

## INTRODUCTION

LEE ROY MARTIN\*

Early Pentecostalism emerged from the nineteenth-century holiness movement,<sup>1</sup> and holiness (both in theology and practice) has been a significant, if at times contentious, feature of the Pentecostal movement throughout its brief history. When I joined the Church of God in 1972, the ministers and members in Cumming, Georgia referred to their church as a ‘holiness’ church, and they expected every believer to seek after the experience of entire sanctification and to pursue a lifestyle of personal holiness. Key passages of Scripture relating to holiness were cited regularly and repeatedly. Those passages included the following:

Pursue peace with everyone, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord (Heb. 12.14).

But as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; for it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy’ (1 Pet. 1.14-16).

... let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7.1).

For this is the will of God, even your sanctification ... (1 Thess. 4.3).

For God has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness (1 Thess. 4.7).

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\* Lee Roy Martin (DTh, University of South Africa) is Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Languages at the Pentecostal Theological Seminary in Cleveland, TN, USA and Editor of the *Journal of Pentecostal Theology*.

<sup>1</sup> Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Studies in Evangelicalism; Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1987), pp. 38-108. Cf. Steven Jack Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2010), pp. 37-43.

Unfortunately, my generation was taught a form of holiness that was sometimes equivalent to legalism. Holiness was viewed as individualistic and outwardly observable. There was little concern for institutional holiness, communal holiness, or social holiness. Pentecostals were known for their external holiness teachings – no jewelry, no makeup, and no worldly amusements. Although the church was best known for what it stood against, paradoxically there was often a positive spirituality underneath the outward layer of prohibitions. The Pentecostal church advocated a holiness spirituality that exemplified what Steve Land has called ‘a passion for the kingdom’.<sup>2</sup> The joyful singing, exuberant shouting, and unrestrained prayer were evidence of the manifest presence of God. In every worship service we prayed at the altar; we invited sinners to be saved; we prayed for the sick; and we prayed for people to be baptized in the Holy Ghost. New believers were expected to learn biblical teachings and follow Jesus wholeheartedly. For most of the members, church attendance was not just a religious duty to be added to their schedule of diverse activities. The church was more than a peripheral element in their otherwise secular lives. Instead, the church was central to their lives, the locus of their primary experience of community.

With the growth of the Charismatic movement and the spread of Pentecostalism into the mainstream, the legalistic and externally focused brand of holiness came under fierce attack. In reaction to perceived legalism, some Pentecostals began to border on libertinism, and the traditional holiness that had been taught with certainty and (unwarranted?) confidence was soon replaced by an uncertain and ambiguous doctrine. My discussions with pastors, laity, and seminary students suggests that the biblical demand for holiness is still widely recognized but is not widely understood or taught. For whatever reasons, our members cannot make sense of the biblical teaching on holiness; our pastors feel unprepared to address the doctrine of sanctification; and very few of our scholars have produced significant publications in the area of holiness theology.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> E.g. the subtitle of Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom*, p. 2 and *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> However, in biblical studies, I would point to J. Ayodeji Adewuya, *Holiness and Community in 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1: Paul's View of Communal Holiness in the Corinthian Correspondence* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001); and *idem*, *Transformed by Grace: Paul's*

In light of current trends and needs in the Church, perhaps it is time for us to evaluate the continuing importance of holiness as a doctrine and sanctification as an experience. While we can look to the past for indications of crucial Pentecostal beliefs, we must consider present and future contexts as we formulate our theology. Holiness is emphasized in the biblical text, but what should be the shape of the doctrine in today's context, both locally and globally? Is sanctification an important experience? If so, how do we teach it and facilitate its continuation?

Pentecostal scholars are beginning to construct contemporary contextual theologies to meet the changing needs of this generation. I would suggest that a reconsideration of holiness should be a part of the constructive theological agenda. God is holy, and the Church is called to imitate God's holiness, but each generation must discover for itself how a commitment to holiness affects its theology and practice. It is time for us to take a fresh look at holiness in its individual, communal, institutional, and global expressions.

