Luke is only peripherally interested in tongues in relation to the fullness of the Holy Spirit; for him, inspired witness is the essential issue”.⁵⁴ This view seems to suggest that not all who are filled with the Spirit speak in tongues. Acts however, does not support his position. There are many instances in Acts where speaking in tongues was normative.

According to Robert Menzies, the Holy Spirit’s primary role was missional.⁵⁵ He makes a clear distinction between Pauline and Lukan pneumatologies.⁵⁶ He refutes the claims of Dunn that Jesus’ anointing at the Jordan was an initiation into new age, that the Holy Spirit embodied a new covenant, and that infilling with the Spirit refers to conversion experience.⁵⁷ He contrasts the view of Evangelicals that equate Spirit-baptism with conversion with that of Pentecostals that insist the Holy Spirit came to empower the believers for effective witness.⁵⁸

While referring to various passages in the book of Acts, Menzies lays down a strong case against Dunn’s assertions. He says that the Samaritan and Ephesian Outpourings in Acts 8:4–17

and 19:1–7 show that they received the Holy Spirit after conversion.⁵⁹ They did not receive the Holy Spirit so that they could be converted. Acts 2:38–39 and Acts 10:44–48 confirm further that the Holy Spirit came upon the believers after salvation.⁶⁰ Luke’s pneumatology emphasizes the coming of the Spirit on converted believers.

Menzies and Menzies further argue that the Holy Spirit’s baptism is not merely for the well-being of the believers but for their empowerment to witness.⁶¹ “When the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit is understood in soteriological terms, Luke’s missiological focus and our expectation of it is lost.”⁶² The gift of the Holy Spirit is to witness and draw people to faith in Christ Jesus.

In his responses, Gordon L. Anderson calls for a proper Pentecostal hermeneutic. He defines this process as one that constitutes (1) “an exegetical method,” (2) role of the Holy Spirit (the pneumatic),” (3) “genre,” (4) “personal experience,” (5) “historical experience,” and (6) “theological presuppositions (doctrinal acceptance)”.⁶³ He elevates both the personal and historical experiences as significant aspects of Pentecostal hermeneutics.” Unlike evangelicals who place a priority on didactic portions, Anderson argues that both narrative and didactic passages are fit for the theological foundation.

The Holy Spirit plays a significant role in the illumination, interpretation, and proclamation of the Scriptures.⁶⁴ He says,

In general, it seems Pentecostals have developed a method of interpretation that incorporates some of the legitimate concerns of postmodern literary criticism, including the new hermeneutic and reader centered literary criticism, while retaining a high commitment to the truth and authority of the Bible and its relevance to the church today.⁶⁵

The Pentecostals have nothing to be ashamed of in the way they interpret Scripture. To the benefit of the body of Christ, Pentecostals have refused to accept a “reductionist hermeneutic which prioritizes grammatico-historical exegesis to the detriment of immediate Spirit-enabled awareness of meaning”.⁶⁶

Implications for Future Pentecostal Theology

Although Lukan and Pauline pneumatologies have their distinctiveness, they “should be viewed as complementary rather than competitive”.⁶⁷ The latter applies his writings broadly to the Christian life while the former focuses more on empowerment for missional work.⁶⁸ The two should not be read dichotomously since the Holy Spirit inspired both writers and guided them to

dwell on certain aspects. Moreover, Luke wrote Luke-Acts with historical, theological, evangelistic, pastoral, and apologetic intents.⁶⁹

Pentecostals should continue seeking the baptism of the Holy Spirit. At conversion, the Holy Spirit works in the heart of the new believer, but more infilling is needed for witnessing.⁷⁰ The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs after the soteriological experience. A “believer becomes a disciple of Christ and then, in a separate experience as explicated in the book of Acts, receives the fullness of the Spirit in a baptism of fire and power”.⁷¹ This position should not be compromised.

According to Menzies and Menzies, the eminence given to the didactic portions reduce the narratives especially the Gospels and Acts into mere appendages.⁷² This claim takes away the intent of narrative portions. The manifestation of the Spirit did not cease “with the close of the apostolic era”.⁷³ Nel concludes that “The same God who spoke and acted in salvation-history events and in the inspiration of Scriptures speaks and acts today”.⁷⁴ Narrative theology has same value as that derived from didactic passages.

