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GETTING REAL ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

ROSE DOWSETT

*'In seeking the Holy Spirit our motivation is to
be transformed as well as empowered'*

Let me begin with some stories. True stories, not fiction.

In the 1970s, Dick and I were living in Manila, Philippines, as OMF missionaries, seconded to Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship. A Filipino colleague turned up in great distress one day. Her brother, demon possessed, was doing terrible things to those around him. He could not be restrained. The extent of his supernatural power was evidenced by his ability to break great rocks apart with his bare hands. What would you have done?

A few years before, I lay in a deep coma in a Manila hospital. The saintly Christian doctor looking after me told Dick to make plans for my funeral. Medically at that time there was no possibility of recovery. But after an extended period of coma, the risen Lord Jesus appeared to me and lovingly touched my wasted body, telling me to trust Him. When I emerged from coma, the doctor said 'There is no medical explanation. Truly the Lord has done this.' Would you have said, 'Well, doctors aren't always right?' or humbly praised God for His intervention?

Back in Scotland, a Malaysian student came to us, agitated and frightened. He was a believer, but struggled with a sense of darkness around him. Before he left Malaysia, his non-Christian mother insisted on giving him an expensive amulet and animistic strings. She had bought them from the most powerful spirit medium she could find, saying they would give protection to the son in an alien land. After a considerable struggle, and trembling, the young man took off the amulet and strings and burned them in a fire in our garden in Glasgow. The black smoke was dramatic, and out of all proportion to the size of the objects. Afterwards, he said, the darkness lifted and he experienced great joy in wholly trusting the Lord Jesus. Would you perhaps have dismissed that as 'all in the mind', explained it away in purely psychological terms?

Perhaps you are thinking, well, these things may happen in the two thirds world, but not here. So let me tell you two more stories, both from the UK.

Sometime around 1968, I don't remember the exact date, I was involved together with Os Guinness and another friend at a small university mission at the still young Essex University, a place founded on

quite aggressively secular, indeed committedly atheist, lines. Each evening a tiny group of Christian students in a neighbouring room would pray throughout the evening meeting, in which Os was explaining the gospel in this hostile environment. One evening, a young woman enveloped in a pink velvet cloak came and sat at the front. As Os began, she dropped her head on the chair back in front of her and shrank into her cloak. Afterwards, thinking she may perhaps have been on drugs or in some other kind of distress, Os and I went over to her. I have almost never before or since seen such naked hatred in a person's eyes. She told us she was the leader of the local witches' coven, which had been operative in the area for centuries. She had come to break up the meeting, but found herself almost paralysed and unable to utter a word. She finally left us, cursing us and the Lord, crying out as a parting shot that only Christian prayer could have gagged her in this way. Do we pray for evil to be bound, the victory of Christ to be experienced, and the power of the Spirit to be displayed? Two students came to faith that night, and went on to a lifetime of discipleship.

And one final one. In 1984, OMF was buying a new property in Jordanhill, a very respectable area of Glasgow. For reasons too complicated to explain here, the task of finding and buying a house to accommodate an office as well as a family was delegated to myself and a member of the Scottish OMF Council. We found a suitable house, but I noticed as we went round it that there were signs of occult activity in several places, including a crucified cat, still nailed to its board, in the attic. The vendor expressed her dislike that a bunch of Christians should be buying the place, but, needing a quick and reliable sale, sold. The day we got possession, a veteran OMF colleague with years of experience in Thailand, a rather bemused Church of Scotland minister, and myself, went round every nook and cranny of that house, praying that the victory of Christ might be known, evil banished, and God's honour upheld through everything that would happen in this place.

By now, some of you may be feeling rather uncomfortable. We don't like arguing from experience (too subjective) and have been trained to prefer propositions over narrative. But that's not how most of the global church families look at things. Maybe we need to recalibrate.

From the time I first went to university as a very young Christian in 1962, through subsequent staff work with IVF (now UCCF), then a lifetime with OMF International, with secondments along the way to BTI/Glasgow Bible College, the World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission and several other ministries, I have been privileged and enriched by being embedded in interdenominational and mostly international bodies.

I say that because I have no doubt that this shaping of my life has also shaped my theology and thinking in a way that is different from those

whose experience has been strongly dominated by mono-denominational and mono-cultural life. We delude ourselves if we think that our study of Scripture is unaffected by these things.

