

# Attempting to develop a Pentecostal theology of worship

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Pentecostals affirm the power of Pentecost in worship where they experience the Spirit's revelation of Christ and teach and preach about worship. However, Pentecostal theologians have not written much about a theology of worship, so Pentecostals' worship practices are not necessarily theologically well-grounded. This article argues that the development of such a theology is necessary and timely because it will serve to inform, evaluate and regulate Pentecostal worship. It is then argued that such a theology of worship should be based on two principles emphasised by the Pentecostal fraternity: the Spirit's equipment of all believers as priests and prophets, and their participation in all worship structures as part of the democratisation of the liturgy. Some elements of such a Pentecostal theology of worship are then explicated, specifically singing and praising God, preaching, communion and baptism, and Spirit baptism, in order to illustrate how the two main distinctive qualities of a Pentecostal worship service determine its contents. The purpose of the article is to theorise about the theological grounding of worship in the Pentecostal movement, hopefully in order to stimulate a South African debate among Pentecostals and interested parties.

**Intradisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary implications:** Worship practices in Pentecostal services are varied but share some common perspectives. It is argued that the theology underlying these practices has not been described in a South African context, making it difficult to evaluate the worship practices in Pentecostal services. By defining a Pentecostal theology of worship it becomes possible to do such an evaluation.

## Introduction

It can be argued that Pentecostals primarily find their authentic identity in the primary Pentecostal experience of Spirit baptism as a leap into a new dimension of encountering God (Lovelace 1985:112) and the exercise of the charismata (Richie 2006:23). A result of the Pentecostal emphasis on spiritual or charismatic experiences is that for Pentecostal people, worship is the highest occupation of the church, fulfilling the ultimate purpose for which the people of God are redeemed (Is 43:21; 1 Pt 2:9; Martin 2016:1).<sup>1</sup> At the heart of Pentecostalism is its spirituality, and its spirituality was found in worship, one of its major expressions (Prosén 2014:87). Pentecostalism can be defined as a new living and authentic Christian spirituality with a distinct theological view of reality (Archer 2011:xix), leading to a radiant life lived in, by and according to the Spirit, a life that is new, joyful, directional and zestful (Oshun 1992:186). The phenomenal growth of Pentecostalism has also been ascribed to the attractiveness of its worship (Miller & Yamamori 2007:23). Hollenweger (1972:466) argues that Pentecostalism's greatest and most important contribution to the larger Christian tradition has been in the sphere of liturgy (including music) and preaching, that is, the practice of worship (Cox 1995:139–157; Mills 1998:110).<sup>2</sup>

Revelation 7:14–15 describes the great multitude of those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; their constant activity is to stand before God's throne and serve him day and night (λατρεύουσιν αὐτῷ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτός). Pentecostals associate with this image and it serves as a model for their worship (Oshun 1992:195), and therefore developing a Pentecostal theology of worship would be worthy of consideration and scholarly formulation. What is needed is a study of recent trends of worship, the diversity of styles in worship, changes in musical tastes and the pragmatics of adopting various liturgical practices from theological perspectives.<sup>3</sup>

1. This is illustrated in the Roman Catholic-Pentecostal Dialogue where the essence of Pentecostalism was discussed, and that concluded that it is 'the personal and direct awareness and experiencing of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit by which the risen and glorified Christ is revealed and the believer is empowered to witness and worship ... The Pentecostal experience is not a goal to be reached, not a place to stand, but a door through which to go into a greater fullness of life in the Spirit' (Kärkkäinen 1998:50–51).

2. Cf. Cox's (1995:122) remark that it is not only that the music is integral rather than peripheral, but that even the prayers and the sermons have a musical lift.

3. Neo-Pentecostalism with its megachurches and televangelism and their impact on contemporary worship music, pioneering 'arena rock worship' supported by sophistication of audio/visual production and rolling out an adrenaline-charged worship experience (Bowler & Reagan 2014:187–188) falls outside the scope of this article. Their theology of optimism, prosperity and positive confession underlying their worship influences most Pentecostal churches in one way or another (Bowler & Reagan 2014:211).