The Pentecostals should demonstrate and proclaim that the Holy Spirit’s baptism is to empower believers to be witnesses. His power is an absolute necessity for the fulfillment of God’s mission.⁷⁵ Some Pentecostals stand accused of vibrancy and speaking in tongues without any form of witnessing. To others, Spirit baptism is sought as a license to prosperity.⁷⁶ Unfortunately, the Pentecostals and Charismatics are key adherents and propagators of this gospel.⁷⁷ They have failed to understand why Jesus fulfilled his promise of sending the Holy Spirit.

The church should acknowledge that the gift of tongues is tied to missional witness.⁷⁸ It is not given for a show but is an indication of the Spirit’s power. Miller affirms that “Tongues are necessary, not simply because they evidence one’s reception of the Spirit, but because they are part and parcel of the empowering process itself”.⁷⁹ Believers should seek initial baptism and continuous infilling of the Holy Spirit. I agree with Hartwick who says, “Considering the biblical, doctrinal, and historical evidence, all believers should be earnestly seeking to be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance”.⁸⁰

Practical and Missiological Implications of One's Interpretation of Lukan Pneumatology

Impact on One's Theology of Mission

Miller affirms that Luke's primary intent in writing Acts was prophetic and missiological.⁸¹ He was a theologian in his own right and not just a historian only interested in a narration.⁸² Luke emphasized the role of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts more than the other Gospel writers did.⁸³

The Holy Spirit was given as fulfillment of the promise in Acts 1:8. Miller regards Acts 1:8 as the interpretive key of the book of Acts since it lays out the empowerment-witness motif.⁸⁴ Menzies and Menzies also noted that the purpose of the "Pentecostal gift is to empower believers to become effective witnesses".⁸⁵ Shelton collaborates this view when he says, "Luke's major emphasis is the Holy Spirit's inspiring human beings to witness concerning Jesus".⁸⁶ How believers understand Luke's authorial intent will impact their theology of mission. To embrace his theology is to embrace missions.

It would be difficult to fulfill the *missio Dei* without the Holy Spirit. Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:8 describes the geographical movement of the witnesses and the necessary power to accomplish the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16–20). The disciples absolutely needed the pneumatic empowerment.⁸⁷ Without the Holy Spirit, the current Christians' mission work would be a failure.

York says that "Spirit-empowered Christian witness may be the best recommendation of Pentecostal experience to watching Christians of Pentecostal tradition".⁸⁸ "The Holy Spirit is the source of missionary empowering."⁸⁹ This will call for humility in the Pentecostals as they acknowledge God's power at work in them.

The outpourings recorded in the book of Acts resulted in powerful witness. Bruce agrees that "the expansion of the gospel was marked by the spontaneous outpouring of the Spirit, as spontaneous as his initial outpouring on the Day of Pentecost".⁹⁰ For effective mission work, the Christians must seek a continuous infilling. A one-time baptism is not sufficient to sustain the mission of God. Acts 4:31 is illustrative of the need for regular infilling.

From this perspective, mission work faces opposition from both spiritual and worldly forces. To penetrate and overcome these forces, the believers should be filled with the Holy Spirit. This perspective will embolden them as it happened in Acts 4:31. Koech wraps this up by

saying, “The church in our contemporary situation needs the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in order to fulfill her prophetic role as well as the liberation function in all respects”.⁹¹

The Doctrines of Subsequence and Evidential Tongues in Light of Church’s Mission

Classical Pentecostals acknowledge and subscribe to the doctrines of subsequence and evidential tongues. It was the recorded pattern in the book of Acts where believers received the baptism of the Holy Spirit after converting to faith in Jesus Christ. According to Torrey,

The Baptism with the Holy Spirit is an operation of the Holy Spirit distinct from and subsequent and additional to his regenerating work. A man may be regenerated by the Holy Spirit and still not be baptized with the Holy Spirit. In regeneration, there is an impartation of life, and the one who receives it is saved; in the Baptism with the Holy Spirit there is an impartation of power and the one who receives it is fitted for service.⁹²

Speaking in tongues is a sign to the church that they are ministering under the Spirit’s power. It helps the new believers know that the Holy Spirit is indeed at work.