Sadly many Scottish evangelicals do not grasp that the overwhelming majority of the world's Christians are neither Reformed (as we understand that term in Scotland) nor Presbyterian. Again, we all have a tendency to read books mostly within our own comfort zone, by our own favourite authors and publishers, and to avoid the challenge of weighing up seriously unfamiliar approaches, be they from other streams of the Christian Church, even from different tribes within Evangelicalism, and even more from the theological and biblical reflection increasingly being generated from the non-western world.

I say all that because I think we need with honesty to see what we can learn from parts of the world church where love for the Lord and his Word prevail as much as we like to think it does among ourselves, yet whose reflection on Scripture sometimes leads them to conclusions different from those most familiar to us here in Scotland. This is especially the case when thinking about the Holy Spirit.

Having said that, we need to refer to a few landmarks from the Western post-Reformation story, because until comparatively recently, this was the locus of Protestantism, though not exclusively of the global Church. Indeed, to this day, Roman Catholicism and the various strands of Orthodoxy numerically outstrip Protestants worldwide.¹ We also do well to remember that since around 1980, the majority of the world's professing Christians have been in the global south, and with the extraordinary growth of the church in China in the past thirty years, the Church in the non-western world — no longer all 'south' — continues to grow while the original heart lands of Protestantism — Europe and North America — see a diminishing presence. We need, however difficult it is, to ask whether there have been deficiencies in the way the gospel has been transmitted to account for that decline, and whether our much-loved theological traditions are quite as unassailably right as we like to think. Are we willing to learn from this situation — decline here, growth there — or will we just say 'Well, it has to be the sovereign will of God' — or perhaps cast all the blame on the liberal hollowing out of God's truth by others? In particular, we need to try to understand why Pentecostalism and churches embracing the charismatic movement have been, and are, the main spearheads of church growth globally in the past fifty years, and also the ones most

¹ For extensive information and statistics about the world church, see *Atlas of Global Christianity*, ed. by Todd Johnson and Kenneth Ross (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

effective in discipling those outside predominantly middle-class evangelicalism.

The great Reformers of the C.16th and the Puritans of the C.17th clearly had plenty to say about the Holy Spirit. They were, after all, avid students of the Scriptures, and you can't go far, especially in the New Testament, without references to Him. Further, they lived in a world where there was ready acknowledgment of the supernatural world, largely through the negatives of superstition, the occult, magic and witchcraft. However, their main concern was to re-establish the authority of the Scriptures rather than that of the Roman Catholic Church, and the true and comprehensive meaning of the Cross in salvation — a huge task, for which we remain in their debt. I think often their attention to the Holy Spirit was largely tied to these two colossal spheres, and understandably so. I hasten to add, Luther, and many of the Puritans in particular, made their appeal strongly to the heart as well as to the mind, encouraging love for God, not just belief, and Puritans such as John Owen wrote extensively about the Spirit.

However, much as we owe the Reformers and Puritans under God, we must not stay in the C.16th. The worldview, and specific historic context, through which they read Scripture and within which they focused their theological concerns is very far different from the worldview and context surrounding us in Scotland today, and some at least of the things we need to wrestle with were never on the Reformers' radar screen. So it helps to trace at least some points in the historical unfolding and changes if we are to understand where we are now and how we need to respond. Each generation, including our own, brings both discernment and blind spots. That was true of the Reformers, too. They were not infallible.

By contrast with the Reformation and Puritan worlds, the Enlightenment of the C.18th to a large extent threw the supernatural baby out with the bathwater, and ever since, large swathes of western theology as well as culture have found it increasingly impossible to accommodate what cannot be explained in material and scientific terms. We are familiar with the depressing habit by some within the church as well as beyond it of trying to explain away the miracles recorded in Scripture, and supremely the Spirit-breathed Incarnation, the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord. In our culture, and generally in our churches, the supernatural has been reclassified as superstition.

Along with that, the Holy Spirit has in many circles become an embarrassing mystery to many in our churches, mentioned briefly in the Creed (for those who embed that in their services), but often reduced to some kind of impersonal inspiration, vaguely 'there', but shorn of divine Personhood and marginalized, generally irrelevant to daily life. The python

of secularism, along with the presumptions of the Enlightenment, squeezes the church, leaving less and less space within which to recognize the Spirit for whom He is and for what His role is. Evangelicals I believe have been more impacted by this than we care to acknowledge.