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Much has been written about worship by Pentecostal music directors and pastors in the form of pamphlets and books, but a comprehensive theology of worship has as yet not been developed in Pentecostalism.<sup>4</sup> It proves to be a difficult endeavour because the diversified practices within Pentecostal and charismatic churches complicate the attempt to write a history or description of Pentecostal worship, and its emphasis on spontaneity and liberty rather than on a set liturgy and uniformity as well as its lack of a central authority, standard prayer book, liturgical handbook or church calendar contribute to a bewildering diversity of worship styles and practices. However, it can be argued that the movement requires extended dialogue regarding the principles underlying a Pentecostal worship of theology (Martin 2016:4) amid the diversity of Pentecostal worship practices. Self-reflection should after all always be a mark of spirituality (Hollenweger in Hudson 2001:41) and reflection should include a consideration of the relevance of its worship practices.

Pincombe (2010:10) provides a functional definition of worship as the humble, adoring, life-encompassing declaration of the absolute worthiness of God as Creator and Redeemer. The believer demonstrates worship through faithful, humble and reverent service to God and manifests it in holy living and Spirit-enabled ministry in the body of Christ, and it results in a deepening personal relationship with the Triune God revealed in Jesus Christ, and it is experienced through the Holy Spirit (cf. Albrecht 1999:2). Christian worship is God's revelation of himself in Jesus Christ and man's response to it, with Jesus Christ at the centre (White 1980:17). True spirituality is the giving of ourselves to God through both our beliefs and emotional attitudes, which ultimately influences our actions and values (Robeck 1992:103).

In the book of Acts, reception of Spirit baptism was always in 'situations of divine worship', argues Gause (2009:133). The Holy Spirit is what makes the difference in Pentecostal worship (Knight 1974:12) and participation in the experience of Spirit baptism is therefore vital to worship meaningfully. The Spirit serves as the *sine qua non* of worship in the Pentecostal setting (Alvarado 2012:137). Worship consists of and includes belief, lifestyle, witness and all that believers do, fundamentally forming the vision of Christian identity in Christ (Wainwright 1980:168; *contra* Althouse 2016:265 who limits worship to the liturgy in the first half of the worship service, consisting of praise and worship, a view shared by many reformed theologians). Worship forms the central locus of divine-human encounter (Chan 2006:5), the *theologia prima*, choreographed, enacted theology in songs and hymns, prayers and sermon, symbolic gestures and congregational movements (Haspelmath-Finatti 2009:374), the liturgical anamnesis of transformational encounter with the divine presence (Augustine 2016:165), making the church's theological thinking and witness spirituality vital (Land 2010:19).

4.The reason for this lack is that theology is not primary for Pentecostals but 'rather a revitalization of the experience of the Spirit' (Kärkkäinen 2002:15), because for them, personal experience is the arena of true religion (Spittler 2002:1097). Only after the experience and encounter room is created for theological reflection.

Pentecostals focus neither on right structure (as some Catholics do) nor on right message (as some Protestants), but instead they emphasise that the Christian life is a matter of the experienced power and presence of the Holy Spirit today. Newbigin (1953:87) argues that neither orthodoxy of doctrine nor impeccability of succession can take the place of an encounter with God through his Spirit. Right affection is then just as important as right belief and right praxis.<sup>5</sup> Worship is the integration of beliefs and practices in the affections which are themselves evoked and expressed by those beliefs and practices (Land 2010:1) and it also touches the emotions in the realm of qualitative distinctions, the place at which people live out their lives and help others to encounter God in a way that affects all aspects of the believer's life, including the intellect (Ware 2009:251).

## Foundations of a Pentecostal theology of worship

It is argued that a Pentecostal theology of worship is based on two principles valued highly in Pentecostalism: the Spirit's unique equipment and endowment of each believer with spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:1–5 refers to the gifts as *πνευματικῶν, χαρισμάτων, διακονιῶν* and *ἐνεργημάτων*) and the priesthood (and prophethood, as Land [2010:18] and Kärkkäinen [2007:11] add) of all believers, leading to their free participation in all worship structures and a resultant democratisation of liturgy and worship (Hollenweger in Hudson 2001:42) with a transparent, non-hierarchical corporate structure (Armstrong 2006:88).

