

## **ENDTIME ISSUES NEWSLETTER No.114**

### **“FIRE IN THE CHURCH” Part 2**

**Lloyd Grolmund, Senior Pastor of Wahroonga Seventh-day Adventist Church in Sydney, Australia**

#### **EDITORIAL**

**Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.,**

**Retired Professor of Theology and Church History**

Watching innocent people being abused, tortured, and even executed is becoming a favorite pastime of an increasing number of people. According to Steve Purham, the chief executive of SurfControl, the websites espousing hatred and violence have increased 26% during the first four months of 2004. Some of the “news events that appear to have triggered the recent sharp increase in hate sites include the controversy over gay marriages and the release of Mel Gibson’s *The Passion of the Christ*, which has been used by some extremists as a platform to express hatred of non-Christians.” (Patrick Barkham, “Religious Hatred Flourishes on the Web,” *The Guardian* (May 11, 2004), p.12.

The three events which have received the largest number of hits in Yahoo and Google are Gibson’s movie on *The Passion* (3,060,000 sites), the beheading of Nick Berger (about 2,000,000 sites), the abuse of Iraqis’ prisoners (about 250,000 sites). The common denominator of these events is the abuse and/or brutal torture of helpless victims.

Millions of people in many parts of the world are paying to watch, not only the relentless beating and agony of Christ in Gibson’s *Passion* at movie theaters, but also the sickening beheading of Nick Berg on countless websites. Thousands of websites are selling the video of Berger’s execution and of the abuse of Iraqis’ soldiers, from \$5.00 to \$10.00. It is a sign of some cultural pathology that an increasing number of people are eager to watch the abuse, torture, and even gruesome execution of some helpless victims.

#### **Watching Violence to Experience an Emotional High**

The question I have been pondering these past few weeks while researching and writing on the history and theology of the Passion Plays, is the following: What makes some people eager to watch the brutal torture and

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even execution of innocent victims? The answer seems to be found in the emotional stimulation provided by such horrible scenes.

Somebody explained to me in technical medical terms that watching innocent people being brutalized and killed, can have the same effect like taking morphine. If the drug is taken to kill the pain, the patient will not have negative aftereffects. But if morphine is taken as a stimulant, it can readily affect the behavior of the user. The individual experiences an emotional high that can lead to irresponsible behavior.

The same appears to be true with violence. The victim who experiences physical and emotional abuse suffers passively without being able to react emotionally. But people who watch a movie or a live scene where helpless victims are brutally tortured, can experience an emotional high. They can become so emotionally charged that they need to react. And the reaction takes different forms.

Historically the people who watched Christ's relentless beating and agony portrayed in the Passion Plays, were so emotionally charged that they vented their emotions in two radically different ways. Some imitated Christ's sufferings staged in the play by flogging themselves and parading their wounds through the streets. Other became so inflamed that went after the Jews, slaughtering them by the thousands.

### **Slaughtering of Christ Inspired the Slaughtering of the Jews**

The lethal bloody attacks against the Jews often were so violent that in some cities the whole Jewish population was murdered. "In Rottingen, Germany, in 1298, the entire Jewish population of the city was put to the stake. Then the angry mob spread through Germany and Austria, pillaging, burning and murdering about 100,000 Jews. In Prague in 1389, 3,000 Jews killed; in Seville, Spain, in 1391, 4,000 Jews killed. In three months that year, the slaughter spread across Spain, with a death tally of about 50,000 Jews. The year Columbus 'discovered' America, the nation that sent him out, Spain, expelled its entire Jewish population." (Richard Nilsen, "Fear of the 'Passion,'" *The Arizona Republic*, February 22, 2004).

The slaughter of the Jews that followed Passion Plays became so frightening, that both civil and ecclesiastical authorities forbade the produc-

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tion of Passion Plays in such cities as Freiburg in 1338, Frankfurt in 1469, Rome in 1539, Paris in 1548, and Strassburg in 1549.

In Rome the Passion Play was staged in the Colosseum by the Confraternity of the Gonfalone—a male-dominated institution actively involved in social life of the city. In 1539 about 70,000 people viewed the play at the Colosseum. After the play, the crowd led by the Confraternity passed through the Jewish Quarter, killing thousand of Jews and destroying their properties. This violent incident prompted Pope Paul III to outlaw the play, despite the repeated attempts of the Confraternity to start it again (Anne Sarzin, “Passion Plays that Inspired Violence in Rome,” *The University of Sydneys News*, February 24, 2000).

During the eighteenth century local governments banned the Passion Plays in many parts of Europe. The people of Oberammergau pressured the Bavarian government to grant them a special permission to continue its play because of the solemn and binding vow they took in 1633 to stage the Passion every ten years if God would halt the spreading of the Boubonic Plague in their town. You will read the rest of the story in the next newsletter, in which I plan to share chapter I of my manuscript on *The Passion*, entitled “The Passion Plays in History and Theology.”

### **Emotional Reactions to the Passion Plays Today**

The outburst of emotion generated by Passion Plays in the past, can still be seen today in the reaction of some people who have watched *The Passion*. Some feel an heightened hostility against the Jew, while others become hostile toward fellow Christians who do not share their views.

Surfing the internet one can find numerous example of anti-Jewish propaganda. For example, an anonymous “angry white female” writes on the internet: “The fact that Jews control so much of what we think via Hollywood, lends an air of mystery and awe to this Gibson versus the Jews dispute. The man just may be something like William Wallace and *The Patriot!* Just imagine the Jews in power shaking in their boots at the prospect of being accurately portrayed as Christ-killers, rather than their usual arrogant churning out of anti-White and anti-Christian movies designed to promote self-loathing and hatred of White western culture, people and history.” (<http://www.angrywhitefemale.net/mel-gibson.html>).

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The Catholic-Jewish Consultation Committee met in New York April 20, 3004, to discuss Catholic-Jewish relations in the aftermath of Mel Gibson's movie. "They reported a few incidents where Jews have been called "Christ killers," and where those who criticized the film have received anti-Semitic mail. They also expressed their concern that the film is being used in some Arab countries to evoke anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish feelings. (

Fortunately, such anti-Jewish voices in America are few comparing to Europe, but let us not forget that Adolf Hitler also was dismissed during the 1920s as a lunatic fringe of German politics. Incidentally, Hitler himself, after attending in 1930 the renowned Passion Play in Oberammergau, Germany, declared the production to be "a convincing portrayal of the menace of the Jewry" and a "precious tool" for his plan to liquidate the "muck and mire of Jewry." (Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Secret Conversations, 1941-1944* (New York 1954, p. 457; dated 5 July 1942). The history of the Passion Plays teaches us that anti-Jewish sentiments can be funned into conflagration, causing untold Jewish sufferings.

### **Hostility toward Fellow Christians**

The emotional high generated by Gibson's *Passion*, is fueling not only anti-Jewish sentiments, but also hostility toward fellow Christians who feel differently about the movie. I have experienced the latter because I have dared to question the jarringly graphic violence of the movie and its subtle promotion of Catholic beliefs and piety. Several Adventists who disagree with my review of *The Passion*, have emailed me "hate" messages, questioning even the genuineness of my religious experience and accusing me of opposing the work that the Holy Spirit is accomplishing through the movie.