In his writing, Luke implies that the evidential speaking in tongues was normative and a reminder that the church “is a prophetic community called and empowered to bear witness to the world.”⁹³ Initially, the believers thought the gift of tongues was to enable them witness in unlearned foreign languages.⁹⁴ McGee points out that “When the failure of tongues as a missio-linguistic tool became apparent, they retained their confidence in praying in tongues as the source of power, an approach both biblical and already familiar to them”.⁹⁵ Tongues have a key role in the mission work.

Miller regards speaking in tongues as a missional sign. He says they signify God’s empowerment, the identity of believers as prophetic community, and God’s presence in His people.⁹⁶ This point means that believers who speak in tongues are encouraged to reach out since the power to witness is already in them.

Effects of Watering Down of the Doctrines of Subsequence and Evidential Tongues

Watering down the doctrines of subsequence/separability and initial evidence would have a significant effect on how the church approaches its missionary task. Unlike the Evangelicals, the Pentecostals hold that these doctrines are distinct from conversion to the faith. The Holy Spirit is given to empower believers in carrying out *missio Dei* (Acts 1:8).

Menzies and Menzies assert that, “When the Pentecostal gift is confused with conversion, the missiological focus is lost. Pentecostalism then becomes empty with no power for mission.⁹⁷ Christians who no longer seek to be filled will result in powerless churches and fruitless mission work. Miller attests that Spirit baptism “equips the Christian worker for greater effectiveness in ministry”.⁹⁸ Without the Holy Spirit, few churches will be planted and those that might will lack the requisite power to grow, disciple others, and witness effectively.

While writing on Pentecostal missions, York noted that the Holy Spirit empowers to witness, draws sinners to Christ, moves believers into compassionate service, shows God’s involvement in winning souls, and demonstrates God’s supremacy.⁹⁹ But all these features will be undermined greatly if the Pentecostal church abandons the doctrines of subsequence and evidential tongues. There is a “correlation between speaking in tongues and the resulting experience of Christian witness, especially among those of diverse ethnicity and language”.¹⁰⁰ The church needs to uphold the doctrines in all her mission endeavors.

Miller observes that speaking in tongues facilitates inner transformation, results in Spirit-inspired speech (prophecy), and praise and worship to God.¹⁰¹ The church stands to lose if the doctrines are abandoned. There is a danger of having churches that have numerical growth but have stagnated in spiritual growth. They would be spiritual infants (1 Cor. 3:1) tossed around by “every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14).

“Tongues then emerge as an integral part of the empowering process”¹⁰² and thus becomes critical in the personal life of the believer. The Holy Spirit gives insight and illuminates the readers to understand and apply the Word of God. In tough times, they are empowered to speak boldly and withstand persecution. Faith in Christ, then becomes experiential and relevant to the believers.¹⁰³

Classical Pentecostals subscribe to the belief that baptism in the Holy Spirit is the gateway to receive and manifest the gifts of the Spirit.¹⁰⁴ Although, those not yet filled can manifest the gifts of the Spirit, baptism with the Holy Spirit catapults their effectiveness. This implies that watering down subsequence and normative tongues will negatively affect the manifestation of spiritual gifts in the church.

Role of Spiritual Gifts in Missions

Miller says, “Spiritual gifts are supernatural anointings given through Spirit-filled believers by the Holy Spirit to accomplish the will of the Father”.¹⁰⁵ Their origin is God, are given through grace, released through the Holy Spirit, and given to accomplish God’s will.¹⁰⁶ They can also be defined as “any endowment that comes from God”¹⁰⁷ or spiritual attributes given to believers for use in the church.¹⁰⁸

Different authors use different categorizations of the spiritual gifts. Miller groups them into revelatory, prophetic and power gifts as depicted in Acts.¹⁰⁹ Those in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10 can also be grouped into “teaching and preaching gifts, ministry gifts, and worship gifts”.¹¹⁰ Regarding the gifts, Menzies and Menzies remark that they are guided by the principles of grace, edification, and participation.¹¹¹ They are free gifts from God to all and for all. In acknowledging their role in missions, Miller recommends that the gifts should be read within the context of evangelism and missions.¹¹²

Neglecting spiritual gifts has significant implications on the church’s evangelistic mandate.¹¹³ The ability to overcome evil forces, witness, and prophecy will be greatly hampered. This point then means that the edification of the believers and evangelism of the lost will be ineffective. To mature the Christians for ministry, the spiritual gifts should be manifested in the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11–13).