Worship is not, as in some other traditions, the expression of one leader backed by a group of spectators; for Pentecostals, worship is 'an orchestra of colourfully diverse expressions' (Macchia 2016:155) with extraordinary gifts given to believers. The worship comes in diverse and interactive expressions. At times the congregation worship and even sing in tongues together; at other times, they sing and praise in their mother tongue, they pray for the sick and prophesy, perform miracles, laugh and dance, also when the thanks offering is given (Pinnock 1996:129).<sup>6</sup> Orality of liturgy, narrativity of theology and witness, maximum participation at the level of reflection, prayer and decision-making in a community characterised by inclusion and reconciliation, inclusion of visions and dreams as means of revelation, and a holistic understanding of the body–mind relationship reflected in the ministry of healing and deliverance and demonstrated in the clapping and lifting of hands give Pentecostalism its *prodigium* (Hollenweger 1986:6), serving as

5.Harper (1976:319–320) agrees that the Catholic emphasis on sacraments, apostolic succession and priesthood may have degenerated into imprisoning the Spirit in church structures, while the Protestant Reformation in reaction may have imprisoned the Spirit in doctrinal formulae, but warns that Pentecostals in striving to release the Spirit from institutionalism and excessive theological formulae may tend to trap the Spirit in experiential criteria. However, Pentecostalism's emphasis on the Charismatic ministry of the Spirit and Christ as the centre of its theology and the resultant focus on Christology rather than on pneumatology probably saves it from trapping the Spirit in experiential criteria (as Kärkkäinen 2007:6 argues).

6.Currently, neuroscientific studies of aspects of Pentecostal–Charismatic phenomena from a neurobiological perspective are indicating that often, what may be regarded as a movement of the Holy Spirit, may actually be a neurobiological experience. Although the research takes note of the results, the purpose of the article is to describe Pentecostal worship in terms of its theological grounding in order to provide a sound theological basis to evaluate its worship tradition.

distinctive marks of Pentecostal spirituality (Armstrong 2006:86). Their spirituality is stirred by rousing sermons calling for a response (interspersed by 'Amen' and 'Hallelujah!' from listeners) and even participation by adding something that a listener may think is important (Samuel 2013:215), fervent prayer, soul-stirring music, shouting and passionate testimony by any participant, partly influenced by its heritage of African and African American worship traditions (Harris 2016:127; Krause & Hayward 2013:814; Mills 1998:110). 'Worship' is another way of confessing that the 'presence of God' is among people (Albrecht 1992:109) because Pentecostals function with the supposition that God intervenes directly in everyday life (Jenkins 2002:77); their spiritual gifts are 'individuations of grace' (Käsemann 1994:334), with *χαρισμάτα* (Paul's most used term for spiritual gifts) harbouring the word 'grace' so that *charismata* can be translated as diverse 'manifestations' or 'embodiments' of grace (Dunn 1985:92). In a graceless world, the church's gifted worship offers richly diverse signs of grace (Macchia 2016:156).

A Pentecostal worship of theology can be explained in terms of the church's charismatic structure, where the movement of the Spirit is expected and encouraged. Traditionally, the tendency has been to sacramentalise or make uniform the charism, and hence the workings of the Spirit, with the resulting clericalism where the notion of charism is overwhelmingly discussed in and limited to the context of ordained ministry, neglecting the richness, variety and exuberance of the spiritual gifts in the context of worship as illustrated in 1 Corinthians 12–14, Ephesians 4:7–13 and 1 Peter 4:10–11 (Kärkkäinen 2001:323–326; Küng 1967:184; cf. Volf 1997:231).

Küng (1967:187) proposes to reverse the historic trend towards clericalism by subsuming office beneath charism. Everyone in the church is called and commissioned to worship and serve as bearers of the Spirit, and equipped with spiritual gifts, implying that the *charismata* are not peripheral but rather central and essential to the existence of the church. Although Küng (1967:363; extended by Volf 1997:231) does not deny the unique role played by pastoral leadership, he places the charisma of oversight (or pastoral leadership) along with all the other *charismata* within an overarching concept of the church as a fellowship in which all members, including ordained ministers, are bearers of the Spirit and gifted to glorify God. Ecclesiastical office can then only be properly understood in terms of the charismatic structure that should determine the way the church functions.

