

The Spirit of the Lord or the Lord of the Spirit: European Pentecostal Theological Implications Seen Through Luke's Theological Scheme of the Jordan Baptism Event

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Introduction

The biblical concept of the role of the Holy Spirit upon the life and ministry of Jesus has been extensively discussed under the terms "Pneumatological Christology" or "Spirit Christology." Even though a consensus on the subject and its implications has not been reached, the general presentation in which these two terms are used interchangeably would examine the facts that "the Holy Spirit bears witness to Christ" and that the third person of the holy Trinity has a role in the work of salvation.¹ However, these two aspects would not fully unfold the field of Pneumatological Christology if we do not take into consideration the third important element, namely that "who Jesus Christ is and the salvation that he brings proceeds from a basic foundational pneumatological orientation."² Ralph Del Colle calls it "a movement from the recognition of Christ as 'baptizer' in the Spirit to Christ as 'bearer' of the Spirit."³ Looking at the specific Spirit Christology contained in Luke, Eduard Schweizer formulates this pneumatological orientation in a different way. He considers Jesus as having the abiding fullness of the Spirit and being "the subject of an action in the Holy Spirit" or being

"led in the Spirit" and not necessarily led by the Spirit. Thus, he sees Jesus as "the Lord of the *pneuma*" and His possession of the Spirit in fullness is further presented by Luke in a different light by introducing the risen Lord as "the One who dispenses the Spirit to the community."⁴

This kind of theological discussion resembles the pre-Chalcedonian dialog and represents

the initial Spirit-Christologies of the apostolic and sub-apostolic fathers ... [which] eventually gave way to the more dominant *logos*/Son Christologies which were able to counter the threats of Christological heresy and allow the assimilation of dogmatic definition into Hellenistic culture (without reduction to its categories) that the ecumenical councils in part represent. With the exception of the psilanthropic⁵ Ebionite Christology, which could be classified as Spirit Christology, the pneumatic dimension was utilized in rather flexible fashion to identify the divine element in the incarnation.⁶

The goal of the renewed discussion of Spirit Christology is not to revise the classical Trinitarian Christologies, as probably some would suggest, but rather to complement them and provide insight that would be quite useful not only for the in-depth evaluation of the current state of Christology, but also for the exploration of the principle tenets of Pentecostal theology. Harold Hunter defined it as

“Pneumatic Logos Christology”⁷ that “makes impossible a Christology that is not wholly theocentric and pneumatological, and a pneumatology which is not genuinely Christocentric and theocentric.”⁸ This is especially important knowing that “pneumatology provides a vital entrance into theology—a belief that has been lived since the start of the [Pentecostal] movement.”⁹

The three principal events in the biblical record of Jesus emphasize the role of the Spirit for their accomplishment. His birth was of pneumatological character because, as Matthew writes, “that which is conceived in her [Mary] is of the Holy Spirit” (1:20).¹⁰ Though in the Gospels’ narratives there is no explicit statement, the presence of the Spirit is also implied at Jesus’ sacrificial death, as revealed by Hebrews 9:14, “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” As to His resurrection, the Apostle Paul says, “Jesus was declared ‘to be’ the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4). It is God’s Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, who also dwells in us (Rom. 8:11).

The Essence of the Christological Debate

While Pentecostals generally agree with this pneumatological perception of Jesus’ birth, death, and resurrection, which could define the whole “Christ event as thoroughly pneumatological in itself,”¹¹ the differences emerge in the interpretation of how much did Jesus depend on the Spirit in performing His Messianic ministry. A good introduction to this subject is the statement by David Petts:

Even though Jesus’ birth was the result of the supernatural operation of God the Holy Spirit, this alone was not enough to equip him for the ministry for which God had sent him. Even he needed to receive the Spirit’s power.¹²

Based on Luke’s record of Jesus’ baptism and beginning of ministry defined by key phrases of pneumatological essence, like, “the Holy Spirit descended on him” (Luke 3:22), “Jesus returned full of the Spirit,” “Jesus was led by the Spirit” (Luke 4:1), “Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14), and “the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him” (Luke 4:18), Petts confirms that “Jesus was constantly dependent on the Spirit.”¹³

While this view may look like a standard interpretation, it needs some specificity due to the fact that it entails certain aspects that need further elaboration. Collin Dye, who, as pastor of the largest Pentecostal Church in Western Europe, influences the theological understanding of many classical Pentecostals in Great Britain and Europe, attempted a more detailed elaboration. His reflections on the degree of Jesus’ dependence on the Spirit serve as foundational for the theological discussion on this topic led by Keith Warrington under the insightful title, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter*. According to Dye, “Because of his anointing with the Holy Spirit, Jesus was enabled to do that which—as a man—he had previously been unable to do.”¹⁴ He acknowledged that there was no sin in Jesus’ life preceding the recorded historical anointing with the Holy Spirit, but added to this statement that, “with rare exception nobody noticed any power or authority.”¹⁵ This statement is followed by a more debatable thought:

As God, Jesus was able to ... heal the sick ... but he had chosen not to “use” his divinity, and he also made it clear that—in his humanity—he was utterly powerless. The miraculous did not occur because Jesus was God, but because he was filled with the Spirit without measure and always moved in perfect harmony with Father.¹⁶

Obviously, Dye considers Jesus’ baptism event as pivotal for the beginning of the supernatural aspect of His ministry and life. Thus, Jesus’ baptism is given a particular meaning that directly points to His personality and identity—helpless and

powerless, but sinless man before the Spirit anointing and someone with supernatural abilities helped by the ever-present Spirit following the baptism.

Jesus' Anointing Seen Through Functional Christology: Support and Objections

Based only on Jesus' baptism event, it is difficult to make conclusions about Jesus' own understanding in terms of the Holy Spirit's participation in His ministry. The deductions could be made on the grounds of Jesus' statements made later while exercising the ministry. They could be derived from two biblical facts: "Jesus' explanation for his success as an exorcist, and Jesus' consciousness of inspiration."¹⁷ Jesus' self-understanding of His successful exorcism in Matthew 12:28, "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you,"¹⁸ implied awareness that He did this through "the power of the end-time rule of God," linking "the presence of the kingdom" with "the effective power of the Spirit" upon Him. This unique eschatological empowering by the Spirit to destroy the works of the devil had life-and-death significance for Jesus that anyone who denies it (it was defined as "blasphemy against the Spirit," Matt. 12:31) "was to put oneself beyond forgiveness."¹⁹

His awareness of having the eschatological prophet identity in whom prophecies like Deuteronomy 18:15, 18²⁰ and Isaiah 61:1²¹ have been fulfilled (Luke 4:21),²² implies how conscious Jesus was of the inspiration behind His proclamation of the gospel. It was a "Spirit-anointed proclamation" done among the religious society in which the Holy Spirit was considered as "the Spirit of prophecy," "withdrawn from Israel since Malachi" and expected "to be given again only in the last days," according to the teaching of the rabbis in the Judaism of Jesus' time.²³

These features of pneumatic self-awareness, demonstrated or confirmed orally by Jesus, define His relationship with the Spirit, which following

Dye's reflection should be considered as non-existent before, having their beginning at the baptism event. The interpretation of empowerment of Jesus with the Holy Spirit to be able to do the supernatural seems to fit the reasoning behind the functional Christology approach according to which it is the work of Christ that primarily reveals who Christ is.²⁴ In our case, it is the miraculous that gains the priority over the ontological. Staying away from the "hypostatic union" discussion, Dye's interpretation of Jesus' baptism event leads to the conclusion that it was at this event that the inherent deity of the Son of God, unrevealed thus far, was coupled with the coming of the Spirit upon His humanity. This enabled Him to perform supernatural acts in the Messianic ministry lying ahead.

Dye's view is in line with some reflections expressed much earlier by other European Evangelical theologians, like Oscar Cullmann, whose discussion develops around the argument that "Jesus ... became conscious at the moment of his baptism that he had to take upon himself the *ebed Yahweh* role."²⁵ It is the voice from heaven that accompanied the descent of the Spirit that provides the strength of this argument. The voice containing the quotation from Isaiah 42:1, "Behold My Servant, whom I uphold, My chosen one in whom My soul delights," is interpreted as an address and call to Jesus "to accept the task of the one who is addressed in the same way at the beginning of the *ebed Yahweh* hymns"²⁶ in this Old Testament text. This *ebed* consciousness ascribed to Jesus in the voice is also clear in the parallel baptismal passages in Mark 1:11 and Matthew 3:17 and the difference in translation from *ebed* into *huios* instead of *pais* could be explained by the Septuagint translations and very possibly also by taking into consideration the influence of the text in Psalm 2:7, "You are My son, today I have begotten you."²⁷ Jakob van Bruggen says, "The pronouncements at the Jordan had to do with the man Jesus and his origins; truly his Father is God!"²⁸ It is the anointing with the Holy Spirit that imparted the *ebed-huios* consciousness of Jesus. Commenting on James Dunn's interpretation of

Luke 3:21-22, Max Turner describes the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of Jesus’ New Covenant sonship,” which highlights some (epochal) change in Jesus’ religious experience of God through the Spirit following His baptism.²⁹

William Atkinson, an associate of Dye at the Kensington Temple international charismatic church in London, confirms that, “Luke’s understanding of the Jordan anointing . . . was essentially an empowering to minister to others.”³⁰ He partially disagrees with Dunn’s description:

While Luke would probably agree with Dunn (!) that Jesus entered a new epoch at Jordan, it is unlikely that he would accept that Jesus “entered” the new covenant. Luke’s opinion concerning Jesus’ relationship to the new covenant is much more that Jesus was its agent that he brought it to the world, than that the Spirit brought it to him. This is the implication of Luke 22.20, as well as of Luke’s probable association of Jesus with the Isaianic servant (Luke 3.22d = Isa. 42.1b MT), who was himself to be the covenant (Isa. 42.6).³¹

Dye’s position also draws some support from Jürgen Moltmann’s approach towards the pneumatological Christology, which goes beyond the “twofold relationship between the Spirit and Christ” and includes the “threefold relationships of the Son, the Father and the Spirit.”³² The pre-baptismal relationships of Jesus and the Spirit are viewed in the light of Luke’s record presenting first Jesus as conceived by the Holy Spirit in 1:35 and “strong in the Spirit as he developed (Luke 2:46).”³³ Through the indwelling Spirit, Jesus had the ongoing knowledge that He is the Beloved Son (Luke 3:22) and His life was marked by prayers in the Spirit to the Father as “Abba, dear Father.”³⁴ Concerning Jesus’ baptism event where Moltmann sees the Holy Spirit “personally present with Jesus,” Lois Malcolm summarizes his view in the following way:

As the “expected messiah of the End-time,” the Spirit descends upon him, bringing “the divine energies of life in Jesus to rapturous and overflowing fullness;” in this way the Spirit makes Jesus “the kingdom of God in person.”³⁵

The kingdom of God comes so close that in his proclamation and actions the signs of the messianic era anticipated by the Old Testament prophets are already visible: the sick are healed, demons are driven out, the lame walk, the deaf hear, the poor have the gospel preached to them (Luke 4:18-19).³⁶

Edward Irvin’s view, considered by some as the definition of Spirit-Christology, also provides support for this interpretation. For him “this Spirit-quickening was manifested in Christ at his baptism, from which time he became the spiritual man; and after his ascension into glory, he became the Spirit quickener. He then began to baptize with the Holy Ghost.”³⁷ This Pentecostal Christological reflection is further elaborated by T. A. Smail:

Jesus’ humanity has its origin in his conception by the Holy Spirit; it has its effectiveness from its anointing by the Holy Spirit. This new man, Jesus Christ, is the work of the Son of God operating in his own human nature in the power and energy of the Holy Spirit.³⁸

Robert Menzies’ exegesis of the passages in Luke that concern the Holy Spirit and the theological concepts of power and miracles relates directly to the question of Jesus’ dependence on the Spirit and the miraculous aspect of His ministry. Based on the non-Christian Jewish intertestamental pneumatology that presents the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of prophecy, Menzies proposes the idea of continuity—the function of the Holy Spirit does not change but descending on Jesus, the Spirit remains to be the source of prophetic inspiration and this defines Luke’s pneumatology. “The Jews looked forward to a messianic age when both the messiah

and his people would be anointed with the Spirit of prophecy.³⁹

Menzies differentiates between Spirit and power, attributing the miracles that Jesus did to God's power, and Jesus' words and authoritative preaching to the Holy Spirit. In line with Schweitzer, Menzies states that "Luke nowhere attributes exorcisms or miracles of healing to the work of the Spirit" and supports this view with the way Luke uses the context and wording of Jesus' statements about the Holy Spirit listed in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. While in Mark 3:29 the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is presented in the context of exorcism, in Luke 12:10 the same subject is found in Jesus' discourse about God's care and persecution.⁴⁰ In fact, "Luke here removes the saying about the sin against the Holy Ghost from its Marcan context because he cannot possibly see the decisive manifestation of the Spirit in the exorcisms of the pneumatonic Jesus."⁴¹ In Matthew 12:28, Jesus reveals that if He casts out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come, but in Luke 11:20 the casting out of demons by Jesus as a sign of the coming of God's Kingdom is attributed to the "finger of God." Menzies' exegesis concludes with the assertion that "the Spirit enables prophecy, while the power enables miracles," and that "Luke takes great care not to associate the Spirit directly with the broader dimensions of the miraculous."⁴²

Atkinson is not convinced by Menzies' arguments. He adheres to Turner's objection that Luke's pneumatology is rather derived from a "Hellenistic-Jewish Christian" background than based on Jewish pneumatology.⁴³ Additionally, according to Turner, "the typically Jewish view is that the Spirit is the organ of communication from God to a human, and sometimes empowers 'invasive' prophecy and praise, but *not* considered preaching."⁴⁴ He indicates further that "for a Jew to hold that the Spirit was received as the Spirit of prophecy did not preclude him from attributing miracles to the same Spirit."⁴⁵

Using support from Turner, Atkinson regards Menzies' exegesis as having difficulty with Luke

