

Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies



Volume 2, Number 1 (January 1999)

Journal Reflections: An Editorial Assessment at the End of the First Year

Now that the two issues for the initial year of the *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* have been published, it seems fitting that we review the intended character and goals of this young publication. Let us consider, then, our course.

It was with some anxiety that the editors launched this enterprise. Questions were faced: Is there a need for yet another journal? In what ways does this effort complement existing publications? Will it be received with sufficient enthusiasm to warrant its continued publication? Thus far the initial responses to this pioneer project have been most encouraging. It does indeed appear that the journal is carving out a sufficiently useful place for the editors and supporters to be reassured about its usefulness. On the inside front cover of each issue of the journal appears a statement of purpose that specifies four intended outcomes: 1) The *Journal* is for the purpose of encouraging serious theological thinking and articulation by Pentecostals/Charismatics in Asia; 2) To promote interaction among Asian Pentecostals/Charismatics and dialogue with other Christian traditions; 3) To stimulate creative contextualization of the Christian faith; and 4) To provide a means for Pentecostals/ Charismatics to share their theological reflection.

Of special significance is the opportunity the journal provides for Asian participation. To enhance the cooperative nature of the journal, we invited several Pentecostal schools and institutions in Asia to participate in the ministry of the journal. These are listed on the editorial page. These institutions actively support the publication and encourage their constituencies, especially faculty members and students, to submit their theological reflections to the editors for consideration for journal publication. Hence, although Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, Baguio City, Philippines, is the sponsoring organization of the journal, it is not intended to be merely an in-house publication, but rather a platform for a much larger association of Pentecostal/Charismatic scholars and leaders.

The journal, then, is a forum in which a variety of topics, opinions, and fruit of research can be shared, featuring as much as possible, items pertinent to Pentecostalism in Asia. It is expected that the majority of articles that will be received will be in the areas of theology, history and biblical exposition. However, it is not intended that the journal be limited to these studies. There may, indeed, be topic in the areas of missiology, pastoral issues, sociological studies, ethics, as well as many others. The editors' hope is that this publication will encourage significant writing and research among Asian scholars. We trust that the creative reflections of an emerging generation may be shared through this mechanism with many others in Asia and throughout the world.

Since the journal is titled "Asian," it is fitting that how that term is understood in this context be articulated. One with Asian ancestry living in North America may be no more

Asian than a European missionary who has been living in Asia for decades. In our use of the term, "Asian" means both those of Asian ancestry and non-Asians who are concerned for, and are working for or with Pentecostals/Charismatics in Asia and have interest in the future of the church in Asia. Hence, the door is open to "friends of Asian Pentecostalism" to share their insights with us, so that together we can strengthen the Pentecostal movement in Asia, and furnish useful resource material to emerging leaders in Asia.

What do we mean by "Pentecostal"? For the purposes of the journal, we are using this term in an inclusive way. In addition to traditional Pentecostalism, as expressed by denominations such as the Assemblies of God and the Church of God, there are now a significant number of people who register many shared values with traditional Pentecostalism. Some of these are labeled Charismatics--some continuing to be renewal agents in parent denominations; some having left parent bodies to form new associations or independent congregations. Some of those who share an active interest in the work of the Holy Spirit do not classify themselves as "Pentecostal," but nonetheless feature values that intersect Pentecostal teaching and experience in important ways. Among these are the so-called "Third Wave" Charismatics of Evangelical Christianity. Contributions to the journal by any of those who are "Pentecostals" and friends of the Pentecostal revival are welcomed. You will note that in the second issue of the journal, at least two articles appeared that were written by Evangelicals who are not strictly identifying themselves with Pentecostals. The reason for this inclusive policy is so that lively discussion and interaction, even debate, may be engaged in a friendly environment. Our belief is that competing views thus expressed and engaged will sharpen the insights of all participants, and hopefully will strengthen and clarify the message of believers in days to come. It should be understood, therefore, that the editors do not necessarily endorse the theology and implications of every article that may be published. It is expected that truth will best be served by allowing for differences of opinion in the publication. Charity among those who share basic Christian convictions and who welcome the fresh flow of the Holy Spirit among God's people in our day is to be hallmark of this journal. Perhaps in an academic setting, such as a theological journal like ours, we can expect to see harmony amid lively debate. This level of spirited interaction with a view to strengthening the spiritual life of the participants we hope to nourish in the days to come.

So, we the editors welcome your responses and your participation in this new venture.

Editors