I do not question what the Holy Spirit can accomplish through *The Passion*, because I believe that God is able to use bad things to good ends (Rom 8:28). Thousand of people every day claim to have found Christ at a pilgrimage to a holy shrine or at a Pentecostal crusade where charismatic preachers like Benny Hinn effectively manipulate people's emotions, deluding them into deceptive healing and salvation. The fact that in His providence God can communicate even through the mouth of an ass (Num 22:28), does not make what is intrinsically bad a good thing.

Sometimes the hostility manifests itself in unexpected way, as illustrated by an email that I received few days ago. A brother writes: "Our church

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likewise went through at least four weeks of sermons and Sabbath school preliminaries of why we needed to go and see *The Passion*. Anyone who disagreed were laughed or sneered at. The worst event was when an 83 year old sister raised her hand about the fifth week, when the church members were asked if they had a comment or a question. She stood up and said that if any one wanted a copy of Dr. Bacchiocchi's review of Gibson's movie, they could stop and see her after the service. She had gone to Office Max to made \$25 worth of copies. Immediately an elder stood up and blasted her that she had no right to do that. Then during the service the elders wrote her a letter and the head elder signed it, telling her she was not to do that because she was casting doubt upon the SDA church. Immediately after the service the pastor called an emergency meeting of the elders and made the ruling that no one is to pass out anything without his approval. The sister went home and burned everything she had. What is worse yet, she now believes that she did was wrong. So much for religious liberty."

It is hard to believe that *The Passion* can so inflame passions that some Adventists become hostile and intolerant toward fellow believers. Questioning *The Passion* for some is tantamount to "casting doubt upon the SDA church." It is evident that the emotional high of the movie causes some people to act irrationally, because they are controlled by emotions rather than reason.

The *Chicago Tribute* reports the curious experience of Velma Dority, a 64 years old Christian lady, who was constantly pressured by her family members to go to see *The Passion* because it would make her a better Christian. She resisted the pressure because she cannot stand violent movie. When the pressure became unbearable, she decided to get help from her doctor. "She called the doctor and obtained a written excuse saying the movie would be harmful to her health." The medical certificate worked magic. Her relatives stopped pressuring her. (Geneive Abdo and Lou Carlozo, "Feeling the Sting of the 'Passion' Buzz," *Chicago Tribute* April 26, 2004.)

The point of this discussion is that we live in a very emotionally oriented society. People respond to Passion Plays, movies, music, theatrical performances, and sermons, on the basis of their emotional impact. In other words, people tend to react more emotionally than rationally to what they see, hear, or read. A sermon, a movie, or some music that stir up deep emotions, are generally evaluated as great performances. But a rational analysis of their content may prove the contrary to be the case.

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Emotions must be controlled by reason, otherwise they can cause the kind of irresponsible, and hostile behavior discussed earlier. This principle applies to both the social and the religious life. A religion largely based on emotional experience may make people feel good about God, but God may be deeply offended by their emotional manifestations. Feeling high for Jesus is not the same as being His disciple. This is the fundamental problem with the Neo-Pentecostalism that is finding its way in our Adventist church. The essay you are about to read by Pastor Lloyd Grolmund. will help you to understand the danger of a religion based on emotions which ignore biblical teachings. This is the second and final part of the essay “Fire in the Church.” Part One was published in Endtime Issues Newsletter No. 110. You can easily access the essay at my website: [www.biblicalperspectives.com](http://www.biblicalperspectives.com).

You will find that Pastor Lloyd offers a perceptive analysis of how the emotionalism of the Neo-Pentecostalism is changing the shape and mission of the Adventist church in Australia, and other Western countries. The new focus is on feeling and experience, rather than on cognitive biblical truth. You may not agree with everything that Pastor Lloyd writes, but you will be challenged to take a fresh look at the future of Adventist church. I always welcome any study that challenges my thinking. Take time to read and share this perceptive study with your friends.

## **RECENT SABBATH DEVELOPMENTS**

Few days ago I received an interesting phone call from a United Pentecostal Minister, near Green Bay, Wisconsin. He called me to share his discovery of the Sabbath and to order additional material for his congregation. He told me how the reading of my Sabbath books has helped him to accept the validity and value of the Sabbath. Teaching the Sabbath truth to his congregation has been costly, since several members left the church. But the greatest threat comes from leaders of his United Pentecostal Church. They are expected to meet with him on Sunday-Monday, May 30-31, 2004, to disfellowship him and take away his credential. He invited me to travel to Greenbay to meet with his church leaders.

Due to a previously accepted invitation, I had to decline his offer. I promised to make myself available after giving an opportunity to his church leaders to read my book **THE SABBATH UNDER CROSSFIRE**. The Lord has used this book in a providential way to help many ministers of different

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denominations to accept the Sabbath. He ordered everything that I have written and recorded: books, articles, CD-ROM, and the latest SABBATH/ADVENT seminar in DVD. I donated free copies of THE SABBATH UNDER CROSSFIRE for his church leaders. I look forward to a fruitful dialogue with these United Pentecostal Church leaders.

When I asked him what has been the reaction of his congregation to the message of the Sabbath, he said: “When we began observing the Sabbath, we wondered how we could fill the 24 hours of the Sabbath. Now, we wish that the Sabbath would last 3 days. The Sabbath has brought a rich spiritual enrichment to the life of our congregation.” Let us pray for this pastor, who is deeply committed to follow the teachings of the Word of God.

Another interesting experience occurred on Thursday, May 6, 2004, when I was invited to speak in Los Angeles at the meeting of the *National Woman’s Christian Temperance Union*—an organization to which Ellen White belonged. Surprisingly there were 5 non-Adventist ministers at the meeting. After my PowerPoint lecture on “The Christian and Alcoholic Beverages,” all the five minister purchased my books and DVD seminar on the Sabbath. They told me that they were very eager to read my research on the Sabbath.

On Saturday afternoon I attended the oratorical context where some brilliant high school students delivered their temperance speeches on the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs. I wish that some Adventist students would have participated, especially since drinking and drugs are becoming a major problem in our campuses. As a student at Newbold College in England and later at Andrews University, I participated at the Temperance Oratorical contexts. In fact, on two occasions, I won the first prize. Such contests provided an unique opportunity for the students to learn more about alcohol and to promote the biblical imperative of total abstinence. Unfortunately, temperance speeches have become a thing of the past, while the drinking problems have become a present reality.

During the past few months it has been encouraging to receive numerous requests from Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostal, and Church of Christ ministers for copies of my book *WINE IN THE BIBLE*. An increasing number of church leaders are rediscovering the Biblical imperative of total abstinence.

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Be sure to inform your friends that they also can receive this newsletter free of charge, simply by emailing me a message at [sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com](mailto:sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com), saying: SUBSCRIBE ME.

**SOUTH ENGLAND CONFERENCE CAMPMEETING**

From June 4 to 12, 2004, I will be in England to speak first in London, at the Hampstead SDA Church on Friday/Saturday June 4-5 and then at the South England Conference Campmeeting from June 7 to 12, 2004. This is the largest campmeeting in Europe attended by about 5000 Adventists. Elder Don McFarlane, the President of the Conference, has asked me to speak on THE PILLARS OF OUR FAITH at the 11:00 a. m. general convocation. I look forward to this opportunity to help our people appreciate and experience more fully the fundamental beliefs of our Adventist Message. Remember me in your prayers that the Lord may grant me the wisdom and grace to meet the spiritual needs of our people.