1:17 ("he shall go ... in the spirit and power of Elijah") because no miracles are attributed to John the Baptist. Similarly in Luke 1:35, it would be difficult "to distance the Spirit from the miraculous conception," and link it only with Mary's prophecy (Luke 1:46-55). The meaning of Luke 4:14 ("And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit") and other verses (for example Acts 1.8), force Menzies to concede that, "for Luke, the Holy Spirit is the source of 'power.'"⁴⁶

Turner's conclusion on the enabling of Jesus at the Jordan River seems to be very convincing for Atkinson:

It is no longer easy to see how his [Menzies'] affirmation that the Spirit is the Spirit of prophecy and the source of *dunamis* (which in turn is the source of miracles) differs meaningfully from the simpler affirmation that 'Luke regards the Spirit as both the Spirit of prophecy and the power of miracles'.⁴⁷

Warrington, who disagrees with this view, looks for an interpretation of the baptism passage that would take into consideration the broader biblical context and pneumatological realities. He observes that the Gospels, as a whole, do not have a lot to communicate as to Jesus' dependence on the Spirit, but rather focus on the uniqueness of Jesus as the Messiah who would later send the Holy Spirit, a message that is carried out even in the Gospel of Luke, which is most concerned with the place and role of the Spirit. He sees the Gospels presenting Jesus as "being the Lord of the Spirit," and not necessarily "the Spirit supporting Jesus," a fact that was ultimately proven in the promise of Jesus in Luke 24:49 for the outpouring of the Spirit and its fulfillment on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:4-5).⁴⁸

Schweitzer looks at the baptism of Jesus from the presumption that "the result of the act is what counts, namely that Jesus has the Spirit from the first (beginning—Luke 1:35)."⁴⁹ The coming of the Spirit during the act of baptism "does not denote growth but shows that each actualization is a new

divine act.”⁵⁰ What Schweitzer observes for Luke 4:1 is essential for understanding the relationship of the Spirit to Jesus, namely, that “Jesus is full of the Spirit, not subject to the Spirit but acting by the Spirit.”⁵¹

Ontological Approach: Support and Objections

The association of Jesus with the Spirit disclosed during the baptism event has to do with the recognition of the significance of Jesus who has always been supreme, but now the evidence has been revealed. Warrington seems to follow the ontological approach and his assertion also sounds convincing: “The Spirit thus functions as marker and witness to the special nature of Jesus,” and this “affirmation is for the benefit of those who were with Jesus, as well as for the readers of the Gospels.”⁵²

While Dye interprets Jesus’ baptism event with what Jesus did not do before and would do from this point on, Warrington is concerned with the meaning of this event in the light of what kind of person Jesus is. Based on the parallel text in Matthew 3:17 (“This is My beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased”), the content of the voice from heaven is not considered as an address, but a proclamation since “*outos* replacing *su* gives us a proclamation of what is true in Matthew 1:18⁵³ (c.f. 2:15)⁵⁴.”⁵⁵ As far as the text in Luke is concerned, one should note that “the description of Jesus as *uios* will undoubtedly have been seen by Luke in terms of Luke 1:35⁵⁶ and 2:49,⁵⁷ which makes the baptismal statement “declaration of an existing status, not the conferral of a new dignity.”⁵⁸ The words of the heavenly voice should rather be interpreted “along the lines of the expectation of the Davidic Son of God of Ps. 2:7.”⁵⁹ “The opening of heaven, the coming of the Spirit, and the sounding of the voice are eschatological events, so that we are to think of the king of the last time rather than an original *pais*.”⁶⁰ Consequently, this “institution into the office of the eschatological king is put already at baptism and the earthly work of Jesus is understood

as the regency promised to the house of David and executed by God’s commission.”⁶¹

Hunter, who approaches the biblical text of Jesus’ anointing with a great deal of caution, clearly objects to reading Luke’s passage ontologically. He relates the interpretation of this experience forward to the Day of Pentecost and the charismatic experiences of the believers in the primitive church and onwards. Luke’s use of the phrase “Spirit of Jesus,” in Acts 16:7 for believers baptized in the Holy Spirit, is seen as reference to the “selfsame Spirit that anointed Jesus” and the confirmation of John the Baptist’s words that Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit (John 1:33).⁶² Considering the link between the word “Anointed” and “Messiah” as synonyms fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies like Isaiah 61:1 in the “charismatic nature of the Spirit-empowerment,” Hunter agrees that

“Jesus came to the baptism of John, among the penitents of Israel responsive to John’s proclamation to begin the messianic task in its fullness as He interpreted it from the writings of the Old Testament.” Luke’s scheme is a theological one with implications for the believer’s experience of the Spirit, not for the understanding of the ontology of Jesus Christ.⁶³