Throughout Acts, the baptism of the Spirit resulted in inspired speech with many coming to the Lord. 1 Corinthians 12:10 refers to this gift of prophecy. Missionaries need this gift so that they can ably minister the Word of God. What they proclaim must be inspired of the Spirit. The gift of prophecy strengthens, encourages, and comforts the church (1 Cor. 14:3).

The gift of speaking in tongues and interpretation reveals the mysteries of God to the unbelievers. In a congregation, they are more effective when working together so that the listeners can understand what God is saying. At a personal level, speaking in tongues edifies the believer (1 Cor. 14:4). With so many discouragements and opposition in the mission field, speaking in tongues helps to build the inner man.

Signs and wonders help the ministers demonstrate that God is at work. When Paul rebuked Elymas in Acts 13:11, he became blind, and the proconsul believed in Jesus. Miracles of

whatever nature have their place in the mission field. They help solidify the proclaimed word. These gifts are significant for church planting and growth.¹¹⁴

When Paul was in Philippi (Acts 16:16–34), he demonstrated the gift of distinguishing between spirits when he confronted the divination spirit in the slave girl. By casting out the evil spirit, the girl was delivered. Although the immediate result was imprisonment, verse 34 records that the jailer and his entire family believed in Jesus. Mission work involves spiritual warfare, and the gift of discernment helps the missionaries distinguish between spirits.

Mission work depends on faithful givers. Romans 12:8 categorizes giving as a spiritual gift. That is the gift that was at work in the Macedonian churches with how 2 Corinthians 8:1–7 show what Paul achieved in his missionary work. This spiritual gift has a role in the mission field. Missionaries cry for such people to rise up and be faithful in exercising their spiritual gifts.

The mission field can be tough and rough. With the best of intentions, missionaries face challenges that might make them reconsider their commitment. They need someone with the gift of encouraging (Rom. 12:8) to hold their hands. Barnabas served this purpose in Paul's life (Acts 13, 14). He defended him when the other apostles could not trust his conversion (Acts 9:27). A call, visit, or prayer will encourage the missionaries to remain strong.

Implications on Pentecostal Missions

Acts 1:8 records that the Holy Spirit was given to empower the disciples for witnessing. The fulfillment of that promise in Acts 2:4 resulted in great witnessing. Thereafter, Luke records many instances where infilling of the Spirit resulted in inspired speeches and proclamations. Pentecostal missions will only be "Pentecostal" if carried out in the Spirit's power. The ministers must seek and be filled with the Holy Spirit so that they can demonstrate the Spirit's power (1 Cor. 2:1–5).

Since God gives His gifts to everyone, the Pentecostal missionaries should not shy away from demonstrating their spiritual gifts. The gifts are for edifying others and are handy in evangelism. Pentecostal missionaries are not only filled with the Spirit but also demonstrate their gifts because they are full of the Spirit. Additionally, their transformed lives will validate their message of Jesus. The fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22) will attract others to Jesus Christ.

By walking in the Spirit and witnessing under his power, the Pentecostal missionaries can expect the church to grow. Spirit-empowered witnessing is the only model that can cause

exponential growth. The new believers must be taught about the Holy Spirit, be filled with the Spirit, and sent out to witness.

Application to my Present Ministry Context

International Christian Center (ICC) where I serve as pastor is strategically located in the city of Nairobi. The mission field is right before her eyes since “The city population is projected to hit 5 million people in 2020 and 6 million people in 2025”.¹¹⁵ Considering that majority of the people are young, the mission field of ICC is ripe and ready for harvest.¹¹⁶ The opportunity to evangelise the city is within her reach.