**Introduction to Pastor Lloyd Grolimund's Essay**

Last February I posted Part One of Pastor Lloyd Grolimund's essay on "Fire in the Church." Many readers responded very positively to Pastor Grolimund's analysis of the challenges our Adventist churches face in Australia today. The delay in posting the second and final part is largely due to the need that arose to review Gibson's movie on *The Passion*, which has taken many of our Adventist churches by storm.

In many ways the essay you are about to read on the impact of Neo-Pentecostalism on the shape of Adventist worship in Australia, and western countries, closely relates to the reception of *The Passion* by a significant number of Adventists, especially in America. The common denominator is the appeal to an emotional experience at the expenses of doctrinal truth. I would urge you to read thoughtfully this insightful study.



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Pastor Lloyd Grolimund, is currently serving as the senior pastor of Wahroonga Seventh-day Adventist Church in Sydney, Australia. On three occasions I have preached in this beautiful church, located across the street from our South Pacific Division office and besides our impressive Sydney Adventist Hospital. Pastor Grolimund has spent the last 14 years in full time ministry – 10 of these have been in youth ministry in South Queensland and North New Zealand. He is married to Deanne and they have two beautiful daughters ,Hannah, and Danae, age.

With pastoral concern Grolimund provides a penetrating analysis of transformation in worship that many of our churches are experiencing in Australia as a result of Pentecostal influences. His analysis is balanced and pastoral. His tone is constructive and conciliatory, not accusative. He reveals a genuine desire to find a solution to the problem of the “stagnant” traditional worship that is driving most young people away from our church.

The challenge that our Adventist church is facing in Australia is present also in most Western countries, including Europe and the USA. In several newsletters I have mentioned the problem. Thus, the essay is relevant for our Adventist church at large. I wish to express my gratitude to Pastor Grolimund for granting me the permission to share his thoughtful essay with our readers. Feel free to email your comments directly to him . His email address is: [lgrolimund@kooee.com.au](mailto:lgrolimund@kooee.com.au)

### **“FIRE IN THE CHURCH” Second and final Part.**

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The church in Australia is undergoing a considerable transformation in worship. Hillsong, Parachute and other Pentecostal influences are having an extraordinary influence on the shape of worship in the Adventist context. This development includes the introduction and practice of drama, Christian rock music, and an informal approach to worship that is directed toward reaching the un-churched secular mind of urban Australia.

Many argue that the vast numbers attending churches that practice this approach is evidence in itself of God’s blessing. Almost on this basis alone the proponents of this phenomena insist on an aggressive and sustained effort

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to introduce and incorporate this worship into the church. To a large degree their efforts have borne fruit and Pentecostal worship is becoming part of mainstream Adventism in Australia.

This is especially evident in youth work where the Pentecostal form and style of worship is used almost universally by all the local conferences. A typical youth rally involves powerful preaching, drama, and plenty of Christian rock music. In many youth rallies/camp meetings etc, the music is the largest part of the worship experience often going for over an hour. The youth are taken to the mountaintop with heavy driving rock songs and then down into the valley with quite gentler tunes. Accompanying this music is dancing and clapping. Unquestionably many of the youth support this approach and this can be seen in the thousands of young people who attend youth rally's, Campoorees, camp meetings etc.

The inspiration for much of what is developing through worship in Adventism is not created from within our own ranks. To a large extent mega Pentecostal churches are driving Christian training in Australia. Many Adventist pastors, and local church officers are attending training symposiums and seminars that are as professionally planned, organized, and directed as any secular program. In five star venues students are told of the infinite value of adopting the Pentecostal approach. Slick bands, experienced song leaders, powerful presenters, and worship that totally overwhelms the senses is an irresistible tonic for Adventist pastors and local church youth leaders struggling to see growth in their churches or youth groups. Add to this the statistics that boast explosive church growth, and a powerful argument to travel the Pentecostal road is complete.

The pressure this movement brings to church leaders who set the direction and focus for the Seventh-day Adventist Church is immense. It is hardly surprising that many are loathe to oppose this Charismatic drift, and it takes great valor to stand against such an overwhelmingly popular and apparently successful approach. That some do is evidence of their commitment to God and their courage.

This phenomena is not restricted to age, gender, or geography. From small country churches to large city ones the Pentecostal fueled revival burns its way through pews and minds all over Australia. Old and young alike are taken up with the excitement and vibrancy of this movement.

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Those who dare to oppose this direction are marginalized as fanatics and placed with the lunatic fringe from the far right. Opponents are seen as traditional and narrow who are not capable of adopting a positive attitude to contemporary approaches to a secular un-churched society. Reputations vanish, friends are lost, and others are ostracized because of their opposition. Many are afraid of the consequences of standing against this movement and therefore allow its progress unopposed.

Others have embraced this Pentecostal drift and endeavor to advance its cause at every turn. They promote it in their churches; encourage people to the symposiums and seminars, then ensure its passage into the worship experiences at every opportunity.

More than one Adventist church has been split irreconcilably because of this. Throughout the length and breadth of the country there are churches, families, and friendships shattered by the impasse that Pentecostalism brings to Adventism.

Because of the metamorphosis of worship in Adventism in Australia, the church faces an uncertain future. Few would argue that the post-modern church will be very different to that of the past. How it shapes up as the current generation of young people, immersed in Pentecostalism, takes over leadership is unknown. Whether it is too late to reverse the trend is questionable. Only God, who knows the beginning from the end, truly knows where these disturbing phenomena will take us.

### **Worship is the Issue**

Worship has always been the issue between Jesus and Satan. This point is very clear in the Bible. Who we worship determines our eternal existence. How we worship determines who we worship, likewise who we worship determines how we worship.

Just as worship has always been the issue, so to it will continue to be the point of contention as the people of God travel through the time of the end. This demands from us a careful and sober study of the subject. Only then can we come to conclusions that will be in harmony with the will of God.

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**How Can the Neo Pentecostal Movement Be Accused of Being Driven By a False Spirit?**

What makes the neo Pentecostal movement so subtle is its apparent compliance to the truth.<sup>1</sup> However underlying this faith is a set of doctrinal approaches that are neither compatible with Adventism or the Bible.

Isaiah 8:20: “To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” This is a simple text that introduces a simple concept. When a movement does not speak according to the law<sup>2</sup> or the testimony<sup>3</sup>, then the Bible states it is because there is no light in it. If Pentecostalism is to set itself up as the spiritual leader of Christendom (and subsequently Adventism), then at the very least it must embrace God’s law and His Scriptures. That it does not embrace this narrow standard disqualifies it from authority and leadership.

The Pentecostal movement falls down in a number of areas in respect to the law and the testimony. Take for example the following:

1. Total disregard and denial of the Sabbath – (Contrary to the law).<sup>4</sup>
2. Rejection of the literal Second Coming of Christ – (Contrary to the testimony).<sup>5</sup>
3. Immortality of the soul resulting at death in either eternal life or eternal hell – (Contrary to the testimony).<sup>6</sup>
4. Baptism of the Holy Spirit separate to conversion and evidenced by speaking in tongues. (Contrary to the testimony)<sup>7</sup>
5. Following the secret rapture there will be a period of 7 years called the tribulation. After this period Christ will return and personally establish his rule over the nations for a thousand years period known as the millennial reign” – (against the testimony).<sup>8</sup>

Through three waves over the last 100 years, the Pentecostal movement has not developed into a pillar of truth.<sup>9</sup> If anything, the third wave commonly known as the “Signs and Wonders Movement” has drifted further away from the truth than either the “Old Pentecostal Movement” of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century or the Neo Pentecostal approach of recent times.<sup>10</sup>

The claim of Pentecostalism to the Holy Spirit is not necessarily a validation of its legitimacy. Its relationship to the Scripture (the testimony)

and God's law (the law) must determine this. If this is the benchmark, then Neo Pentecostalism is indeed in serious trouble.