It is only because of the Jordan experience that Luke 4:18 shows that Jesus was able to quote Isaiah 61:1.⁶⁴ However, it still remains unclear from Hunter’s exegetical remarks if Jesus’ baptism at Jordan points to Him as becoming the Messiah or it was a confirmation of His Messianic identity and role. Referring to Gordon Fee’s description of the Spirit as “God’s presence,” Warrington asserts:

The baptism of Jesus provides the occasion for the affirmation of Jesus and a confirmation of his Messianic role by the voice of the Father and the presence of the Spirit (Luke 3:21-22). The allusions to Psalm 2.7, a royal psalm relating to the Son and heir, and Isa. 42:1, referring to the Servant (Mt. 3:17), are powerful

affirmations of Jesus who, at the Jordan, was legitimized by the Spirit.⁶⁵

Vacillating Between Two Well-argued Interpretations

Concerning the question of the link between the Messianic designation and Jesus' baptism, Warrington, unlike Hunter, relates it first to John the Baptist who needed confirmation about the identity of the Messiah and this was done through the descent and the presence of the Spirit. From now on, the Spirit would not "lead Jesus in order for him to function as Messiah; it is because Jesus is the Messiah that the Spirit is leading him (Matt. 4.1)."⁶⁶

The baptismal event obviously introduced the age of the Spirit, as Isaiah 61:1 indicates. Since Jesus, from His conception, was from the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20), the anointing at Jordan had to do "with the formal inauguration of His ministry, marked by the baptism and its aftermath, which is itself based on the dual pattern of the king's coronation and the servant's commission."⁶⁷ The one who was going to baptize with the Spirit had to experience himself "the formal anointing with the Spirit."⁶⁸

In relation to Luke's presentation of Jesus' baptism, it should also be added that, "for Luke, Jesus' sonship ... is more fundamental than anything that can be contained in normal messianic categories."⁶⁹ Based on various passages in Luke, John Nolland suggests that Jesus' sonship could be compared with that of Adam and Israel (3:38; 4:1-13) and "may be traced to a distinct divine involvement in his human conception (1:35), which makes it no surprise that he is able to participate in the resources of the divine power."⁷⁰ Therefore, this unique status of Jesus as Son made him "qualified to speak for God (9:35) and to reveal God (10:22)."⁷¹ Howard Ervin is even more specific: "Jesus is the Son of God by nature. He never was, is not, and never will be other than the Son of God ... There is no sense in which Jesus only becomes Messiah and Son at Jordan."⁷² This last statement is completely opposite to James Dunn's view of Jesus' baptism as initiation to divine sonship.

Walter Hollenweger concludes that, "theological statements must be rooted in spirituality. ... If that is not the case, theology becomes idle."⁷³ Spirit-Christology is not just a doctrine of the past. The content of Luke's writings, as a whole, clearly points to the fact that his "special concern was with the time of the Church" and the presentation of Jesus through the events of His birth, anointing at baptism, and the following powerful manifestation of the Spirit in His life had in mind the time when all the members of the eschatological community will be given the Holy Spirit."⁷⁴ It is my conviction that Jesus' baptismal event, recorded by Luke and belonging to the field of Pneumatological Christology, is foundational for the Pentecostal-Charismatic spirituality.

The two views expressed by the two European Pentecostal theologians interpret the Jordan River event in different ways: either as the beginning of the decisive manifestation of the Holy Spirit enabling the anointed Jesus to perform miracles and exorcisms or a new divine act in which the endowment with the Spirit is an actualization or formal recognition of the One who is the Messiah.

Pentecostal theologians should actively participate in investigating the validity of each of these two conclusions. By considering the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus "as empowerment for ministry," the functional Christology approach provides an exegesis that mainly takes into account descriptions that immediately follow Jesus' baptism experience. The motif behind phrases like "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit returned from the Jordan" and "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee" is "a crux in the interpretation of Jesus' experience at Jordan, for were the theme of power removed from Luke-Acts, or even relegated to a subordinate place, Luke's theology of the Holy Spirit would be largely unintelligible."⁷⁵ Luke's narrative of the earthly ministry of Jesus, as a whole, portrays the Spirit as being on Jesus for the purpose of empowering Him for the Messianic ministry. This is an undeniable

argument and Warrington himself recognizes that “the motif of power is present in the experience of Jesus at the Jordan ... [but] it need not be the only, or even the main, motif.”⁷⁶ Having made this concession, he states further his view in the following way: “Jesus may be empowered by the Spirit ... [but] he is certainly endorsed by him (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16).”⁷⁷ He concludes: “The Spirit confirms more than he empowers Jesus.”⁷⁸

Disagreeing slightly with Warrington, who makes his conclusion based on the Gospels as a whole, one should note that individual passages in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew do portray Jesus as depending on the Spirit. The age of the Spirit for them was an eschatological reality and “in so doing they wanted to describe Him as the unique eschatological Deliverer.”⁷⁹ As for Luke, he “made a clear-cut theological decision ... and clarified this insight.”⁸⁰ The Spirit of God, who is working in the community, reveals himself for the first time in Jesus and it is through Him, born of the Spirit and possessor of the Spirit, that this work is done among the community.⁸¹