Pentecostals concur with Küng's view of the church and define the gifted nature of the church as one of Pentecostalism's most important and distinctive doctrines (Dunn 1985:93).<sup>7</sup> Believers accept the invitation to become partners with Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:9 δι' οὗ ἐκλήθητε εἰς κοινωνίαν τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν).

7.Lim (1991:34–38) argues that the Reformation doctrine of the priesthood of all believers was never adequately brought to bear on the local church and its worship service until the Pentecostals' realisation of the Spirit-infused and Spirit-led worship service where anyone can participate in any of the elements of the worship service.

Emphasis on the charismatic structure of the church and the participation of everyone gives Pentecostal worship certain distinctive features (Albrecht 1992:108–109; Hollenweger 2005:17–18; Spittler 1988:804).

A first feature is the dominance of the spoken or *oral* rather than written communication (Spittler 1988:804), which also expands participation among those who are not well trained in written communication. This partly explains the impact of Pentecostalism on Africa (Weigel 2015:1). Combined with orality is the preference typically granted to *narrativity* of theology and witness (Aalders 1969:129). Believers' testimonies and stories based and modelled on biblical narratives tend to take precedence over abstract rational systems of doctrine or dogmatics and sermons also contain narratives to demonstrate truths.<sup>8</sup> For this reason, Pentecostals prefer to speak about 'messages' rather than 'sermons', to accommodate their emphasis on the room left for the Spirit to interfere in the preacher's work (Sheppard 2001:64). Believers are also encouraged to *participate* at all levels, of preaching and singing, praying and decision-making. When all believers are gifted of the Spirit, everyone can contribute to all facets of worship and they are encouraged and empowered to do so. Pentecostals place a high esteem on such spontaneity (Spittler 1988:804). Another feature is the encouragement given to relating of visions and dreams as well as other gifts related to the *dark side or depths of the human spirit* within all forms of worship in the church. The eternal, the 'up there' in heaven, is sometimes more real than the present (Spittler 1988:804). And lastly, Pentecostals foster experiences of *interaction between body and mind*, as demonstrated by their emphasis on holistic healing (Letson 2007:112). In these accents, Pentecostals are not unique although they flourish within services where these features occur. It is continually emphasised that all believers should participate in all facets of church life in line with their own unique gifting by the Spirit.

It may be argued that charismatic diversity may be waning in some (predominantly white) Pentecostal churches although orality, narrativity, dreams and visions, healing and utilisation of the body as well as making room for the unconscious still occur among most Pentecostals. And charismatic worship is also no longer only to be found among Pentecostals as many main-line denominations allow some charismatic aspects to infiltrate their worship services.

## Some elements of a Pentecostal theology of worship

A Pentecostal theology of worship is defined in terms of the Spirit's equipment of believers to do their work and build up the church, the body of Christ (Eph 4:12 πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν

8.Stott (1976:15) thinks that it is a major shortcoming in Pentecostal theology that narrative rather than didactic texts are used for doctrinal formation. However, Pentecostals read biblical events with a different goal than to formulate doctrine. What Stott overlooks is that Pentecostal theologians do not build their theology primarily on the Bible but they find in the Bible a precedent to be repeated in the lives of contemporary believers (Archer 2009:140–156). They do not define doctrine from the narratives about the early church but they use these narratives as a model for what they expect to experience themselves, in their meeting with God through his Spirit. Their 'subjectivising hermeneutic' requires that the events of salvation be re-enacted in the lives of contemporary believers (Olson 1999:491).

τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), and every believer participating in the act of worshipping God. The definition with the two elements of the endowment with gifts allowing all believers to participate in worship holds certain implications for the different elements that worship consists of.<sup>9</sup>

## Praises

It is a fact of culture that music addresses itself to the listener and therefore elicits subjective participation, expressing sentiments and at the same time engendering them (Reymond 2001:84). In the church, music offers the contextual *Sitz im Leben* approach as an alternative to the geometrical and/or architectural approaches, as a structuring model for theology and as a means of theological expression because of its ability to synthesise. Music is rhetoric and a viable language that has been used to embody theology for many centuries, enabling theological reflection to get away from argumentative controversy generated by doctrines (Reymond 2001:91–92) because of music's ability to carry emotional meanings where semantic parameters are less critical (Lim 2014:312). And forms of musical expression including suggestive, symbolic worship, choruses and verbal praise practices serve to trigger a close sense of God's presence (Jaichandran & Madhav 2003:58). Gause (2009:28) suggests that Pentecostal worship consists of three defining elements, rapture, rapport, and proleptic, a distinction that proves valuable to describe different elements of worship.