### **Role of the Holy Spirit**

The Word has some clear insights into the work of the Holy Spirit and His influence and direction to the church:

1. John 14:26: "But the Holy Spirit will come and help you, because the Father will send the Spirit to take my place. The Spirit will *teach you everything* and will remind you of what I said while I was with you". (CEV) One of the central roles of the Holy Spirit is to teach. But what is He to teach?

2. John 16:13: "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come." (CEV)

It is the function of the Holy Spirit to teach *all* truth. If Pentecostalism claims Spirit led inspiration and leadership, then it **MUST** be a storehouse of truth. It must teach the truth, preach the truth, practice the truth, draw deeply from the truth, obey and follow the truth. As has already been illustrated, this movement is neither a bastion nor proclaimer of the truth. Because of this the Holy Spirit cannot possibly lead this movement.<sup>11</sup>

### **The Difference Between Adventism and Pentecostalism**

Adventism cannot claim to have the entire "truth". What sets Adventism apart from Pentecostalism is its willingness to grow into "the truth". As the SDA church has developed over the last 150 years it has been a work in evidence of this fact. Take for example the following:

1. Changed from Sunday to Sabbath worship.
2. Changed from eating of anything to an understanding of the Biblical food laws.
3. Changed from misunderstandings on the Trinity to a Biblical understanding of the Godhead
4. Progressive understandings on righteousness by faith.
5. Acceptance and assimilation of the truth on the state of the dead.
6. Understanding and conviction of the sanctuary message.

This SDA Church is an illustration of how a denomination can move into a deeper understanding of the truth in its journey. This is clear evidence

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of the leading of the Holy Spirit – evidence that is not forthcoming in Pentecostalism.

### **False Fire Stoked by a False Spirit**

Because the Pentecostal system practices and encourages false doctrine, false worship practices have inevitably followed. This is best seen in its integration of the flesh (*world*) with the things of God. This practice makes the Pentecostal worship approach very dangerous.

1 John 2:15 says “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” Pentecostal worship is saturated in the “flesh”. At the forefront of the Charismatic approach is the use of rock music in worship. This phenomenon has taken the church (Christian and Adventist) by storm and its origins and roots are found in the Pentecostal experience.<sup>12</sup> Rock music is the front line in the Pentecostal assault, and it is used to advance its message into mainstream Christianity and Adventism. Although this article is not largely concerned with the issue of rock music in the Christian church<sup>13</sup>, its huge impact on the spread of Pentecostal practice among Christian denominations cannot be ignored. Rock music is the Pentecostal vanguard into mainstream Christianity (and Adventism). With its acceptance comes a host of other Pentecostal influences and practices that are crippling the Christian (Adventist) church and hijacking its mission<sup>14</sup>

We are crippled and hijacked because our youth are the ones ordained by God to finish the work. They are the ones who are impacted most by the Pentecostal approach. When they become immersed in the Pentecostal experience, it becomes almost impossible for them to have an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is not present at many of our youth programs when the youth are called to surrender, full commitment, and unselfish service. The use of worship based in the flesh while our youth are called to Jesus causes the Spirit to flee. It is only through a genuine walk with the Saviour that young people will find the power from the Spirit needed to finish the work. This will not and cannot happen while we continue to immerse and drown our young people in Pentecostalism.

Prominent among these are drama, creative expression (dance), speaking in tongues, holy laughter, prophesying, and healings. Through these Pentecostal mediums the focus of the Christian (Adventist) message has become an experience. Worldly entertainment and titillation is at the basis of

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this experience. The truth of the Bible has become subservient to the “experience”. This is why key doctrines of the Word are totally ignored in the urgent search for an experiential high. This spiritual high is induced through rock music and cheap Hollywood style entertainment - modes that are clearly not influenced by the Spirit of God, but rather the spirit of darkness.

These weaker and less effective vehicles have replaced the preaching of the Bible. This is Satan’s stated purpose. In many Christian churches the preaching of God’s Word has been substituted<sup>15</sup> by long drawn out theatrical dramas<sup>16</sup>, hours of heavy rock music, and a smattering of creative dance.<sup>17</sup> Bill Hybels, senior pastor of Willow Creek Community Church, states this principle when he says, “The weekend worship services rely on music, drama, and the preached gospel, largely in that order”.<sup>18</sup> This is in direct contrast to the apostle Paul exhortation to “Preach the Word”<sup>19</sup>.

The ambivalent attitude of Pentecostalism to the preaching of God’s Word has brought about the “dumbing down of Christianity” (Adventism). While thousands of people are experiencing the highs of Pentecostal worship, very few know about the precious truths of scripture that have shielded the church from error and apostasy through the millennia’s.

Pentecostalism is a movement based in false doctrines and half-truths that relies on a powerful sensory experience to overwhelm any defence or reservation the sincere Christian may have.<sup>20</sup> This is what makes it so dangerous to the Adventist church and its people.

### **How Will the Pentecostal Movement Aid In Setting Up An Image to Rome?**

Basic prophetic Adventist understanding has held that some force will unite the churches of Protestantism to reach across the gulf to Rome and join in a worldwide rebellion against God.

This truth has been ridiculed and derided by many scholars as being far fetched and ridiculous. At the basis of their scorn has been the unlikely “union” of Protestant denominations who for centuries have been deeply divided over theological beliefs and doctrines. In fact almost every attempt to find unity amongst the warring denominations of Protestantism has met with ignominious failure. However the advent of Pentecostalism has irreversibly changed all that forever!

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The Pentecostal juggernaut has rolled into the ranks of every mainstream Christian movement. The Baptists, Catholic, Uniting and Anglican denominations are all caught up in the controversy and influence of this movement. While some theologians and pastors decry its manipulative sway,<sup>21</sup> many more are accepting it as the new wave of a future. Generally the pastors and protectors of the flock are promoting Pentecostalism as a movement that speaks to a rebellious generation in both effective and powerful terms. Pentecostalism's acceptance into mainstream Christianity (including much of western Adventism) is almost complete.<sup>22</sup>

Christian commentators outside Adventist circles are recognizing this. "Christianity's "next wave" may (*will*)<sup>23</sup> come in Pentecostal form. With an estimated 500 million followers, Pentecostalism now comprises the second largest communion of Christians in the world, more than Protestants and Anglicans combined. With its continued growth and its unique understanding of Christian experience, Pentecostalism promises to reshape Christianity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>24</sup>

"The Pentecostal movement is not simply a new denomination," says Margaret M. Poloma of the department of sociology of the University of Akron. "The rise of Pentecostalism is more analogous to the rise of Protestantism in Christianity than the birth of a new denomination. It's an example of the restructuring of Christianity."<sup>25</sup>

Because Pentecostalism is a movement rather than a denomination, it has been able to infiltrate into Christianity smoothly. This is evidenced everywhere.

Most major Christian youth festivals in Australia are organized and run by the Pentecostals. "Youth Alive" is an example of one of the largest ministry programs in our country and is arguably the most successful.<sup>26</sup> Thousands attend these youth events that are saturated and immersed in Pentecostalism.