Luke 2:40 and 1:80 could be considered as good parallel passages for comparison. It is important to observe that “Jesus is not said to grow in spirit as the Baptist is.”⁸² Similarly, it could also be said, “There is no evidence of growth of the Holy Spirit presence in Jesus’ life.”⁸³ Jesus’ experience at the Jordan River rather marks the beginning of the implementation of the Spirit’s presence. In line with Isaiah 61:1-2, Luke presents Jesus’ anointing by the Spirit and not a baptism with the Holy Spirit and this is “an activity of and not to the coming one.”⁸⁴ The whole presentation is done in the context of the unique filial relationships with God and Luke develops it “in terms that transcend normal messianism.”⁸⁵ Warrington convincingly states: “It is because of the remarkable grandeur of Jesus (as described in the Gospels) that none other than the Spirit is identified as partnering him.”⁸⁶ This is how we could understand the meaning of key passages such as Luke 4:1 in which Jesus “was led in the Spirit,” 4:18 in which He is anointed for Messianic mission, and 4:24 where He identifies himself as a

prophet of good news. The immediate context of Luke’s baptismal passage is not about power for miracles, but the identification and affirmation of Jesus as Son, Messiah, and Prophet. This association of the Spirit with Jesus “is not about leading and following, the superior guiding the inferior, the director of the journey steering the uncertain traveler, but about the destiny of the one being inextricably entwined with the destiny of the other.”⁸⁷

Concluding Observations

In Acts 1:8, Luke clearly links the presence of the Holy Spirit upon the believers with the concept of power. How much this Scripture, along with the Spirit baptism upon the disciples beginning at Pentecost and manifested upon the believers throughout the Book of Acts, is linked with the anointing of Jesus in Luke 3, remains a crucial question for Pentecostals. For some of the Pentecostal scholars, these are “functionally equivalent experiences,”⁸⁸ while for others they are “analogous rather than identical.”⁸⁹ For the first group, the charismatic function and empowerment of the Holy Spirit effected in Jesus finds its continuity in His followers. The charismatic presence and anointing of the Spirit among them represent the continuation of the ministry of Jesus. Following the baptism in the Holy Spirit, there is a great deal of resemblance between the ministry of signs and wonders of the apostles and the disciples in the Book of Acts and the one of Jesus in the Gospels. Thus, the empowerment of Jesus, which begun at Jordan, also became operative in the church.⁹⁰ On the other side, in contrast with Dye’s understanding, Warrington’s assessment could be categorized to be more in line with the theological reflection of the British Evangelical scholar, Max Turner, whom he quotes:

Jesus’ experience at Jordan [as] a unique Messianic anointing [was] without a clearly intended parallel in the disciples’ experience,⁹¹ ... the point of parallels between Jesus’ ministry in the Spirit and what takes place in Acts is not that the

Church has inherited Jesus' anointing but that the risen Lord himself continues his redemptive activity, as Lord of the Spirit, through the charismata he bestows in his Church.⁹²

This leads him to conclude that "the presence of the Spirit was valuable to Jesus but invaluable now to believers in enabling them to fulfill their respective and different destinies."⁹³

It seems like the two views share more common ground when it comes to their implications. James Shelton attempts to elaborate on it when he considers "the Holy Spirit as the source of miracles" and yet with primary function "to inspire proclamation."⁹⁴ According to him, Luke's narrative of Jesus' baptism deliberately presents "parallels between Jesus' anointing at the Jordan and that of the disciples at Pentecost."⁹⁵ Jesus' experience becomes "archetypal for believers. ... In both instances, the Spirit comes primarily as the source of power for effective ministry. Luke's emphasis on Spirit inspired witness ... links the early Christian mission to the ministry of Jesus."⁹⁶ However, Shelton also recognizes the difference between the specific Messianic task of Jesus and the believers, commissioned as witnesses, and warns that "the experiences of the believers with the Holy Spirit can *not* be equivalent to Jesus' relationship with the Spirit."⁹⁷

Another important option would be to see the blend of the two views in the Resurrection event of Jesus where Jesus' being and Jesus' function are fully

revealed to belong to each other. This approach would be in line with Wolfhart Panneberg's theological methodology that "the Resurrection establishes retroactively that Jesus as a person is not to be separated from God in any way and at any time."⁹⁸ No consideration of Jesus' life and His relations with the Spirit are to be done "in isolation from the final vindication of Jesus' person and claim at the Resurrection."⁹⁹ Thus, one could conclude:

In fact, all the Evangelists who stress the Spirit-filled nature of Jesus' conception, birth, and baptism as well as his Spirit-driven mission of preaching and healing are saying precisely this: if Jesus was lord at the Resurrection, he must have been lord at his suffering, throughout his mission, at his baptism, at his birth, even from the very genesis of salvation history in the eternal love-intention of the triune God.¹⁰⁰

In the comparison of these two positions, one discovers that despite their different emphases, they actually complement each other. The empowering of Jesus should not be disassociated from His endorsement and vice versa. The above analysis, made in the framework of Luke's theological scheme of Jesus' baptism event, helps us to conclude their compatibility and not total exclusivism. The ongoing examination of the differences and similarities between the two would, in my opinion, allow the development of a more comprehensive and biblically sound Pentecostal theology.