*Rapture* describes the quality of ecstasy that is inherent to Pentecostal worship, consisting of overwhelming surges of praises that cannot be suppressed without quenching, even grieving the Spirit. Among these ecstatic expressions are forms of prophetic speech, including prayer, song and glossolalia encased in the universal language of music (Mills 1998:125).<sup>10</sup> During these experiences, worshipers in their subjective perception remain fully aware but lack full comprehension, accompanied by a heightened sense of the presence of the Spirit, and the perception of hearing the voice of God mediated by the Spirit (Gause 2009:30). This coincides with what Frith (2007:263, 268) describes, where singing creates temporality that gives participants a sense of self through cultivating their emotional responses in the engagement with the songs that transcend the mundane and take people out of themselves.

*Rapport* is defined in relational terms as a union of love between the worshiper and God, and between all those who worship him (Gause 2009:30), resulting in *koinonia* through

<sup>9</sup>Archer (2011:73–80) uses the fivefold Gospel (Jesus as Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, Healer and Coming King) as the matrix for doing Pentecostal theology, keeping Jesus at the centre. Worship is not merely observances done because of a command, but calls for participatory faith on the part of the worshiper. He describes worship practices in terms of the fivefold Gospel: for Jesus as Savior, water baptism; for Jesus as Sanctifier, foot-washing; for Jesus as Spirit Baptizer, tongues speech; for Jesus as Healer, laying on of hands and anointing with oil; and, for Jesus as soon-coming King, the Lord's Supper. However, not all Pentecostals emphasise foot washing and anointing with oil in the same manner.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. William Durham's (Spencer 1992:159) observation at the Azusa Street revival in 1907, that 'it was collective Holy Ghost singing that explained the almighty presence of God'. Singing in the Spirit serves as a way of initiating the congregational testifying (Mills 1998:125).

the Spirit with God and with the people of God. The believer is not passive in this experience (Gause 2009:135); rather, the believer and God experience a profound rapport in such intimacy that the believer becomes fully responsive to the Spirit (Gause 2009:135). Writing about music's tremendous ability to shape local and trans-local community, Ingalls (2008:299) explains that worship can create new worlds and construct new identities. Contemporary worship songs foster a community across racial, ethnic and gendered lines that has an overtly eschatological and often Christological focus (Ingalls 2008:303), reminding of the temporal and limited nature of institutional boundaries, theologies and cultic expressions (Macchia 1993:74).

*Proleptic* refers to a spiritual return to the historic events of redemption where worshipers re-experience the biblical events in unity with the church, transcending space and time, combined with an anticipation in which the believer is transported via the Spirit in the final glory of the kingdom of God. Believers do not only look forward, but also participate in the consummate glory of the King in his kingdom (Gause 2009:31). Already they experience in part what they will experience in full with Christ's eschatological return. In this way, music establishes boundaries, including social norms, leading to an insider or outsider boundary resulting in meaning making and identity construction among participants (Ingalls 2008:289).

Gause's classification is useful to demonstrate what is important in Pentecostal singing, including singing in the Spirit or in tongues. The ecstatic phenomenon (*rapture*) originates in the Spirit and produces harmony (*rapport*) among the participants and with God. They experience praises as participation in the 'song of the redeemed' (Rv 14:3 ἄδουσιν ὡς ᾠδὴν καινὴν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου) where those who have been redeemed sing a new song before the throne of God (*proleptic*). Not all Pentecostal believers have experienced speaking in tongues; however, many Pentecostals witness to an ecstatic (emotional) element in their worship experiences.