This is often far less of a problem for our brothers and sisters in the non-western world. Many in Africa, Asia and Latin America live cheek by jowl with the open manifestation of the supernatural, and are familiar with spirit mediums, witchdoctors, demons and all the naked activity of the Evil One. But equally believers are then often more sensitive to the every day presence of the Holy Spirit, and have no difficulty in relating to the unseen world because they do not compartmentalize life. I still remember the moment when in Asia I woke up to the fact that the 'great cloud of witnesses' in Hebrews 12:1 are not simply examples from the past but a present reality, a point where time and eternity intersect.

Further whereas from the Enlightenment onwards, western cultures have placed more and more emphasis on the cerebral, and theologians have focused on the intellect, sometimes in a form of scarcely baptized philosophy, non-western Christians are more likely to know that knowing God is not just about cognitive acquisition, but involves the whole person — body, mind, emotions, heart and strength, relationships and community, and our sense of the aesthetic as we worship God in His beauty: all that and more is to be swept up into true knowledge, truly knowing. That is often far closer to biblical and Hebrew understanding of 'knowing' than is allowed for in much that is taught and experienced in our Scottish churches.

Even as evangelicals, we can be so taken up with the need for right words and terminology that we lose sight of the messiness of love and of surrendered-to-God living, and of the limitations of our understanding. We can be nervous about mystery, and try to have clear definitions of everything with no loose ends. How much we need vivid multi-dimensional experience of God as the Spirit takes the Word and brings it into all its living, active, life-bearing, transformative intent so that we can say with awe and wonder 'We have met with God in Person, and He's as real to us in every part of our lives as the persons we share our homes with, the people we work alongside: truly, God within us....' That surely is the dynamic of the Spirit. Is that what we share with our people, and demonstrate unmistakably in our lives, individually and corporately? If it were, would the current story of the church in Scotland not be far different?

Let me share with you a comment from the Ghanaian theologian, Kwame Bediako, on the way Western theology has been shaped by the Enlightenment:

Coinciding as it did with significant advances in scientific discoveries, the Enlightenment acted to direct intellectual attention away from the realm of transcendence to the empirical world that could be seen and felt, that is, from the intangible to the tangible. By and large, Christian theology in the West made its peace with the Enlightenment. It responded by drawing a line between the secular world and the sacred sphere, as it were, and so established a frontier between the spiritual world on the one hand, and the material world on the other, creating in effect, a dichotomy between them. Many earnest Christians have been attempting by various means since then to bridge the two worlds.²

Let's return to our glimpses into western Protestantism, starting again at the C.18th Revival. Here, against a backdrop of the Protestant churches being at a low ebb, God in His grace again poured out His Spirit in great power. At Herrnhut in Saxony in August 1727, a motley collection of refugees from religious persecution came reluctantly and in a spirit of mutual dislike and mistrust to a shared Communion table. Arvid Gradin, who was present, wrote afterwards of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon them in a way that seemed like Pentecost all over again. 'They were so convinced and affected that their hearts were set on fire with new faith and love towards the Saviour, and likewise with love towards one another'.³ The renewed, formerly disparate and fractious, group became the united Moravian community, who were to be instrumental in the conversion of the Wesley brothers a few years later.

First in America in 1734 under Jonathan Edwards' ministry, and then a little later in Britain under John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield, God answered the prayers of those who recognized how dead the Church was and longed for something far different. It is I think significant that history records over and over again that a small group of deeply praying people can become the channel through whom God graciously does something beyond all our feeble faith dares to imagine, and where the Spirit comes in great power.

Whitefield came to Scotland fourteen times, the second time being associated with the Cambuslang revival in 1742, only seven years after his own conversion. Despite his strong Calvinist convictions, he nonetheless appealed passionately to the crowds who came to his mostly open-air preaching to turn to Christ and be saved: no passive idea of God's sover-

² Kwame Bediako, 'Worship as Vital Participation: Some Personal Reflections on the African Church', *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 8 (2005), 3-7, (p. 3).

³ *The History of Christianity*, ed. by Tim Dowley (Oxford: Lion; revd. ed. 1990; repr. 1992), p. 446.

eighty there. There were local revivals in other places, too, for instance, Kilsyth under James Robe, or in the northern Highlands under John Balfour. Those who experience such revivals, and all the records of them, highlight the recognition of the Holy Spirit coming in great power to convict and save, and to transform both individuals and sometimes communities.