Those youth programs not run by the Pentecostals are so heavily influenced by this genre of youth ministry that they are all but indistinguishable.<sup>27</sup> A interdenominational Christian rock festival in New Zealand called "Parachute" is an example of a mega Christian event that attracts young and old in their tens of thousands.<sup>28</sup> Peoples of all faiths and religions are a part of this exciting gathering, and it too is immersed in the Pentecostal wave.



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In every major city of the western world it is Pentecostalism that is overwhelmingly driving Christian education and training of the laity. In Sydney, “Hillsong”<sup>29</sup> sets the pace in Christian conferences and training.<sup>30</sup> Christians in there thousands (including hundreds of Adventists) are attending these training events held in up market city locations. Armed with new knowledge and exciting ideas that seem to work, leaders from every faith stream back into their churches to implement what they have learned. Almost all of Protestantism (*including Adventism*) is gathering at the feet of the revered Pentecostal elders.

Where once there was theological division among Protestant denominations, now there is spiritual harmony and it is authored and held together by a Pentecostal worship experience. This sense of unity, through worship, powerfully overrides long held suspicions, bigotries, and doctrinal differences among the many denominations. This is a watershed in the experience of the Christian faith and especially Adventism.

I believe that this new Christian unity, driven by the spirit of darkness and powered by false doctrine and half truths, will allow a united protestant movement to reach across the gulf and grab the hand of Rome.<sup>31</sup> It is still difficult to do anything but speculate on how this will exactly happen. Nevertheless, I believe that this phenomenon will continue to evolve and the future will answer our questions as it unfolds.

## **FIRE IN REVELATION 13**

Revelation 13:13, 14: “And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.”

What we can be sure of is that the fire of Revelation 13 that unites Protestantism and prepares her to join with Rome can be no other power other than the mighty movement of Pentecostalism in Christendom. This conclusion can be justified by the following:

- i. A false Spirit leads Pentecostalism.
- ii. This is exemplified in the reticence of this movement to follow or obey the truth.

iii. Because of this, Pentecostalism is a mixture of half-truths and falsehoods, relying on an “experience” rather than “*the experience embedded in the truth*”.

iv. Pentecostalism is a religious experience and so because of this can be seen as “being from heaven”.

v. All three waves of Pentecostalism rely on the miraculous rather than the truth to legitimize their positions.<sup>32</sup>

vi. Pentecostalism’s influence on Christianity is profound and overwhelming – it is truly a world wide phenomenon.

vii. Christianity has been united through Pentecostal practice.<sup>33</sup>

viii. All previous doctrinal objections and differences are presently being overlooked or removed to acquiesce to the power of the Pentecostal phenomena.

ix. Because the Pentecostal movement is “spirit” (false) driven it is fire (false) based.

x. It is a fire driven movement that is leading people away from the truth and thus away from God.

xi. Because of all of the above, Pentecostalism can safely be said to be the fire that deceives the whole world and drives Christianity into the arms of Rome.

### **An Important Observation**

At this juncture we should note that this would not be possible if the Christian church would acknowledge and practice the truth as found in the Bible. Protestantism has rejected Sola Scripture. That it openly disobeys the truths of the Bible<sup>34</sup> has left the church wide open to Pentecostalism. The Spirit is forced to flee in the face of disobedience, the Bible is rejected as the source of truth,<sup>35</sup> and the Christian church falls to the deception of a good-looking fire driven movement authored and directed by Satan.

That Adventism in Australia is being caught up in this last day deception is probably unavoidable considering the enormous influence Pentecostalism has been able to exert right across the pendulum of Christianity. However it is not justifiable. Of all the Christian movements, it is Adventism that should have been most immune. We have wonderful insights into prophecy together with the counsel of Ellen White’s ministry. That we are so easily led is a wonder.

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## Pentecostalism's Threat To Adventism

The threat of Pentecostalism to Adventism is unparalleled in its danger. Following are some of the perils this “*spirit*” driven movement poses:

**1. Loss of Identity** – As we have embraced the Pentecostal movement Adventism is loosing its spiritual and doctrinal identity. Our “worship experience” is the same as any other denomination or church. Because of this many of our people (*especially youth*) are leaving us for a “better worship experience” – a Pentecostal one at a Sunday worshipping church.

**2. False Worship** – Thousands of our youth (*and others*) are worshipping to the heavy throbbing beat of rock music. Together with flashing colored lights and dancing, the end time worship scenes (*in our churches*) prophesied by Ellen White almost 100 years ago are coming true in this generation.<sup>36</sup>

**3. Ecumenism** – The shared Pentecostal worship experience is making it simpler for Adventist to identify with the other denominations. Because the worship experience has become so central, doctrine has become unimportant. Often it is seen as being nothing more than a divisive irritant. In many instances it is no longer fashionable or permissible to concentrate on distinctive doctrines that may cause disunity and disharmony with other Christian denominations. The Sabbath, the Sanctuary, the Mark of the Beast, and other distinctly Adventist beliefs are in many quarters becoming an embarrassment. The unity Adventism now shares with most other Christian religions through the Pentecostal worship experience is cultivating pressure on these distinctive doctrines and those who promote them. As we lose our doctrinal inimitability together with our unique approach to worship, Adventism risks being swallowed up in the “feel good” ecumenical wave sweeping across Christianity.

**4. Loss of Spirituality** – Spirituality comes from experiencing and being with God. Because the spirit behind Pentecostalism is not of God, real spirituality in the presence of this false spirit will decrease rather than increase. This is why we see the increasing introduction of the “*things of the world*”<sup>37</sup> into corporate Pentecostal (and Protestant) worship.

**5. Loss of tithe and offerings** – Parallel to the advent of Pentecostalism is the real loss of tithes and offerings. This has come about largely because of two factors:

i. Disaffected members are sending their tithes and offerings to independent ministries who oppose the Pentecostal drift.<sup>38</sup>

ii. The loss of spirituality through Pentecostalism is bringing about a lack of commitment. This is seen in the massive loss of revenue the church in Australia is currently experiencing. Many members no longer see the Adventist church offering anything distinctive or unique and thus do not practice sacrificial giving at any level. It is my opinion that until we recognize this fact and allow God to cleanse us from this phenomenon plaguing the church, we will continue to see the revenue from tithe and offerings decrease.

**6. Loss of members** – The church in Adventist Australia continues to lose members on a grand scale. Many local churches are closing their doors. Where once Adventism thrived it now is weak or tragically non-existent. I believe the strong Pentecostal thrust of many churches and worship services is directly responsible for the majority of the apostasies and departures we are now faced with. No longer can people call on a unique experience with God based in His Word. Without this practice, the troubles, trials and challenges of life are sweeping us out of the church and its message.

### **What Can We Do?**

**1. Love** – The battle over Pentecostalism in the Adventist Church is fierce. Friendships are lost and families are split. This is antichrist behavior. God is love (*1 John 4:8*). There is no room in the experience of Christians for animosity, impatience or loathing of others – no matter what their views may be. As Adventists we must love each other. It is our love for each other that confirms our love for God and irrefutably establishes our claim to Christianity. If we do not love our brothers and sisters then we do not love God (*1 John 4:20, 21*). It takes God-breathed wisdom and love to be able to discuss these issues – disagree – and continue to love. If we do not love then we may be theologically right (*or wrong*), yet lose everything.