I would encourage Pentecostal scholars to identify both opportunities and challenges for the future of holiness in Pentecostalism from the perspectives of the various academic disciplines. We should explore the implications of holiness for Pentecostal theology, peacemaking, justice, global concerns, ethics, postmodernity, ecology, ecumenism, social responsibility, ecclesial structures, ministerial practices, Christian formation, missional practices, intercultural engagements, immigration, civil society, political systems, personal relationships, and more. These explorations should proceed from biblical, theological, historical, ecumenical, practical, cultural, aesthetic, and missional perspectives.

This book is an attempt to stimulate conversation regarding Pentecostal approaches to the theology of holiness. Most of the chapters are revisions of papers that were presented at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Society for Pentecostal Studies, which met in conjunction with the Wesleyan Theological Society. I served as the

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*View of Holiness in Romans 6-8* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2004). In theology, I would mention Daniel Castelo (ed.), *Holiness as a Liberal Art* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012); and *idem*, *Revisioning Pentecostal Ethics: The Epicletic Community* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2012); Dale M. Coulter, *Holiness: The Beauty of Perfection* (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 2004); R.H. Gause, *Living in the Spirit: The Way of Salvation* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, Rev. and expanded edn, 2009); and Land, *Pentecostal Spirituality*.

Program Chair for the SPS, and worked with Jason Vickers of the WTS in the planning of the program. When we chose the topic of holiness for the conference theme, we were unsure of the response that we would receive. However, we were quite thrilled with the number and quality of papers that were presented at the conference. We were also pleasantly surprised by the level of interest and the depth of dialogue that emerged from the SPS and WTS membership.

Upon seeing the positive response to the conference theme of holiness, I decided to edit and publish a collection of papers from the conference. In the selection of chapters for the book, I was concerned to involve a group of Pentecostal scholars who were diverse in regard to academic discipline, gender, age, ethnic group, and nationality. The book includes three sections, based broadly upon the disciplines of biblical studies, theology, and practical theology. I deliberately excluded a section on history because, as the title of the book suggests, I wanted the studies to envision the future of holiness rather than reflect upon its past. Hopefully, this work will suggest fruitful avenues for the continued exploration of holiness and its place in the global Pentecostal movement.

This volume illustrates a number of specific ways that Pentecostal scholars can contribute to future discussions of holiness. In the field of biblical studies, I would propose both the revisiting of the classic texts on holiness and the exploration of other texts that can illuminate the Bible's teaching on holiness. The biblical texts should be viewed with fresh eyes, utilizing newer hermeneutical methods, and proceeding from a diversity of global contexts. It is time that a new generation of Pentecostal biblical scholars examine the biblical foundations of our teachings on holiness and sanctification.

In the field of theology, I would hope that the doctrine of holiness would find its place within the larger context of the developing Pentecostal Theologies of Frank Macchia, Steven Land, Amos Yong, Simon Chan, Kenneth Archer, and others. Perhaps our theologians can show how holiness impacts the formulation of soteriology, ecclesiology, pneumatology, and eschatology. The different streams of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement should dialogue about holiness and explicate areas of commonality. Furthermore, we should dialogue with other Christian traditions in regard to holiness and spirituality, holiness and society, holiness and technology,

holiness and global concerns of materialism, militarism, and nationalism.

From the perspective of practical theology several concerns come to mind, such as holiness and ministry, holiness and youth, holiness and ecclesial practices, social holiness, holiness codes, and personal, experiential holiness – i.e. sanctification – in the local church. We might address the future of sanctification as an experience. Is it an important experience? If so, how do we emphasize it and facilitate its continuation? Finally, I would argue that we have not wrestled sufficiently with the inherent Pentecostal tension between purity and power, and we have not constructed a theology that accounts for that tension in light of the Bible, church history, and our common experience.<sup>4</sup>

Although the essays in this volume do not address or solve all of the issues that I have mentioned above, they nevertheless represent the kind of work that I believe we should be doing. It is hoped that they will generate interest in and further discussion of our theology of holiness.

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<sup>4</sup> The importance of this topic for Pentecostals is highlighted by Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition* (JPTSUP 21; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), pp. 86-96. See also Lee Roy Martin, 'Judging the Judges: Searching for Value in These Problematic Characters', *Verbum et Ecclesia* 29.1 (2008), pp. 110-29.