In discussing Ephesians 5:18–19 (πληροῦσθε ἐν πνεύματι, λαλοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς ψαλμοῖς καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ᾠδαῖς πνευματικαῖς, ᾄδοντες καὶ ψάλλοντες τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν τῷ κυρίῳ), Hughes (2011:51) notes that singing in Pentecostal worship is not an exhibition of talent, nor is it intended for the entertainment of the hearers. It is rather making melody in the heart to God, explaining the apparent lack of inhibition of Pentecostal worshipers. They become caught up in the moment, wafted away on the wings of song. Often, they are oblivious to what happens around them, accounting for their beaming, shining countenances as they are enraptured in song (*rapture*).

Pentecostal singing is experiential and dynamic, with the worshiper and worshipping community being responsive to the Spirit's movement into the glory of God, realised already in part but not yet in fullness (Alexander 2016:220). Up to now, the theme of the article has been subjective and overstated in the language used.

## Preaching and communion

Luke 24 recounts how the hearts of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus burn (Lk 24:32 ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν καιομένη ἦν ἐν ἡμῖν) when Jesus opens the Scripture to them and breaks the bread (Lk 24:30, 32 λαβῶν τὸν ἄρτον εὐλόγησεν καὶ κλάσας ἐπέδιδου αὐτοῖς ... ὡς διήνοιγεν ἡμῖν τὰς γραφάς), reading like a parable of post-Easter experience (Green 2013:220). The community of faith still recognises the Lord and communes with him through these two means of grace, the opening of Scriptures and the breaking of bread, as a symbol of communion (Macchia 2016:160). 'Scripture' is understood by Pentecostals as a 'grand meta-narrative with the Gospels and Acts as the heart of the Christian story' (Archer 2011:13).

The proclamation of the Word is a means of God revealing himself through his Spirit. The Word has a doxological as well as an ethical function and its effect is experienced not only cognitively but also affectively, resulting in the will to act righteously. For Pentecostals, the Word consists of a divine encounter, a means of new creation and not only new knowledge (Land 2010:67), creating a zone of revelatory, efficacious grace that causes the sermon to convey transformative power (Johns 2003:46). Again, any believer can proclaim the message if he or she experiences the anointing and inspiration of the Spirit. And because the community of faith have received the gifts of the Spirit and capability of being led by the Spirit, they can actively contribute to the sermon from its preparation to the preaching event (Samuel 2013:214). Believers are also involved in the actual delivery, through the use of 'call and response', which refers to a pattern of verbal interplay between the preacher and listeners that shapes its delivery (Smith 2008:297). The Pentecostal message allows even for progressional dialogue, consisting of the intentional interplay of multiple viewpoints that may lead to unexpected and unforeseen ideas (Pagitt 2005:52).

## Sacraments

The Lord's Supper is the meal of thanksgiving by which believers participate in the body and blood of Christ (1 Cor 10:16–17), a communal reality that they share with fellow believers, giving an extra dimension to the words that they 'share in/as the body of Christ' (κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστίν).<sup>11</sup> Through the agency of the Spirit, the sacrament becomes a means of grace, and in many instances of healing (Black 2009:87). As in preaching, the presence and working of the Spirit is the constituting factor changing a ritual into a life-transforming event and serving to instruct, exhort and model the life of faith (Bridges 1993:124). The Spirit is 'the remembrancer divine' and 'true recorder of Christ's passion' who brings Christ to believers in the communion and makes the words of Christ contemporary, incorporating them into one community with the disciples at the Last Supper (Green 2013:230). The centrality of the Spirit should be highlighted in the fellowship of the meal (Yong

11. Most Pentecostals follow the Zwinglian memorial view of the communion, as a memorial of Jesus' death (Kärkkäinen 2008:122).

2005:161–162) because he makes Christ *real* in the sense that he can be experienced, can act and be acted upon, and *realising* in the sense that he thereby effects *koinonia* with God and one another (Green 2013:234).

The consensus among most Pentecostals is that the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is rejected although baptism by immersion for believers is essential, and even obligatory, for all new converts as an outward expression of what has happened within them. Baptism is the initiatory rite that allows a believer to participate fully in the life of the community. Failure to follow the Lord in baptism is described as wilful neglect and may lead one to apostasy (Tomberlin 2010:115). Water baptism can and should be an ecstatic or spiritual experience, which leads the new believer to deeper consecration (Williams 1992:224–225) because it is participation 'in Christ', a paradigm for the believer's participation in the redemptive work of Christ (Rm 12:5; 1 Cor 12:27; Eph 4:12).

