
The late Gary McGee, Pentecostal mission historian *par excellence*, has published throughout his entire career on the intense relation between Pentecostal self-identification and the movement’s missionary activities. In this work, McGee argues for an essential link between the expectancy of miracles and supernatural occurrences and the explosive growth of missions – and American Pentecostalism – in the late nineteenth and twentieth century. As McGee passed away in December, 2008, he did not live to see the publication of his *magnum opus*. The monograph therefore starts with an appraisal of the author by Byron Klaus, followed by a fine summary of its content by Annette Newberry. This clear overview at the beginning is no luxury, as the volume is interspersed with hundreds of short historical accounts and anecdotes related to the main theme – intriguing and thought-provoking, to say the least.

In the opening chapter, Gary McGee sketches the atmosphere in the modern Protestant missionary movement in the nineteenth century. Missionary organizations were optimistic due to the logistic possibilities which modernity brought, but also perplexed by the huge crowd of heathens to be reached. The comparison with the first-century apostles was easily made, but was nagging because an essential element of apostolic mission was felt painfully lacking in their days: the power of the Holy Spirit evidenced with miracles. A large outpouring of the Spirit which would eclipse even the earlier awakenings and serve – perhaps save – the missionary cause was eagerly prayed for (chapter 2). By the end of the nineteenth century, so McGee explains, all was in place for the arrival of the Pentecostal blessing in radical Evangelical circles in North-America (chapter 3). Expectations of Christ’s coming were high and both Wesleyan and Reformed traditions shared an emphasis on power and purity. Faith mission was modelled by George Müller, focusing on evangelising the whole world without worrying too much about structures and finances. McGee also signals a growing expectation of a reoccurrence of miracles in the Last Days. While just before the turn of the century Evangelical missionary organisations had high hopes to evangelize the world in their generation, many were at the same time frustrated by the prospect of an inevitably slow process of foreign language learning. With telling examples, such as the Polhills and Jennie Glassy, McGee shows how tongue speech as a missionary tool became a hotly debated issue. The fourth chapter recounts the first
occurrence of tongue speech in Topeka on January 1, 1901 under the auspices of Charles Parham. In the fifth chapter, McGee describes how in the first decade of the twentieth century, Pentecostal(-like) revivals all over the world led to an increase of enthusiastic Pentecostal missions in the tradition of the faith missions. Meanwhile, dozens of (non-Pentecostal) Protestant missionary organisations were seeking for more unity in and after Edinburgh 1910. When the unity claimed at Edinburgh unravelled in the years following, it became clear that twentieth-century Christian missions were to be characterised by a huge diversity. But McGee argues that Pentecostal missionaries were to stand out, as they ‘were travelling [...] to the mission lands with a spirituality that uniquely connected to the worldviews and needs of their hearers’ (p. 98).

In chapter six, McGee calls attention to the fact that the importance of tongues in early Pentecostalism was not questioned because of the perceived lack of missionary-linguistic success. It led simply to a shift in emphasis. Spirit Baptism was seen to bring empowerment for personal life and missions and the concomitant tongues enabled one to exercise superior praise and intercession. Within a decade after the early Pentecostal revivals, several efforts were made to establish Pentecostal mission agencies (chapter seven). McGee describes the struggles that this involved, due to the Pentecostal emphasis on individual promptings by the Spirit. Yet, by 1920 some agencies were successfully installed, both denominational and independent. McGee stresses the continuity with pre-Pentecostal missionary agencies and especially the influence of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) stands out. In the 1920s, the focus on individual and Spirit-led mission slowly receded due to growing recognition of the need of preparatory studies and strategies of church planting. Pentecostals took over from other Protestant organisations the emphasis on the Three Selfs (self-governance, self-support, self-propagation) and spiced it with the ‘Pentecostal Standard’: evangelism always had to come first, prior to education and charity. In real life however, McGee explains, the picture was more balanced (chapter eight). In his chapter on ‘Healing Movements and Misgivings’ (chapter nine), McGee discusses the Fundamentalist/Pentecostal controversy surrounding healing and focuses on the missionary effects of healing workers not only within North-American Pentecostalism (pre- and post-World War II) but also in the Anglican Communion (focusing on the ministry of James Hickson) and Majority World Pentecostals (such as John Sung in China). In his final chapter, McGee discusses the diversity of Pentecostalism a century after Topeka,