Parsitau and Mwaura note that young people are attracted to Pentecostal churches in the cities.¹¹⁷ There is need to engage in programs that deliberately witness to them and take advantage of this disposition. Effective urban ministry would require ICC to understand the dynamics of urban environment.¹¹⁸ Praying in the Spirit for God’s guidance is critical so that effective Spirit-inspired witnessing can happen.

Another reason why ICC is on vantage ground is the growth of the church in the Global South. There has been an explosion of church growth especially in the Pentecostal movement.¹¹⁹ As a Pentecostal church, ICC should create networks with other Pentecostal churches in Africa. This networking can create missionary exchange programs that would result in intercultural exposure. As compiled by Dempster, Klaus, and Petersen, “Pentecostal and charismatic leaders need to seek ways to cooperate in ministry across ecclesiastical, ethnic, and racial boundaries.¹²⁰ Partnership is key in accelerating the church growth.

The congregation of ICC is well versed in media and communication. York says that “The computer age has generated an electronic media revolution”.¹²¹ The young people especially are tech savvy. ICC can use their connectedness to witness to them. Most of them have social media accounts and by befriending them, the church can create inroads into their lives. Bible studies can also be conducted online for them. Later, these people can be invited into the church where they will be prayed for to receive the Holy Spirit.

As an educator at KAG EAST University, there is the need to analyze literature in order to then teach pneumatology effectively. To allay the challenge posed by Evangelicals, more resources by Pentecostal theologians should line up the bookshelves. Menzies and Menzies observe that in the quest for acceptance by the Evangelicals,

[The] Pentecostals largely abdicated their theological agenda to Evangelical academic leadership. Pentecostal Bible Schools employed Evangelical textbooks wholesale. ...Further, some Pentecostal students who were immersed in Evangelical textbooks began to question the premises of Pentecostal theology.¹²²

This is a wakeup call to Pentecostal theologians. They must demystify the traditional view that Classical Pentecostalism is just about spiritual manifestations and is anti-intellectual.¹²³ The library at the KAG EAST University should be furnished with resources that propagate Pentecostal theology.

KAG EAST University as a Pentecostal institution should remain true to Classical Pentecostalism. Its mission of being a “Pentecostal training center” must be safeguarded and unashamedly propagated.¹²⁴ In such a college, Miller posits that,

- (1) Teachers should “systematically, convincingly, and abundantly [teach] about the Holy Spirit”.¹²⁵
- (2) Administrators must critically examine the curricula and steer it towards a strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit and Pentecostalism.¹²⁶
- (3) A “well-considered contemporary Pentecostal model for the training Spirit-filled pastors and church leaders” should be developed.¹²⁷
- (4) “The importance of the spiritual formation” in the student’s life should be emphasized.¹²⁸
- (5) Teachings about the Holy Spirit should be prioritized.¹²⁹

There has been overdependence on materials developed by the Evangelicals. The lecturers at KAG EAST University should revise the programs and ensure that Pentecostalism is emphasized at all levels. The lecturers should also demonstrate Pentecostalism in their lives and ministry.

A big threat facing KAG EAST University is the recent change from being a Bible Seminary into a chartered private university. Whereas in the past it enrolled Christian students to take Bible and Theology courses, the doors are now open to everyone. Secular courses have been added and there is a perceived risk of losing focus since some of the students will come strictly to learn and not to attain ministerial skills. On the other hand, it is an opportunity for the lecturers to demonstrate the Spirit’s power and draw them to Christ. The Chapel programming has to be designed in such a manner that it challenges students from the diverse faiths and backgrounds to embrace the lordship and salvation of Jesus Christ.

The need for a fresh move of the Spirit in life of every believer at ICC cannot be overemphasized. Hartwick asserts that, “Considering the biblical, doctrinal, and historical evidence, all believers should be earnestly seeking to be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in tongues as the Spirit gives utterance”.¹³⁰ In my church, I will continue teaching the doctrines of subsequence and evidential tongues to all new believers coupled with opportunities to be filled with the Spirit. Closely tied to this practice will be an encouragement to pray in tongues during corporate and personal prayer times.