John Wesley visited Scotland 22 times, and while theologically perhaps less in tune with Scottish Presbyterianism than Whitefield, left an important imprint, especially emphasizing assurance of the Spirit, evidenced through progressive sanctification and transformation, as being a hallmark of true conversion. In an age when the indiscriminate baptism of all infants, an integral element of Christendom practice, was still the norm — even legally required as the sole basis of civic registration — I think it is understandable that Wesley urged a fresh and genuine encounter with God. I think we should bear that in mind when trying to assess his apparent teaching of a second blessing, which disturbs most in the Reformed tradition. In general, the concept of baptismal regeneration, for centuries, and widely, a Christendom given, had not been dislodged by the Reformation, and if you have universal infant baptism you have to have some way of describing subsequent coming to real faith. And of course, the Wesleys provided us to this day with a wealth of wonderful hymns, at the time a superb teaching tool of biblical truth in memorable form, alongside the metrical psalms.

Then we come to the Holiness movement of the C.19th. In some ways this was the direct descendant of the Wesleys' ministry, with its concern that professions of faith without subsequent evidence of growth in Christ-likeness were a form of St Paul's clanging cymbal, and now a second blessing was seen as being the deliberate receiving of the Holy Spirit in a fuller way to empower people to live the so-called Higher Life. But there were some serious flaws. Increasingly shaped by the rising tide of pre-millennial eschatology, and with growing preoccupation with prophecy, along with the emergence of Darby's dispensationalism, the concept of holiness became more and more detached from anything other than individual change in a rather mystical manner, a 'withdrawal from the secular', and a downgrading of the role of the church.

Iain Murray, in his book, *The Puritan Hope*, comments:

Practically no area of life remained unaffected by this eclipse of the old hope [*i.e. eschatology as understood by the Reformers and Puritans*]. Political and social endeavor, such as marked the lives of a number of prominent Christians in the Reformation and Puritan periods, and, in more recent times, in William Wilberforce and the 'Clapham Sect', was no longer regarded as legit-

imate evangelical activity. To engage in such pursuits savoured of the error that the world could be made better and it involved participation in a 'human' order of things.⁴

Christian faith was individualized and privatized. On the positive side, and also as a result of pre-millennial beliefs, there was a significant impetus to engage in world mission in order, so it was said, to 'hasten the Lord's return', though there were of course other factors that stimulated mission at the time, such as growing awareness of the wider world, easier and faster travel and communications, and the expanding role of Protestant European empires. But the truncated and individualised view of transformation still divides the global missionary movements today.

As far as I am aware, pre-millennialism is not a big issue in Scotland's churches today, but in parts of North America and some parts of Asia it is powerful, and lies behind the tension found in movements such as Lausanne and the World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission, and in evangelical international mission agencies, where many North Americans and some others view mission as only concerned with individual conversion and personal spirituality, and holistic mission or concern to see societal change as unbiblical: a sort of acceptance of being light, but leave the salt out of it.

Sadly, in some parts of the UK church today we have swung to the opposite extreme, and find it easier to be concerned about social welfare and development than about the urgency to see men and women and children become citizens of the Kingdom of God. Biblical transformation must surely be both—and, not one without the other. As John Stott once said, 'Holiness is not a mystical condition experienced in relation to God but in isolation from human beings. You cannot be good in a vacuum but only in the real world of people.' Equally he would have said emphatically that a gospel concerned only with physical well-being is no gospel at all.

By the late C.19th, the increasingly influential Keswick movement, which had its roots in the Holiness and prophecy movements, was teaching that holiness comes from a second distinct and decisive experience after conversion, when the Holy Spirit is explicitly sought. This was based on some NT references to being filled with the Spirit happening subsequent to some prior commitment to Christ e.g. Acts 2:4 and the experience of the Apostles at Pentecost; Acts 9:17 and the ministry of Ananias to Saul; or Acts 19:1–6 where Paul finds 'disciples' who have never heard of the Holy Spirit though baptized with John's baptism. At its most extreme

⁴ Iain Murray, *The Puritan Hope* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1971), pp. 203–4.

it was sometimes taught that this second stage of blessing could so change the believer's heart that he would never sin again — that is, at conversion a person could be delivered from the guilt of sin, the second blessing would save from the power of sin — a complete and final deliverance from sin in this life. This manifestly makes a nonsense of passages such as Romans 7:7–25, where Paul describes the ongoing battle against sin.

