

The Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements



This is the next chapter of the book, [The Foundations Under Attack: The Roots of Apostasy – By Michael de Semlyen](#)

Chapter 14 **The Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements**

John Wesley's Arminian teachings had inspired the founders of The Holiness Movement, who introduced into the Christian community the idea that "sinless perfection" or "entire sanctification" can be achieved in this life through a second work of grace or a "second blessing." In time this would become identified with "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit" and the speaking with tongues of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement. In his book *The Holiness – Pentecostal Movement in the United States*, pentecostal historian Vinson Synan's description of the arrival of the "first wave" of Pentecostalism (preceding the Charismatic second and the current signs and wonders' "third wave") is instructive:

"Although the Pentecostal Movement began in the United States, itself a significant fact, its theological and intellectual origins were British. The basic premises of the movement's theology were constructed by John Wesley in the Eighteenth century. As a product of Methodism, the Holiness-Pentecostal movement traces its lineage through the Wesleys to Anglicanism and thence to Roman Catholicism."

"This theological heritage places the Pentecostals outside the Calvinistic, Reformed tradition which culminated in the Baptist and Presbyterian movements in the United States. The basic Pentecostal theological position might be described as Arminian, perfectionistic, premillennial and charismatic."

Evan Roberts and the Welsh Revival

At the beginning of the twentieth century, once again there was much talk of "revival". Historian R.C. Wetzel notes that in 1904, "Evan Roberts began the Welsh Revival." This comment seems perceptive, for it is unlikely that this year long aberration was begun by GOD, marked as it was with a "de-emphasis on preaching, ... interruptions by worshippers, stress on the baptism of the spirit, and Spirit guidance... (and) ...Lay preachers such as Evan Roberts at center-stage.. ." This appears to have been a thoroughly Arminian event.

Its historical significance lies in the fact that it was the precursor to, and has been linked with, the "Pentecostal Revival" which began at Azusa Street in Los Angeles in 1906 and is said by many to be continuing today. The

Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements records that “in 1904-05 reports came to Los Angeles of a substantial revival that was taking place in Wales, largely associated with the work of Evan Roberts. In Chicago, ‘Holiness’ publisher, S.B. Shaw was the author of *The Great Revival in Wales* (1905), which was widely read in the Los Angeles area in 1905 and 1906. People who read the book began to establish cottage prayer meetings where they sought God for a similar revival among the churches of Los Angeles.”

Therefore it is clear that the name of Evan Roberts is closely connected with both the Welsh revival and with later happenings at Los Angeles. A quote from the preface written for Frank Bartleman’s book, *What Really Happened at Azusa Street*, seems to be both ironical and self-contradictory:

“To the praise and honor of God, the Azusa Street Revival brought glory to no man. As testimony to this, no man’s name is connected with it. However, it can be safely said that no more faithful witness to its events could be found than *Frank*.”

In fact, it can be argued that Azusa Street was not, as Pentecostals now insist, a spontaneous “revival”, nor a sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, but was initiated by Evan Roberts in Wales via his correspondence with Frank Bartleman in Los Angeles.

Welsh “Revival” Spreads to North America

Frank Bartleman is described as “the primary chronicler of Pentecostal origins in Los Angeles.” In the preface to his book, originally entitled *How Pentecostals Came to Los Angeles*, it is stated, “pamphlets telling of the visitation of the Spirit of God in Wales in 1904 provided the spark for the great revival in Los Angeles in 1906. During 1905, as Frank Bartleman corresponded with Evan Roberts in Wales and they agreed in prayer, as he and others spread the message of the Welsh revival ... the spark became a spreading flame that burst forth into a world-wide conflagration of Pentecostal Revival in the Church of Jesus Christ.”

The various manifestations and excesses of the *Toronto Blessing* and its offspring, the *Pensacola Outpouring* (or *Laughing Revival*) in the 1990s are nothing new. The same characteristics and phenomena were to be found at Azusa Street and were experienced during the Latter Rain movement of 1948. In all of them the experiences or “blessings” were passed on from person to person. Just as more recently people have travelled to Toronto or Pensacola to obtain the “Blessing”, in like manner an earlier generation travelled to Los Angeles to seek revival and the outpouring or “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” with “the gift of tongues.”

All of these movements have one common denominator—they are all Arminian. They all preached and continue to preach a “gospel” that is unlikely to save. We know that the Sovereign God can save in any situation in which He is truly sought. We also know from the Apostle Paul that “*whether in pretence, or in truth Christ is preached*” -Phil. 1:18 there can be cause for rejoicing. However, we remember “*that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils*” 1 Tim.4:1

Scripture teaches us to expect apostasy, not revival. Church history demonstrates this over and over again. This has perhaps never been more true than it is today. For we are now in a time of great apostasy. Counterfeit Christianity is again in the ascendancy, with the foundations of the true faith very much under attack. *"Another gospel"* is being preached with *"another Jesus"*, and *"another spirit"* 2 Cor.11:4 and with *"all deceivableness of unrighteousness"*. *"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."* 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12

This is a solemn matter. It is Almighty God Himself who sends delusion upon those who *"received not the love of the truth."* 2 Thessalonians 2:10 To those whom he has chosen, He says, *"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation and belief of the truth."* 2 Thessalonians 2:13 God's people will not ultimately be ensnared by apostate movements, which masquerade as *"revival"*, nor will they succumb to *"The Sovereign Drug Arminianism."*

There is a misconception among the great majority of Charismatic and Evangelical churches in our day. It is the belief that the Charismatic Movement is a genuine work of the Spirit of God. But just as Pentecostalism was man-manufactured, so too was the Charismatic Movement, although both surely have very many genuine believers who belong to Christ but are caught up in the deception.