**2. Respect** – In this discussion we need to continue to respect each other and our differing views. Even when the discussion is hot and the disagreements intense, God demands that we treat each other with mutual respect and forbearance. There is no place for rudeness, arrogance or

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condescending attitudes. This increases misunderstandings and tension making it more difficult for progressive and fruitful conclusions.

**3. Silence** – If the spirit of love and respect is not present then it is sometimes better to keep silent.

**4. Prayer** – Both sides in the discussion need to pray – by themselves and with each other. Prayer is one of the mediums God will use to unite His church and settle this discussion.<sup>39</sup>

**5. Go to the Bible** – We are the church of the Bible. This book must be studied and adhered too if we vision the continuation of a strong Adventist church free of the influences of Pentecostalism.

**6. Ellen White** – Ellen White’s writings have a powerful amount of material on this subject. If she is God’s messenger to His last day church, then surely it is time that we started to acknowledge and credit these writings with authority. If we had heeded her council on this subject we would never have found ourselves in this inexorable mess!

**7. Have a relationship with God** – It is very difficult to reach a satisfactory conclusion on this subject when all parties are not fully committed to Jesus. When both parties in the discussion are dedicated to a daily walk with God, then they will find God’s will. However if both or one of the parties is outside the Kingdom of God then tension, arguments, and hostility will usually ensue.

**8. Be relevant in corporate worship** – There is no excuse for the church to reside in the 1950 or 60’s. *Worship must be relevant.* Relevance is not Pentecostalism. We should continually endeavor to reach the public and our members in a language they understand while not crossing the God given boundaries as outlined in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy.

Our music must be vibrant and enthusiastic. The worship service should be well planned and must have as its focus the honor of God. Good worship is also inclusive worship. Both the youth and the aged together with our families ought to be actively involved. The Bible should be the basis of our preaching and study during the corporate Sabbath worship services.

Entertainment must be avoided, and we must do our part by bringing the Holy Spirit **WITH US** as we come to worship God each Sabbath.

While endeavoring to experience worship in a relevant setting it is also very important to remember and incorporate all that is positive from the past. True worship that honors God will include that which is good from the past while integrating that which is proper from the present.

Resistance of the faithful church to Data Projectors, Overheads, and other technological tools is foolish. This foolishness includes the unnecessary prohibition of musical instruments.<sup>40</sup> *It is the musicians not the instruments who choose to uphold or dishonor God.*

The Pentecostal movement in Australian Adventism uses every vehicle it can to promote its unrestrained message. When possible and appropriate our church should use vehicles and modes<sup>41</sup> of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to encourage beautiful worship that *uplifts and honors* God.

**9. Recognize that our youth<sup>42</sup> are different from the older generations of the church** – They often don't wear ties and suits. Their language and interests are different.<sup>43</sup> Sometimes their approaches to life, God, and worship are unlike the expectations and practices of some in the older church.<sup>44</sup> Nevertheless many of our youth love Jesus. They are seeking God. We need to encourage them into the *truth*, rather than the *customs and traditions* of OUR past.<sup>45</sup>

**10. Resist** – Pentecostalism in Adventism should be resisted. This must be done in an orderly fashion through the appropriate means.

The resistance should (in most instances) be in-house (*through church board and business meetings, Conference, Union, Division and General Conference sessions*). We should talk to our church elders, pastors, conference administrators, leaders etc. about our concerns. When nothing seems to be achieved we must keep talking, keep writing, and keep praying – **NEVER EVER GIVE UP.**

Our resistance must be long and sustained. It should be patient and gentle. We should try to present the truth in a clear and precise manner. When we present at board and business meetings our approach should be well founded, rational, and sound. At all times we must argue the cause with the gentle Spirit of Jesus permeating our own lives.

When the faithful continue to experience failure and rejection in their efforts to advance the truth on this matter, then they should meet together for prayer. Gather together in each other's homes, and bring the presence of the Almighty down upon your church and its leaders. Let Him change what you can't. I believe this is the finest form of resistance each of us can participate in.

### **Options We Can Take**

I am a pastor who believes in the Seventh-day Adventist message in its entirety. At times I run across strong opposition, yet in 15 years I have never had to leave the church to remain faithful. I am preaching the straight Word in one of the largest churches in the South Pacific Division. I am not getting any significant trouble from any of the brethren or leaders of our Division, Union or Conference Church. I believe that there is room in Adventism to practice and preach a faithful walk with Jesus without Pentecostal influences.

People who consider that the only option to "progress" the church is to initiate or join an unfaithful independent ministry, do nothing more than participate in an organization that is unsympathetic to the cause of the church and ultimately to God.

If we attend a church that continues to participate in unfaithful practices then there are options we can take:

- i. Find another faithful church.
- ii. Plant a new church through the appropriate channels.

iii. Stay in the unfaithful church praying, talking, and agitating for change! I believe more of our faithful members need to stay with our unfaithful churches. Such people are the salt, the light on the hill – through them God will bring about the revival we all long for. The strength of our relationship with Christ should be in our own private devotions – most of us should be spiritually mature enough to stay in an unfaithful Pentecostal worshiping Adventist church while gently encouraging true worship! (*Despite the fact that we are sometimes criticized, demonized, misunderstood, ostracized and maligned*).

**10. Accept the leadership of the church as God appointed.** Sometimes the leaders are faithful and at other times they fall short. Nevertheless

God put them in their positions! He sets up and pulls down leaders in His time and in His way. God did this in Scripture and He continues to do it in the church today. We need to do all we can to maintain spiritual purity in the church and then we must lean on God. He is the Father of the church. He is in control. We must exercise patience and learn to watch as He works marvelously with the church and its leadership.

We should never forget David's example in his treatment of Saul—the unfaithful king of Israel. In voice or action David refused to harm the anointed of God. This must be our attitude.

I am convinced that we have many leaders who love Jesus, are faithful, and are doing the right thing by God and His church. Our perception of them is often tempered by misunderstanding and ignorance of what they have done and what they are doing. I believe that the church of God should be praying daily that God will endow the leaders and pastors with wisdom, courage and grace. They surely need prayer support in the current times of apostasy, confusion, and fear.

When leaders are unfaithful we should talk to them, pray for them, and then speak up clearly in nominating committees (*that appoint our leaders*) with fearlessness and love (*when we are appointed to them*).

**11. Avoid extremes**—This includes extremes in Christian lifestyle and practice. The 27 fundamentals represent Adventism. These great Biblical truths should be the theological foundation of our faith and practice. Each fundamental is rooted in Jesus and the Bible!

It damages the cause of Christ when the church clings to ways that are not rooted in the Word. Insistence on the sole use of the KJV<sup>46</sup>, the needless and pointless opposition to modern technology<sup>47</sup>, the insistence on certain forms of dress<sup>48</sup>, the dogged slavery to a certain structure of worship<sup>49</sup>; all play into the hands of Satan and those who walk the Pentecostal Road. Our youth (*and others*) rightly see this as hypocritical and un-Scriptural. We must be seen as fair minded people who can rightly divide the word of truth. Let us move when we can, advance the gospel through every means proper, and stand firm when sin and deception endeavor to enter the holy doors of God's church.