I should add that Keswick long ago abandoned such teaching, though it remains a high concern to encourage believers to embrace whole-hearted discipleship in every dimension of life, a seeking after Christlikeness as the Spirit brings the Word to life and transforms people. Often people can look back on significant steps forward in their commitment to Christ as a result of being at conventions such as Keswick. But from early on, the Keswick message also emphasized that the Holy Spirit's ministry was to empower God's people for mission and service, looking out to the world as well as inwards for personal holiness, and in the last years of the C.19th and at other points, too, hundreds went around the world with the gospel as a result. Sadly, they all too often took an inadequate Western version with them. It's grace and mercy that the Lord gently uses flawed and far from perfect servants.

At the start of the C.20th, the Pentecostal movement brought fresh attention to the Holy Spirit, and new ideas. In fact it is hard to say exactly when Pentecostalism was birthed, as there were certainly antecedents to what is usually described as its beginnings in 1906 in Los Angeles, California. On the day following the terrible earthquake in San Francisco that had killed many thousands, a small group of mostly poor and racially mixed believers met together, and heard their leader, an African American, declare that this event was a sign that the Lord was close to returning, and that God by His Spirit was restoring the Apostolic church, which would include all the gifts bestowed at Pentecost. The message quickly and powerfully spread, and like Wesley's Methodism or William and Catherine Booth's Salvation Army, especially impacted the poor and those on the whole not effectively reached by most of the mainstream churches at the time. This empowerment of the poor and marginalized has been especially significant in Latin America and Africa, but impacts urban poor in Europe and America, too.

And so we come full circle, because these were — and are — people and cultures who by and large were not impacted as the West has been by the Enlightenment and all that flowed from that. For them there is no question of denying the existence and power of the supernatural and spiritual world. That reality is to this day the air they breathe, permeating every dimension of life. Why would God, if He is who He says He is, not perform miracles today? Why, if on the Cross Christ was not only atoning

for sin but also disarming and triumphing over all powers and authorities, as Paul tells us in Colossians 2, would He not still by His Spirit and through His servants be in the business of casting out demons, liberating from many sicknesses, and delivering from evil? On what grounds would anyone believe that any of the gifts of the Spirit, as experienced in the early Church, would mysteriously disappear, since there is no biblical indication that any were only temporary? Why would the Creator Spirit not still be intimately involved in the health, fruitfulness and renewal of the whole universe? And if the Lord promised that his followers, with the Spirit at work within them, would do even greater works than he had done in his earthly ministry, isn't that what we should seek and long for?

Yes, there have been, and are, some instances that we can all cite of abuse, wild ideas and practices, and vulnerabilities to wandering well away from biblical truth. But we, too, have been guilty of error, of pride in believing we have always got everything right, of shying away from radical discipleship, of domesticating God by assuming our theology is the pinnacle of absolute truth.

Of course, if you are Dispensationalist, your system has to conclude that only a handful of gifts remain. Perhaps some Scottish Christians are functionally Dispensationalist without knowing it. But if you go back through church history and trace the route by which our Western heritage started picking some gifts as permanent and others as non-permanent, you may need to question the grounds on which such decisions were made, especially as they were often in the context — and interest — of the church changing from movement to institution, and the dynamic of the Spirit being replaced by ritual, hierarchy and control by the powerful. And there are always the sticky fingers of the Enlightenment, the default rejection of the miraculous and supra-rational.

Like Wesley's ministry, Pentecostalism was marginalized for much of the C.20th by the mainstream churches, even when revivals and awakenings achieved what those churches were not achieving. Run forward to the 1960s and the coming of the Charismatic movement. Many people brought to vibrant new life were cold-shouldered by their churches and went off and established new and independent ones, including here in Scotland. Maybe their enthusiasm was not always matched by biblical wisdom, but at least they were alive and not asleep or dead. Others brought a breath of fresh air and renewed faith and vision into mainstream churches. In England, the most common hostility to the Charismatic movement revolved around the issue of speaking in tongues, which some eager charismatics, like most Pentecostals before them, reckoned was the evidence of new life — or baptism — in the Spirit. In some parts of Scottish evangelicalism, the grounds of rejection was because the mobilization of the laity — a

strong feature of the charismatics, because of their emphasis on the need for all the gifts — was deemed to downgrade the authority of the Minister and his ministry of the Word.

Evangelicals do indeed hold the ministry of the Word in a very high place. But is that only vested in the Minister? And is it right to set that in a completely different category of value from other complementary gifts, all of which the Word tells us are vital for a true and healthy Body life? Does the professionalization of the preaching ministry in so many of our churches not carry dangers as well as gifts: the Minister who normally only listens to his own voice as a preacher may grow to assume he or she is always right. If you are a church leader, especially a teacher of the Word, are you equipping the saints for ministry or holding all the strings in your own hands?