Pentecostals should concentrate on integrating the sacraments into the worship experience of the liturgy. It might be possible that these events can become ritualised because it is repeated regularly, as might be the case in other traditions as well; a theology of worship should allow for the sacraments to be an integral part of the planning of the worship event.

## Spirit baptism

Spirit baptism is seen by Pentecostals as the primary paradigm for Pentecostal experience (Richie 2005:109), based on the biblical description of the disciples being filled with the Spirit and speaking in tongues (Ac 2:1–4), an experience which equips believers to witness effectively (Land 2010:84).<sup>12</sup> People are filled with or baptised in the Spirit in the course of the liturgy, and the experience is repeated for individuals (Gause 1980:72). The evidence that believers have received the Spirit baptism is described by Pentecostals in terms of divine love reflected in and determining their daily walk, as well as various outward manifestations, such as speaking in tongues and its interpretation so that the believers will be strengthened (1 Cor 14:5 ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία οἰκοδομην λάβῃ), laying of hands on the sick and the sick being healed, prophecy for the purpose of strengthening, encouraging and comforting fellow believers (1 Cor 14:3 λαλεῖ οἰκοδομῆν καὶ παρακλήσιν καὶ παραμυθίαν), casting out of demons, and the resultant saving of unbelievers convinced by these signs of the reality of God (1 Cor 14:24–25 τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς καρδίας αὐτοῦ φανερὰ γίνεται, καὶ οὕτως πεσῶν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον προσκυνήσει τῷ θεῷ, ἀπαγγέλλων ὅτι ὄντως ὁ θεὸς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐστίν). This forms the context for experiencing the redemptive and sanctifying presence of God in great power (Archer 2011:70).

12. Is the experience a valid religious encounter, based on the biblical experience of being filled with the Spirit? Richie (2005:109, 121) writes that when one looks at the experience of Spirit baptism through the lens of numinous encounter, it is affirmed that it involves an ontological, objective reality rather than a subjective human fabrication, leading to a fully healthy spirituality. That the tongues described in Acts 2 (xenolalia) differ from the tongues in 1 Corinthians 12–14 (glossolalia) is a fact that Pentecostals should discount in their theology.

Contemporary Pentecostal practice may in some instances be criticised that it excludes invitations to members for prayer to receive the experience of Spirit baptism. Where that is the case, such opportunities should purposefully be created and built into the worship event. However, Pentecostals should take note of the reality that a segment of its members have not participated in Spirit baptism, leading to a possible perception among them that they are 'second-class' members of their Pentecostal denomination. These members' need to worship should be considered and they should deliberately be made a part of the worship event.

## Need for discernment

The most important value that governs Pentecostal spirituality is the locus of individual experience (Jaichandran & Madhav 2003:55). Pentecostals are not satisfied until they had an experience with God. Negatively, experience can become the tail that wags the dog, with beliefs becoming secondary to experience or else beliefs are denied as untrue unless they are experienced. And experiences can be manufactured (Jaichandran & Madhav 2003:55).

1 Corinthians 12–14 explains that four criteria make spiritual gifts fitting for worship (cf. Bezuidenhout 1980). *Firstly*, Christ is to be acknowledged and exalted as Lord (1 Cor 12:1–3 οὐδεὶς ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ λαλῶν λέγει· Ἀνάθεμα Ἰησοῦς, καὶ οὐδεὶς δύναται εἰπεῖν· Κύριος Ἰησοῦς εἰ μὴ ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ), an unusual mutation of monotheism that led the early church into serious problems and would eventually occupy the theological minds over the succeeding centuries (Hurtado 1999:97). Believers are baptised into one body by the Spirit and they drink from one Spirit. Only by being incorporated into his body can they find unity (Eph 4:3 σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητά τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης) and the capacity to give themselves for the Lord's glory (1 Cor 12:13 ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἓν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν ... καὶ πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἐποτίσθημεν). The question that needs to be asked is whether believers seek to experience God or seek to experience the phenomena associated with the work of the Spirit (Ruf 1996:13). MacInnes (1990:243) distinguishes between the expression of emotion released both towards God and others as an authentic mark of the work of the Spirit, and emotionalism as a selfish indulgence in the sheer pleasure of experiencing emotion instead of being an expression of worship.