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**Conclusion**

Pentecostalism presents extreme danger to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This is an end time battle for the people of God. I am not sure how much damage the church will sustain in this battle. However I believe we are at present losing thousands and thousands of precious youth to this apostasy. I pray that we will through God's grace navigate through this storm—nevertheless I am deeply concerned. Because of this I would like to end this series of articles with a challenge and a call:

**1. Leaders of the Church** – Be sure of your calling. You are where you are because God has put you there. In your life and in your ministry God has seen qualities that He wants to use – that is why you are a leader. Be faithful to this calling. Realize your potential and be what God wants you to be. Be strong and courageous and stand up for God and truth at ALL COSTS!

Evaluate and pray about this phenomenon. Let God lead you through your daily experience with Him in His Word and prayer. When you become convicted – ACT!

Protect the church as God has called you to do. Stand up and be men and women of courage, see evil and deception for what it is, and then lead us out of this apostasy and through God's grace bring the church home to God.

There are thousands and thousands of us in the corporate church who will support you if you stand. Above all you will have the support of God. With Him you will never loose. We love you and are praying for you – please lead us!

**2. Church members** – Pray for your elders, pastors, and presidents. Resist this apostasy in your own small way. Be Christians of balance and reason. Do not make your stand on the traditions of the past but rather in the timeless truth of God's Word – pray for wisdom to know the difference.

Above all continue to unconditionally love others. If we loose this we loose everything. If we maintain this we gain eternity.

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**PRAYER**

Dear God

Bless our leaders and give them wisdom, strength and courage. Give us wisdom to understand the truth. Remember your church and save us in our hour of need. May we glorify and honor YOU in a world that is dark and lost. Please do not forsake us, forgive us, and hear our prayers we pray.

In Jesus name,

Amen!

Feel free to can contact me via email. My email address is:  
[lgrolimund@kooe.com.au](mailto:lgrolimund@kooe.com.au)

**ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> On Hillsong's (large Australian Pentecostal church) website under "what we believe" is a description of the basic tenets of their faith. Their belief structure as displayed on their Internet site could be the belief structure of any Adventist Church in the world.

See:<http://www.hillsong.com/church/bin/view.pl?sitename=church&page=beliefs&showAboutUs=true&showAboutUs=true&showbuilding=true>

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 20 is a succinct compilation of God's law – the ten commandments

<sup>3</sup> Revelation 19:10 identify's the "testimony of Jesus as being the "Spirit of Prophecy". 1 Peter 1:19 – 21 clarifies the "Spirit of Prophecy" as the Scripture. 2 Timothy 3:16 reinforces the authority and truthfulness of all Scripture.

<sup>4</sup> The Sabbath is at the very heart of a Christian walk with God. It is Divinely designed for the genuine Christian to spend time with a personal God in an intimate relationship. This is a day of worship and fellowship with Him. It is the central plank of Christianity as it is the central theme of a genuine relationship with Jesus. To openly refute this doctrine as the Pentecostal movement does, is to question the foundational principles as set out in the Bible for a relationship with Him i.e. Bible Study, Prayer, and the Sabbath – the 3 planks of a successful relationship with God. See Gen 2:1 – 3; Ex 20:8 – 11; Lk 4:16; Isa 66:22, 23.

<sup>5</sup> Most Pentecostal groups reject the literal Second Coming of Jesus choosing rather to accept the secret rapture. For a brief summation of Pentecostal beliefs follow the links below.

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[http://www.aog-harlow.co.uk/what\\_we\\_believe.php](http://www.aog-harlow.co.uk/what_we_believe.php); <http://experts.about.com/q/2256/1864929.htm>; See point 7

<sup>6</sup>The misunderstanding that the majority of Pentecostals have over the immortality of the soul leaves this movement open to the occult. If we never die then it is feasible that we can have contact with dead loved ones!

<sup>7</sup>Christians believe that baptism of the Holy Spirit cannot be separated from conversion and is evidenced by any or all of the gifts of the spirit – including tongues. See 1 Corinthians 12 and 13 together with Matthew 3:1 – 12. <http://experts.about.com/q/2256/1864929.htm>; See point 13

<sup>8</sup><http://experts.about.com/q/2256/1864929.htm>; See point 14. The Bible clearly teaches in Revelation 19 – 22 that Christ will come, with the saints’ returns to heaven for 1000 years, and then re-establishes His Kingdom on earth for eternity.

<sup>9</sup> See – <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/char/abrief.htm>

<sup>10</sup> The term “third wave” was first coined by C. Peter Wagner in 1983: “I see historically that we’re now in the third wave. The first wave of the moving of the Holy Spirit began at the beginning of the century with the Pentecostal movement. The second wave was the charismatic movement that began in the fifties in the major denominations. Both of those waves continue today.

“I see the third wave of the eighties as an opening of the straight-line evangelicals and other Christians to the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that the Pentecostals and charismatics have experienced, but without becoming either charismatic or Pentecostal. I think we are in a new wave of something that now has lasted almost through our whole century” (Peter Wagner, “The Third Wave?” *PastoralRenewal*, July-August 1983, pp. 1-5). This movement is also called the Signs and Wonders Movement and the Vineyard Movement. It has been a rapidly growing movement, drawing adherents from both charismatic and non-charismatic churches. The movement stresses “power evangelism” whereby the gospel is explained and demonstrated by way of supernatural signs and wonders.

There are three key leaders of this movement: (1) John Wimber, probably the central figure of the movement. He was the founder of the Vineyard church movement upon coming out of Chuck Smith’s Calvary Chapel movement, and he taught with C. Peter Wagner at Fuller Seminary. The course

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was entitled “Signs, Wonders and Church Growth.” (2) C. Peter Wagner, professor at Fuller Seminary School of World Missions, where he co-taught with John Wimber. (3) Paul Cain, an influential “modern day prophet,” a disciple of William Branham whom Cain called “the greatest faith healer of our time” and the “greatest prophet of all time.” Branham was a heretical false prophet who held erroneous view on the Godhead and on the Trinity. In the Signs and Wonders movement, tongues speaking can be found, but the gift of tongues is not stressed as much as it is in the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. The Signs and Wonders movement (Vineyard movement) does stress the gift of prophecy (insisting on the importance of modern day prophets) and the gift of healing.” Pastor George Zeller, The Middletown Bible Church adapted from the Appendix of a paper (“The Charismatic Movement: 35 Doctrinal Issues”) See: <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Psychology/char/35.htm>, (worth reading)

<sup>11</sup>. Of course this is not the same as saying individual Pentecostal believers are without the Holy Spirit. It is the system of Pentecostalism that is under discussion, not the walk of individual Christians with Jesus.

<sup>12</sup>. As Pentecostalism began to develop in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century loud music dominated by drums and noise was used to drive worshippers into ecstatic spiritual experiences. This is why Ellen White spoke against such excesses. See <http://www.egwtext.WhiteEstate.org/cgi-bin/egw2html?C=39426599&K=205057022610418661>

<sup>13</sup>. You can receive my article “Rock Music and the Christian Church” by emailing me on [lgrolimund@koee.com.au](mailto:lgrolimund@koee.com.au) . I will send it to you immediately.

<sup>14</sup>. We are crippled and hijacked because our youth are the ones ordained by God to finish the work. They are the ones who are impacted most by the Pentecostal approach. When they become immersed in the Pentecostal experience, it becomes almost impossible for them to have an authentic relationship with Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is not present at many of our youth programs when the youth are called to surrender, full commitment, and unselfish service. The use of worship based in the flesh while our youth are called to Jesus causes the Spirit to flee. It is only through a genuine walk with the Saviour that young people will find the power from the Spirit needed to finish the work. This will not and cannot happen while we continue to immerse and drown our young people in Pentecostalism.