I will continue to teach on the significance of the Holy Spirit. The power to witness and win the world for Jesus is available. Menzies and Menzies conclude that “Luke encourages post-Pentecostal disciples to ask for the gift of the Spirit, which, for Luke meant open access to the divine Spirit—the source of power that would enable them to be effective witnesses for Christ (Luke 12:12; Acts 1:8)”.¹³¹ If the church will have any impact in the world, she has to seek the initial baptism and infilling of the Holy Spirit in all the congregants. The Holy Spirit is missional.

The congregants will be encouraged to pray for boldness and share the faith with their families, workmates, and neighbors. Those who need help will be given evangelism classes to equip them on how to share the faith. Through the existing small groups, evangelism events will be organized in the neighborhoods. ICC will do well to adopt “organic evangelism”.¹³² This style seeks to minister to the whole person and touch “the deepest religious longings of the heart”.¹³³

Kenya hosts many refugees from the neighboring countries especially Somali and Sudan. There are also many labor immigrants from China as well as expatriates working for international organizations like the United Nations and NGOs. To reach these people groups, the church needs Spirit-inspired strategies. The small groups in their neighborhoods should be encouraged to invite them into their homes so that they can share the Word with them. ICC can adopt the concept of “Diaspora Missions” where the people not only evangelize to refugees but also compassionately reach out to them.¹³⁴ Befriending and helping them to assimilate culturally will be essential. They should view them as lost people who need to know Christ rather than “inconveniences” taking over their neighborhoods.

For the expatriates, there is the need to develop programs that will minister to their needs. Some of them come from post-Christian nations that require different methods of ministry for outreach evangelism. The locals who work with them will be encouraged to reach and invite

them to church or church-related events. ICC can have cross-cultural training that helps to interact and integrate the foreigners into the church life. Building friendships will help thaw the uncertainties or misconceptions that they might have about the local people or the church.

Time is ripe for the church to train, send, and support missionaries. These actions have been happening with some missionaries receiving financial support. Since my local church has the capacity to train and send, I will encourage an initiation of a program where potential missionaries can be trained on foreign missions and church planting. The congregants will be requested to adopt and support the missionaries while the church leadership deploys and mentors them.

ICC can also contribute to the missionary growth by raising tentmakers. As an urban church with college-educated congregation, there are a number of people who relocate to other nations on job assignments. These emigrants can be trained as tentmakers so that they can represent Christ wherever they go.¹³⁵ Such missionaries would penetrate the 10/40 Window¹³⁶ and post-Christian Western nations among other regions that closed to the gospel. Pentecostal businesspersons need to be encouraged to incorporate witnessing as they engage with both the local and international market.¹³⁷ Their business acumen is an opportunity to witness.

In training missionaries, it will be vital to speak about persecution. Spiritual warfare is at the core of mission work. Pentecostals know that their weapons are powerful enough to bring down strongholds (2 Cor. 10:5). However, boldness has gradually dwindled, and many are scared to venture out. With so many Christians preoccupied with safety and comfort, there is need to teach about the Spirit's protection when challenges arise. They should be encouraged that the Holy Spirit will be with them in the mission field (Luke 12:12). Those who remain in the church should pray that the Lord increases his harvest and sends out more laborers (Luke 10:2).

The local church where I serve faces two main challenges in establishing her Pentecostalism. These are African Traditional Religions (ATR) and prosperity gospel. For the former, some people including Christian believers infuse God's Word with animistic practices that put off those who would desire the Holy Spirit. For the latter, they teach that the Holy Spirit is a means to self-gratification and quick riches. The congregants end up disillusioned and confused about the Holy Spirit.

To counter these issues, the pastors should pray for the gift of discernment. This spiritual gift will help them differentiate truth from error as well as real workings of the Lord from

counterfeit miracles. Their preaching shall be inspired of the Holy Spirit that seeks to draw people into intimacy with Christ instead of promising worldly prosperity.

Finally, the local church should adopt the goal of seeing “10 million new believers baptized in the Holy Spirit and mobilized as Spirit-empowered witnesses”.¹³⁸ As part of the wider family of Assemblies of God, the church can factor this in her planning. The senior pastor can break down the goal and generate targets for the local church. Furthermore, to spiritually empower the congregants the local church should join hands with other churches and invite Acts in Africa Initiative for revival and refilling sessions.¹³⁹ This point will result in empowered witnesses.

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