One of the key reasons why Pentecostalism has spread so well has been precisely because it has empowered the laity to be active in meaningful ministry: evangelism, discipling and teaching others, leading worship, serving Christ in the workplace, not just in church. They are entrusted with starting networks of new believing communities, who in their turn then sow gospel seeds in their families and neighbourhoods, and then in the next, and so on. Where the strengths of Pentecostalism and of the charismatic movement have been absorbed into existing churches, this has brought renewal and growth. Here in Scotland, the 2016 Church Census showed that Pentecostals doubled in numbers since the previous Census in 2002, standing at 19,000, which is 5% of all Scottish church-goers. If you add self-identifying charismatics as well, the percentage is considerably higher.

But even Pentecostalism, in the West at least, despite its bringing the Person and work of the Holy Spirit back into focus, has not dealt fully with the dualism that has dogged us for so long. The late South African, David Bosch, traces the root of it all the way back to Augustine, and his absorbing ideas from Greek philosophy. In his (that is, Augustine's) wrestling to find the answer to his need for personal salvation, Bosch writes,

The human soul is lost, therefore it is the human soul that has to be saved [...] God became human in order to save human souls that are hurtling to destruction. Not the reconciliation of the universe but the redemption of the soul stands in the center. This redemption is understood to be both other-worldly and individualistic, in contrast not only to much of the Old and New Testament, but also of the traditional religions of Europe, which were exclusively this-worldly and communal [...] The theology of Augustine could not but spawn a dualistic view of reality, which became second nature in Western

Christianity – the tendency to regard salvation as a private matter and to ignore the world.⁵

What might we need to ponder for Scotland today, a Scotland that is both deeply secular and also often trying to fill the vacuum with irrationality, and yet intent on marginalizing Christian faith as empty superstition, and where Christian truth is devalued as at best the private eccentricity of those who choose to subscribe? Have we been contributing, however unwittingly, to that conclusion by teaching that salvation is highly individual, spirituality an interior matter, by our failure to integrate the seen and the unseen, and by our preoccupation with fighting over who may have the most correct doctrine rather than longing to see the power and glory of the Lord unmistakably transforming congregations and through them communities?

Have we bought into the humanization agenda of the Enlightenment, with its elevated views of human autonomy, so that our church people are uneasy in the presence of the Spirit displayed in ways that are beyond our desire to control? Please don't tell me that Scots don't do emotion: just go to a football or rugby match, or to a pop concert. And please don't tell me that expressing strong emotion in our worship is incompatible with reverence: Peter could write of 'unspeakable joy', which doesn't sound too restrained to me. And the Lord receives gladly the extravagant, emotional love of the woman who anoints his feet with tears streaming down her face. Does our Scottish love affair with systematic theology leave us reading the Gospels through the grid of Romans, with all its logic and order, in the process often losing much of its passion, rather than Romans through the grid of the Gospels, with its narrative and demonstration of a life lived perfectly in the power of the Spirit? Do we then reduce the Holy Spirit to facts about Him rather than as the dynamic, God-with-us-here-and-now Person in us and among us that He truly is? Do we think of the fruit of the Spirit in rather anaemic terms of just a bit more joy or peace, a bit more love and goodness than those of our nice unbelieving neighbours, or do we look for and expect a qualitative difference in the way Scottish Christians live — a difference that the watching world would not fail to see?

Power and transformation are both tricky words to use wisely. If you buy into the Enlightenment package, they both end up as what humans think they own and can achieve, and church becomes a place of philosophy with a slim veneer of Bible, and a comforting therapy club. That's so far removed from the community we are designed and called to be, a

⁵ David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991), p. 216.

visual aid of embodiment of the very life of God. We can't rewrite history, and the church in Scotland today has been shaped by her history for both good and ill. But maybe we are being called today to long for something far different from what we mostly see and accept as normal Christian life. Timothy Tennent of Gordon Conwell Seminary quotes Samuel Escobar's observation, 'Evangelical Protestantism emphasized the "continuity of truth by the Word," whereas Pentecostalism has emphasized the "continuity in life by the Spirit"', and concludes that we need both.⁶ Then perhaps we will see more of the transforming power of God, more of His Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven, and more Scots who become worshippers to the glory of God. Lord, let it be, for your Name's sake.

⁶ Timothy C. Tennent, *Theology in the Context of World Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), p. 189.