Vatican II and the Charismatic Movement

What should deeply concern all lovers of Truth is the fact that from its beginnings in the early 1960s the Charismatic Movement had the full backing of the Vatican. In 1965, *The Second Vatican Council* officially opened the way for Charismatic *"renewal"* within the Catholic Church. It was also decreed that *"the Church should become a full and active participant in the ecumenical movement."*

In a previous book *All Roads Lead to Rome*, this writer described in more detail the early history of the Charismatic Movement and the involvement of the Roman Catholic Church. Cardinal Augustin Bea (Jesuit personal Confessor to former Pope Pius XII and President of the *Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity*) spoke to the Council of the need for the Church to *"strive to revitalise its own inner life, so that it can be manifested to our separated brethren, an ever clearer image according to the gospel."*

"The 'separated brethren' had been 'heretics' for many hundreds of years before the Council was convened. Suddenly, with 'this new movement of the Holy Spirit' they were 'welcomed back into the fold.' David Du Plessis, the Pentecostal leader known as *'Mr. Pentecost'*, was invited to attend the third session of Vatican II as Cardinal Bea's personal guest. In 1967, two years after the Council officially opened the way for renewal, the first Charismatic *'Baptism in the Spirit'* experiences of Catholics occurred at Duquesne and Notre Dame Universities. The Church of Rome officially adopted its own renewal movement – the only denomination to do so."

Remembering Our History

We do well to remember our history. We need to be aware that Vatican II reaffirmed the decrees and anathemas of the Council of Trent in the very same year, 1965, as it welcomed back the “separated brethren.” As we have already seen, in order to counter the Reformation, Trent had asserted *free will* and denounced the *Doctrines of Grace* as “accursed.” Important to remember too is the excerpt from the Jesuit letter found in Archbishop Laud’s study in 1627:

“We have now many strings to our bow. We have planted *the sovereign drug Arminianism* which we hope will purge the Protestants from their heresy; and it flourisheth and beareth fruit in due season...I am at this time transported with joy to see how happily all instruments and means, as well great as smaller, co-operate with our purposes. But to return to the main fabric; OUR FOUNDATION IS ARMINIANISM.”

The calculating Papacy must have determined that the most effective method of undermining and destroying the gospel of the “heretics” was to replace it with the new revivalist gospel of so many of the “separated brethren.” The hidden agenda of Vatican II was to undermine Calvinism and to promote Arminian ecumenism among the Protestant churches. Jesuit Cardinal Augustin Bea was the man chosen to play the key role.

The Charismatic Renewal Movement is viewed by many as the daughter of Pentecostalism; but it is also the product of Popery, the implacable enemy of the true Gospel and of the saints of the Most High God. The Pope of Rome, the Cardinals, and the Jesuits must be delighted that their centuries-old strategy has proved to be so successful. They may struggle to believe their own good fortune that they have lived to witness “Protestant” evangelicals zealously promoting their Arminian doctrines “...with ‘all power and signs and lying wonders’ by ‘... even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan.” 2 Thess 2:9

They must thank their God as the “heretics” beat a path back to unity with the “Mother Church” and as Charismatic leaders queue up to meet with the Roman Pontiff and to join their flocks in “worship” with tongues-speaking Catholics. But, they do not recognise in themselves the fulfilment of the words the Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples: ‘... *there shall arise false Christs; and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders: insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*’” Matthew 24:24

We ask the question, “What is it that unites supposedly Protestant evangelicals with Roman Catholics whose allegiance is to the avowed enemy of the Protestant Reformation?” Apart from widespread ignorance and neglect of Church History, we suggest a twofold answer—shared “spiritual” experiences and Arminianism.

The main burden of this book has been today’s neglect of history by both church and nation and the costly consequences of such disregard. History is the repository of experience and knowledge, of lessons learnt and unlearnt. It can be seen as the outworking of the Holy Spirit in the life of the invisible church, the elect of the Lord Jesus Christ. Few believers today

know that historic evangelicalism has long shared a common heritage in the “solas” of the sixteenth- century Protestant Reformation. The Reformation “solas” affirmed: Scripture alone (*Sola Scriptura*), Christ alone (*Solus Christus*), Grace alone (*Sola Gratia*), Faith alone (*Sola Fide*), and to God be the Glory alone (*Soli Deo Gloria*). In short, the “solas” were the rallying cry of the reformers.

Continued in [The Abandoning of the Protestant Reformed Religion](#)

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- [The Historical View of Prophecy and Antichrist](#)
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- [The Origins of Arminianism](#)
- [Catholicism and Arminianism in England and France During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries](#)
- [“New Revivalism” Charles Finney, D.L.Moody, and a Man-Centered Gospel](#)
- [The Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements](#)
- [The Abandoning of the Protestant Reformed Religion](#)
- [Notes from a former Charismatic to Christians in the Charismatic Movement](#)
- [Papal Rome and the EU](#)
- [The Foundations Under Attack The Roots of Apostasy](#)
- [The British Monarchy In Peril](#)