See <http://www.egwtext.WhiteEstate.org/cgi-bin/egw2html?C=77039259&K=204235022610418298>; <http://www.egwtext.WhiteEstate.org/cgiatement-bin/egw2html?C=3984109&K=204634022610418607>

<sup>15.</sup> The following statement on Willow Creek’s (contemporary church in Chicago attracting over 20000 people every Sunday) approach illustrates my point; “Willow Creek’s investment in contemporary music and drama strategically avoids the usual over reliance on the preached wordÉ” How to Reach Secular People, p.152

<sup>16.</sup> At a recent Pathfinder Camporee I witnessed the demise of the preaching hour. Each evening program was preceded by an hour-long drama production. At the conclusion of the drama, when the preacher got up to speak, hundreds of Pathfinders together with their leaders streamed out of the amphitheatre leaving God’s messenger with very few Pathfinders to speak too.

<sup>17.</sup> If you live in the Australia you can validate this claim for yourself. Go to almost any SDA youth rally, the youth & teen tents at camp meetings, or one of the many summer camps the church runs. You will find in almost every case, the described Pentecostal model is the one being used by our Conferences, Union, and Division youth departments. It is to be expected that many of the local churches will follow suite, as it is the church organization that rightly sets the pace on the direction and style of worship in Australia. That they have largely chosen the Pentecostal approach should be disturbing!

<sup>18</sup> How To Reach Secular People, p153

<sup>19.</sup> 2 Timothy 4:2

<sup>20.</sup> This is a sensory experience induced by rock music, flashing lights, hype, and noise. Too often this is leading to tongues speaking, prophesying, and healings – even among Adventists. What makes these phenomena’s so disturbing is that they are not based in the truth, but rather in a spirit that neither upholds or practices the truth. The Holy Spirit will move through the speaking of tongues, prophesying and healings, but only when the vehicles for such miraculous phenomena’s are practicing and promoting the truth. Then we will see the true work of the Spirit and we will experience the real fruit!

<sup>21.</sup> See the following 3 links: <http://www.traditioninaction.org/HotTopics/d002ht.htm>; [http://www.pbministries.org/Baptists/Laurence%20Justice/embrace\\_pentecostalism.htm](http://www.pbministries.org/Baptists/Laurence%20Justice/embrace_pentecostalism.htm); <http://logosresourcepages.org/charismatic.htm>

<sup>22.</sup> This is borne out in the increasing number of Protestant and Catholic churches accepting and practicing the Pentecostal approach to worship.

<sup>23</sup> Italics mine

<sup>24</sup> See: [http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/quick\\_question32.html](http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/quick_question32.html)

<sup>25.</sup> Ms. Paloma authored the study, “The Spirit Made Me Go”. See it at [http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/research\\_pentecostalism\\_palomaart1.html](http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/research_pentecostalism_palomaart1.html)

<sup>26.</sup> See <http://www.nsw.youthalive.org.au/events.htm>;

<sup>27.</sup> Many SDA youth programs in Australia are indistinguishable to the ones run by the Pentecostals.

<sup>28.</sup> See <http://p04.parachutemusic.com/frameset.asp>

<sup>29.</sup> A large Pentecostal Church based in the affluent northwest Bible belt of Sydney.

<sup>30.</sup> See <http://www.hillsong.com/conferences/colour/bin/view.pl?sitename=colourconference&page=index&showcolourconference=true>;  
<http://www.hillsong.com/conferences/colour/bin/view.pl?sitename=colourconference&page=index&showcolourconference=true>;  
<http://www.hillsong.com/conferences/colour/bin/view.pl?sitename=colourconference&page=index&showcolourconference=true>.

<sup>31.</sup> See <http://www.egwtext.WhiteEstate.org/cgi-bin/egw2html?C=20881961&K=193849022210405633> I believe that the false working of a (dark) spirit in Pentecostalism has at its base the power of the Occult. That is why we see such disturbing spiritual phenomena’s – tongues, raucous laughter, false miracles etc. I am at present putting together another article re this aspect in Pentecostalism.

<sup>32.</sup> Neo Pentecostalism relies on prophecies and visions – sometimes healings and rarely tongues or miracles.

<sup>33.</sup> Including some of Adventism

<sup>34.</sup> Mainstream Christianity mostly rejects the truths of the Sabbath, Investigative Judgement, Health Message, Second Coming, State of the Dead, Coming Judgement, Creation, etc..

<sup>35.</sup> That is why issues such as homosexuality, abortion etc, are issues in Christianity.

<sup>36.</sup> See <http://www.egwtext.WhiteEstate.org/cgi-bin/egw2html?C=22646438&K=214634031410426798>

<sup>37.</sup> Rock music, dancing, flashing lights, long theatrical dramas etc.

<sup>38.</sup> All tithes should enter the storehouse of the corporate church. Supporting Independent Ministries do not accept tithe. 3ABN, Voice of Prophecy, Carter INC., Amazing Facts – are all examples of independent ministries who do not accept tithe and yet are thriving through the support of generous gifts from the laity! They have a powerful influence on the mission and spirituality of the church in America. I have yet to meet anyone who can mount a successful defense for the taking of tithe to support an independent ministry. There is absolutely no Biblical example of any ordinary Israelite

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taking tithes away from the Levitical priesthood – who incidentally were often very unfaithful!

<sup>39</sup> Certain sections of the Adventist church are so far down the Pentecostal road that it is probably only the intercessory prayer of God's faithful saints that can ever bring them back

<sup>40</sup> I have found it very difficult to incorporate drums into worship. They inevitably get louder to the point where they are uncontrolled. Because of this I have chosen to keep them out of worship services I have an influence over – and I do encourage others to do the same.

<sup>41</sup> Data Projectors, Overhead Projectors etc..

<sup>42</sup> It is our youth who are most dramatically effected by the Pentecostal push into Adventism.

<sup>43</sup> We should not exclude youth from participatory or leadership roles in the church because of their contemporary dress or youthful language.

<sup>44</sup> At times youth will make mistakes when leading out in worship. They should be treated gently and led lovingly.

<sup>45</sup> Although the worship expectations of our youth can be divergent to that of the older church, this is not an open door ticket into the Pentecostal approach. Likewise the customs and traditions of the older church (order of service, use of hymns only, only piano and organ used in music, suits and ties only in church, no technological helps) can be a hindrance to our youth finding Jesus. Both the older and younger generations need to respect each other's expectations and in a spirit of humility and reverence work together to find corporate worship that blesses all and honours God!

<sup>46</sup> I love this beautiful old translation, however it is not the only one that God is using. It is a sin to stop the Word of God reaching the people in the modern vernacular – this is what Catholicism attempted to do in the middle ages. Let us thank God that there are so many accurate translations that can bless the people in their language.

<sup>47</sup> Let's use the data projector, computers, and anything else that will help to uplift Jesus, honor His cause, and share His message.

<sup>48</sup> Suits and ties are not the only appropriate form of dress for men while worshipping God. There is certainly more room for women regarding dress than a below the knee skirt and long sleeved blouse.

<sup>49</sup> God is a God of creativity. We do not need to be tied down to just three hymns, a prayer, followed by an offering and the sermon. There is nothing wrong with this approach, however to move outside these barriers while adhering to the principles of worship as espoused in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy is both good and proper.