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¹ Ralph Del Colle, "Spirit-Christology," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*, 3 (1993): 95.

² *Ibid.*, 96.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ E. Schweizer, "πνεῦμα," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, (hereafter *TDNT*), edited by Gerhard Kittel, translated and edited by Geoffrey W. Bromley (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1968), 6: 405.

⁵ "Psilantropic," meaning regarding Jesus as a "mere man."

⁶ Del Colle, 97. The author lists the names of Ignatius of Antioch, Clement, Shepherd of Hermes, Tertullian, Hippolytus, and Cyprian.

⁷ Harold Hunter, "Spirit Christology: Dilemma and Promise," *Heythrop Journal* 24 (1983): 277, quoted in Del Colle, 98.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Andrew Michael Lord, "Network Church: A Pentecostal Ecclesiology Shaped by Mission" (Doctoral Thesis, University of Birmingham, May 2010), 33.

¹⁰ Matt. 1:20, ASV; Luke's account in 1:35-37 also confirms the role of the Spirit in Jesus's birth. Hereafter all biblical quotes will be from the ASV.

¹¹ M. Habets, "Spirit Christology: Seeing in Stereo," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 11, no. 2 (2003): 234, quoted in Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 51.

¹² David Petts, *The Holy Spirit: An Introduction* (Mattersey, England: Mattersey Hall, 1998), 29.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Collin Dye, *Living in the Presence* (Kingsway Publications, June 1996), 32, quoted in Warrington, 52.

¹⁵ Ibid., 52.

¹⁶ Dye, *Anointing*, 52.

¹⁷ Colin Brown, "Spirit, Holy Spirit," in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, edited by Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), 3: 696.

¹⁸ The parallel passage in Luke 11:20 uses the phrase "the finger of God" with slightly stronger argument for having "the Spirit" in the original; according to Dunn's conclusion in J. D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), 45.

¹⁹ Brown, 696.

²⁰ Deut. 18:15, 18, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. ... I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him."

²¹ Isa. 61:1: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me ..." (Luke 4:18-19).

²² Luke 4:21: "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

²³ Brown, 696.

²⁴ For a detailed study on the difference between functional Christology and ontological Christology, see Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia, PA: The Westminster Press, 1963), 3-4.

²⁵ Cullmann, 66 -67.

²⁶ Ibid., 66.

²⁷ Ibid., 66-68.

²⁸ Jakob van Bruggen, *Jesus the Son of God: The Gospel Narratives as Message* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 147.

²⁹ Max Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 198-199.

³⁰ William Atkinson, "Pentecostal Responses to Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Luke-Acts," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 6 (1995): 117.

³¹ Ibid., 117. Luke 22:20: "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood." Isa. 42:6: "I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I will hold you by the hand and watch over you, and I will appoint you as a covenant to the people, as a light to the nations."

³² Jürgen Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 70-71, quoted in Del Colle, 99.

³³ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993), 4, quoted in Lois Malcolm, "Jesus and the Trinity," *Word & World*, 29, no. 2 (Spring 2009): 147.

³⁴ Malcolm lists the following Scriptures from the Synoptic Gospels: Matt. 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11. Additionally, he refers the readers to Gen. 22:2; Psa. 2:7; Isa. 42:1; Luke 4:1-13, and Acts 4:27. Malcolm, 147.

³⁵ Moltmann, *The Spirit of Life*, 61.

³⁶ Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ*, 97, quoted in Malcolm, 147.

³⁷ G. Strachan, *The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 97.

³⁸ T. A. Smail, *Reflected Glory: The Spirit in Christ and Christians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), 64, quoted in Del Colle, 110.

³⁹ Robert P. Menzies, *Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts* (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1991), 51-112, quoted in Atkinson, “Pentecostal Responses,” 108.

⁴⁰ Menzies, *Development*, 124, quoted in Atkinson, “Pentecostal Responses,” 121.

⁴¹ Schweizer, *TDNT* 6: 405.

⁴² Menzies, *Development*, 124, quoted in Atkinson, “Pentecostal Responses,” 121.