*Secondly*, love should direct and guide the way the gifts are exercised (1 Cor 13). Gifted worship can by definition not arise from a context of division and animosity, leading to glossolalia becoming noise without love (1 Cor 13:1 γέγονα χαλκὸς ἤχων ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον). Love is an attitude, a life orientation and way of acting and forms the context from which worship arises (Pincombe 2010:87).

*Thirdly*, the gifts must be oriented towards building up others rather than serving the individual (1 Cor 14:26 πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γινέσθω). Believers are strengthened and encouraged not only by the preaching and partaking in

communion but also by the exercise of spiritual gifts (Eph 4:15 αὐξήσωμεν εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα, ὃς ἐστὶν ἡ κεφαλὴ, Χριστός). The danger is that worship may become a means of escaping from the reality of the world with its burdens and frustrations into a world of illusion (Jaichandran & Madhav 2003:59). Albrecht (1992:109–113) depicts a Pentecostal worship experience in terms of ritual sound and ritual sights that stimulate the Pentecostal ritualist and kinaesthetic dimensions, which are suggested by a cacophony of sounds that symbolise an entrance into the very presence of God. The music is intended to help individuals to taste heaven and the significant visual sight of fellow-worshippers stimulates the participant to be immersed into worship, seeing in one another the object of worship, their God.

*Lastly*, the spiritual gifts should be exercised and utilised in worship according to the order and guidance prescribed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:40 (πάντα δὲ εὐσημιόμως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν γινέσθω). While prophecy is limited to two or three people, the others gifted with discernment should weigh carefully what is being proclaimed (1 Cor 14:29 οἱ ἄλλοι διακρινέτωσαν). Pentecostal worship and experience of God should focus on adoration of God and his nature (Poloma 1999:364). A danger in the Pentecostal movement might be an increasing tendency to add more stimulating techniques, technologies, visuals and music, in order to transport the participant into worship, implying that 'the experience of worship' is superior to the exposition of Scripture. Even the message might be aimed at a virtual reality that may bring delight for the listeners but superficialise the revelation of the Word (Jaichandran & Madhav 2003:60). An authentic spirituality will put people in touch with the divine in an experiential way that makes sense of their daily experience of life and provides answers to their real questions (Castelo 2004:36–37).

Spiritual gifts not only encourage believers and address unbelievers (1 Cor 14:24–25 ἐλέγχεται ὑπὸ πάντων, ἀνακρίνεται ὑπὸ πάντων) but also contain the risk of emotionalism and subjectivism, taking the attention away from Jesus as the Lord (Antola 1998:57; Kärkkäinen 2007:14). For this reason, the charismatic gift of discernment plays an important role to enable believers to determine where and when, or whether, the Holy Spirit (or other spirits) is present and active (Yong 2000:185–188). The loving practice of correction should always be a vital part of worship and participants should be willing to subject themselves to the guidance of proven leaders and their interpretation of Scripture because gifted people are in control of their spirit (1 Cor 14:32) and the exercise of the gifts should lead to peace and not disorder (1 Cor 14:33 οὐ γάρ ἐστὶν ἀκαταστασίας ὁ θεὸς ἀλλὰ εἰρήνης). Scripture remains the living measure of the church's diversely gifted worship and forms the privileged voice of the Spirit in the church (Macchia 2016:164).

## Conclusion

The article provided a theological grounding of worship in the Pentecostal movement. It is argued that Pentecostal worship requires the Spirit revealing God and believers

equipped with the gifts of the Spirit facilitating his revelation. The worship of a diversely gifted church becomes a richly diverse orchestra of expressions and an adventure in fellowship with the Holy Spirit and each other, a sign of grace before an increasingly graceless world. Pentecostal worship is determined by two elements: the equipment of the Spirit of all believers as priests and prophets, and their participation in all worship structures. All the elements of Pentecostal theology of worship should be subjected to these main distinctive qualities of a Pentecostal worship service, including singing and praising God, preaching, communion and baptism and Spirit baptism.

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