

1:19-21). We also know that it was the Apostles alone who could pass out miraculous gifts (Acts 8:14-19). When the last of the apostles (of which one could not be an apostle unless they had walked with Christ, Acts 1:21-22) died, there could no longer be miraculous gifts which was the plan of God. Pentecostal churches teach that they still are able to perform miracles, claiming to be the same as the apostles. Yet they have no genuine apostles to bestow this ability, and the miracles they claim are not the same as in the first century. Finally, we are told that there would be no further revelation (Revelation 22:18-19), and to bring another gospel was to be cursed by God (Galatians 1:8-9).

*Pentecostal teachings on miracles contradicts the teaching of the New Testament.*

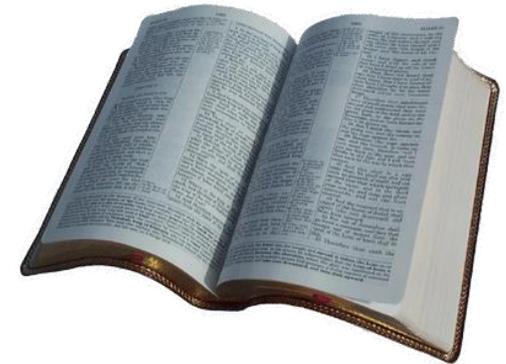
Pentecostalism also contains a number of doctrines distinct from the New Testament. Pentecostal doctrines of salvation follow the error of many protestant churches: one is born with a sinful nature (Ecclesiastes 7:29) and one is saved by faith only (James 2:24); They teach various forms of pre-millennialism, denying Jesus established His kingdom (Mark 1:15). They violate teachings on worship in the Bible; for example, women are leaders in the worship assembly, which is forbidden in Scriptures (1 Timothy 2:12, 1 Corinthians 14:34); they teach the Old Testament practice of tithing, contrary to the New Testament church (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). As well, they do not follow the New Testament

pattern of local churches (1 Timothy 3:1-15, Titus 1) with elders, deacons and evangelists, but instead create a church hierarchy with a human head (2 Thessalonians 2:4). They also have additional teachings (church manuals) and creeds of men.

*Pentecostal churches teach and practice doctrines contrary to the wholesome doctrine of Christ.*

There are many variations of the Pentecostal movement, and it is not necessarily fair to characterize all the same way. This has been an attempt to boil down the most basic conflicts of the Pentecostal movement with New Testament Christianity. There are other errors, even more serious than those mentioned here, that are used by specific denominations of Pentecostalism (the oneness doctrine, teaching of miraculous ability, word of faith, etc). Yet what has been discussed is sufficient to equip us to see the false nature of the Pentecostal churches.

# Understanding Pentecostal Churches



**P**entecostalism traces itself back to New Year's Day, 1901, in Topeka, KS. At that time a small group of people supposedly received a "Divine Revelation" for the first time ever recorded. Soon afterward the "Power of the Holy Spirit" supposedly fell upon 120 people, and a "new revelation from God" came to them. Subsequent revelations came in later years to various groups with various changes in theology. These groups identify themselves today as "Pentecostal", a reference to Acts 2 and the day of Pentecost event recorded there.

The Pentecostal movement came out of Methodism and the Holiness movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Originally, the movement believed that Jesus was soon to return (by 1900) and restore His kingdom. With that time passing, some began to believe that there would be a supernatural event at that time instead, culminating with the events in 1901.

Today there are many Pentecostal denominations. There are 30 apostolic Pentecostal denominations, and 80 oneness Pentecostal denominations in the world. Pentecostal believers are nearly half of the Protestant churches in the world. They include the Assemblies of God, the Apostolic Church, the United Pentecostal Church, the Church of God, and Calvary Chapel.

Pentecostal doctrines vary from denomination to denomination, but tend to agree on four basic tenants (called the four-

square gospel or full-gospel): Jesus saves according to John 3:16 (by faith only); baptism with the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4; bodily healing according to James 5:15; and the return of Jesus according to 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.

### **Pentecostalism Verse Christianity**

Pentecostalism sought a restoration of the events of the first century at Pentecost, and a restoration of that first century church. There is a question here about the need to restore this Christianity. Jesus said, of His church, that it would not be overcome or fail in Matthew 16:18. We are told that it was perfectly established, and that the Scriptures that sustain it were delivered once for all (Romans 10:17, Jude 3, 2 Peter 1:3, 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Thus, there is no stated need for a new apostolic movement; the work of the Apostles was to establish the church (Ephesians 2:20) and deliver the doctrine of the church.

*Pentecostalism seeks a restoration that the Bible denies is necessary.*

Pentecostalism states that in 1901 the Holy Spirit fell upon a number of people, and they experienced a baptism of the Holy Spirit. However, the promise of the Holy Spirit baptism was something made only to the apostles (John 14:17, 26; John 15:26; John 16:7,13; Acts 1:5), and when it happened it was a great

rushing wind heard all over the city of Jerusalem, and tongues of fire appeared above their heads (Acts 2:1-4). They then spoke in languages of other people. This only happened again to Cornelius in Acts 10:44-46, which is testified to by Peter in 10:47 and 11:17.

*Pentecostalism fails to recreate the circumstances or events of Acts 2.*

Pentecostalism establishes its authority on miracles and speaking in tongues. It is clear in the New Testament that speaking in tongues was a reference to speaking in a foreign language that was unlearned, as seen in Acts 2:8 ("how is it that we each hear them in our own language"). Yet the *glossolalia* spoken by members of the Pentecostal movement are indiscernible, unintelligible noises that are understood by none.

*Pentecostal speaking in tongues is not the same as in the New Testament.*

In addition to the miracles of speaking in foreign tongues, there are other miraculous works found in the New Testament that were given to the church with the purpose of establishing the veracity of the doctrine of Christ (Mark 2:10-11, Acts 14:3, Romans 15:18-19, Hebrews 2:4). Once that doctrine was delivered once and for all, the need for miracles ceased (1 Corinthians 13:1-11, 2 Peter