⁴³ Max Turner, “The Spirit of Prophecy and the Power of Authoritative Preaching in Luke-Acts: A Question of Origins,” *New Testament Studies* 38 (1992), 87, quoted in Atkinson, “Pentecostal Responses,” 120.

⁴⁴ Turner, “The Spirit of Prophecy,” 76-87.

⁴⁵ Max Turner, “The Spirit and the Power of Jesus’ Miracles in the Lucan Conception,” *Novum Testamentum* 33, no. 2 (1991): 132-135. He referred for support to Judges 14:6, LXX—Samson killing the lion as the Spirit of the Lord came on him; Gen 1:2, LXX—God’s Spirit moving over the surface of the earth; Targ., 2 Kings 2:9-15—The spirit of Elijah rested on Elisha and the waters of Jordan were divided as the latter struck them with the mantle that fell from Elijah.

⁴⁶ Atkinson, “Pentecostal Responses,” 121. The last point number is based on Menzies’ own words in Menzies, *Development*, 125.

⁴⁷ Turner, “The Spirit and the Power of Jesus’ Miracles,” 140-141.

⁴⁸ Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (London, UK: T & T Clark, 2008), 53.

⁴⁹ E. Schweizer, “*pneúma*,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Volume*, edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, and translated by Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), 887.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² Warrington, 53.

⁵³ “Mary ... was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.”

⁵⁴ “Out of Egypt did I call My Son.”

⁵⁵ E. Schweizer, “*υιός*,” *TDNT* 8: 380, n. 328.

⁵⁶ “The holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.”

⁵⁷ “Did you not know that I have to be in My Father’s *house* (things)?”

⁵⁸ I. H. Marshall, “Son of God or Servant of Yahweh? A Reconsideration of Mark 1:11,” *New Testament Studies* 15 (1968-69), 326-36.

⁵⁹ Schweizer, *TDNT* 8: 368.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 367-368.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 368.

⁶² Harold Hunter, *Spirit-Baptism: A Pentecostal Alternative* (Boston, MA: University Press of America, 1983), 72.

⁶³ G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1962), 55, quoted in Hunter, *Spirit-Baptism*, 74.

⁶⁴ Hunter, *Spirit-Baptism*, 73.

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- ⁶⁵ Gordon Fee, *God's Empowering Presence* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 8, quoted in Warrington, 53.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.
- ⁶⁷ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13, Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1993), 58.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 57.
- ⁶⁹ John Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20, Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1989), 164.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷² Howard M. Ervin, *Conversion-Initiation and the Baptism in the Holy Spirit* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1984), 12.
- ⁷³ Neil Hudson, "Pentecostalism, Past, Present and Future: Interview with Walter Hollenweger," *The Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 21 (2001): 43.
- ⁷⁴ Schweizer, *TDNT* 6: 412.
- ⁷⁵ Howard M. Ervin, *Spirit Baptism: A Biblical Investigation* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1987), 6. The two phrases are citations from Luke 4:1 and Luke 4:14.
- ⁷⁶ Warrington, 56.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁸ D. L. Block, *Luke 1:1-9:50* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994), 345, quoted in Warrington, 56.
- ⁷⁹ Schweizer, *TDNT* 6: 405.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 405-406.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, 405. This statement is based on the interpretation of Luke 1:47 where *pneuma* seems to be parallel to *psyche*, signifying "not human ability, but the I which is given to man ..." *Ibid.*, 405 n. 466.
- ⁸³ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1983-1985), 872.
- ⁸⁴ Nolland, 164.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁶ Warrington, 54.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 54-55.
- ⁸⁸ Roger Stronstad, "They Spoke with Tongues and Prophesied," *Enrichment*, 10, no. 1 (2005): 85, quoted in Warrington, 57.
- ⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.
- ⁹⁰ For a list of similarities between Jesus' miraculous ministry and the miracles performed through the apostles and the disciples in the book of Acts, see Hunter, *Spirit-Baptism*, 74.
- ⁹¹ M. M. B. Turner, "Jesus and the Spirit in Lucan Perspective," *Tyndale Bulletin* 32 (1981), 40, quoted in Warrington, 57.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*
- ⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ James Shelton, *Mighty in Word and Deed* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 161, quoted in Robert P. Menzies, “James Shelton’s *Mighty in Word and Deed*: A Review Article,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 2 (1993): 106.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 148, 157, quoted in Robert P. Menzies, “James Shelton’s *Mighty in Word and Deed*,” 106.

⁹⁷ Shelton, *Mighty in Word*, 136-144, quoted in Warrington, 58.

⁹⁸ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1968), 141, quoted in Philip J. Rosato, “Spirit Christology: Ambiguity and Promise,” *Theological Studies* 38, no. 3 (1977): 423-449. <http://www.ts.mu.edu/readers/content/pdf/38/38.3/38.3.1.pdf> (accessed October 7, 2013): 442.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 441.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 446.