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The Teaching and Practice of the Apostolic Church, with special reference to its concept of Directive Prophecy

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**The Teaching and Practice of the Apostolic
Church, with special reference to its
concept of Directive Prophecy**

A dissertation submitted in accordance with
the regulations of Bangor University

for the degree of

Master of Philosophy

by

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Abstract

The Apostolic Church in the UK was established in 1916 under the direct supervision and leadership of Pastor Daniel Powell 'DP' Williams (1882-1947). He had been considerably influenced by the charismatic ministry of William J. Hutchinson (1864-1928) who had established the Apostolic Faith Church in 1911. Following a disagreement between Hutchinson and Williams, 'DP' concentrated his energies on his homeland in West Wales where plans soon came to fruition for the establishment of the Apostolic Church in Wales. Faithfully assisted by his brother William 'Jones' Williams (1891-1945), 'DP' adopted the practice of directive prophecy as a central tenet of the new denomination. This specific use of the prophetic gift has had wide ranging impact upon the nature and development of the denomination. The Apostolic Church has accepted directive prophecy despite the opposition of the other main stream classical Pentecostal denominations. Classical Pentecostals widely accept the roles of prophecy in the contemporary church to include edification, exhortation and comfort with a possible predictive element. The Apostolic Church is unique in that it inherited both a theology and praxis of directive prophecy from the Apostolic Faith Church. Directive prophecy has been keenly accepted by its adherents and criticised by opponents as a result the Apostolic Church has become somewhat isolated within the Pentecostal movement. This has generally been due to the fact that directive prophecy is considered authoritarian and restrictive by its critics. There is therefore a need to revisit the Apostolic Church's understanding of directive prophecy and assess its acceptance and practice within the denomination. In order to facilitate this evaluation of directive prophecy this research will therefore consider the following definition of directive prophecy:

Directive prophecy is prophecy that instructs the recipient with regard to actions to be taken, location to serve in or steps to be taken that will lead into a greater sense of the purpose of God and its practice within the Apostolic Church.

Coupled with this definition, the Apostolic Church has inherited a hierarchical approach to leadership, recognising apostles as the primary leaders with prophets holding a secondary role. However both ministries function together and exercise an authoritative role in the Church.

This purpose of this research is to summarise the biblical roles of apostles and prophets and further evaluate the historical development of the use of directive prophecy within the Apostolic Church. In order to evaluate the validity of directive prophecy it will be necessary to establish the historical context of the Apostolic Church, tracing its history over its 100 years of existence, finally considering whether an authoritative role from senior leadership is conducive for contemporary congregations.

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Chapter 1 Introduction and methodology

Historical context and background

The Apostolic Church was born out of Pentecostalism, a twentieth century phenomenon with its roots widely accepted as being traced to the teaching of Charles Fox Parham (1873-1929) in Topeka, Kansas, USA.¹ Pentecostalism was shaped by a variety of theological themes that had been prevalent during the nineteenth century; dispensationalism,² divine healing³ and holiness⁴ being widely held as the most influential. Parham's distinctive teaching focused on a restoration of the experience recorded in Acts 2:1-11 and which would equip his students with *xenolalia*⁵. Parham believed this experience would enable its recipients to preach the gospel by supernatural means without any formal language training. Agnes Ozman (1870-1937), a student at Parham's Bible School was the first to receive this experience which was labeled as being 'baptized in the Holy Spirit'; I will return to this subject below. Another of Parham's students, William Joseph Seymour (1870-1922), was instrumental in the event commonly described as the 'Pentecostal Revival' in Azusa Street, Los Angeles, USA in 1906.⁶ The events at Azusa Street can be regarded as the catalyst to the establishment of the worldwide Pentecostal movement.

¹ William K. Kay, *Pentecostalism* (London: SCM, 2009); William K. Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000); Walter Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (London: S.C.M. Press, 1972); Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). For sermons preached by Charles Parham, cf. www.apostolicbiblecollege.org/library_e-books_133.html: for a biography; gcbcedu.us/TheLifeOfCharlesFParham.470pages.pdf.

² Dispensationalism, was widely promoted by John Nelson Darby (1800–82), founder of the Brethren Movement, and is a futurist biblical interpretation that foresees a series of 'dispensations' or periods in history in which God relates to human beings in different ways under different biblical covenants. (cf. Marion Field *John Nelson Darby-Prophetic Pioneer* (Godalming: Highland), 2008).

³ John Alexander Dowie as a young man in Australia he experienced a healing from chronic indigestion which he attributed to divine intervention; this led to his growing activity as a faith healer and ultimately to the foundation of his International Divine Healing Association. R. Harlan, *John Alexander Dowie and the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church in Zion*, (PhD Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1906), p.117.

⁴ The Holiness Movement emerged from the Methodist Church in the mid-nineteenth century and was distinguished by its emphasis on John Wesley's doctrine of 'Christian perfection'. Its distinguishing feature being a belief in entire sanctification as a second definite work of grace, received by faith, through grace, and accomplished by the baptism and power of the Holy Spirit. Parham equated this 'baptism and power of the Holy Spirit' with the ability to speak in tongues. Donald Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987).

⁵ Whereas glossolalia is the belief in tongues for the use of glorifying God and personal edification, xenolalia is the belief that the baptism of the Holy Spirit was a supernatural ability to preach the gospel in foreign languages. Gary McGee *People of the Spirit :The Assemblies of God* (Springfield MO: Gospel Publishing, 2014) and Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter* (London: T & T Clark, 2008) with James Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit (studies in Biblical theology)* (London: SCM), 1970 positing a contrary view.

⁶ Cecil M. Robeck, Jr. *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival* (Nashville, TN.: Thomas Nelson, 2006); cf. D.W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street: An Eyewitness Account* (Gainesville, FL: Bridge-Logos, 1980), Roberts Liardon, *The Azusa Street Revival: When The Fire Fell* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2006), Wilmington Group, *The*

Embryonic Pentecostalism may well have been theologically naïve in that it accepted the basic Evangelical theological framework; blending it with a distinctive pneumatology. However it has developed into a worldwide movement and has now become the fastest growing of all Christian movements. Pentecostalism was particularly attractive to the working-classes as it allowed for all members to be involved in spiritual ministry as interpreted from 1 Corinthians 12-14. Pentecostal services were organized to allow for spontaneity of worship; and also moved the new movement away from the necessity of a professional ministry. The other main issue that attracted the working-classes to Pentecostalism was the teaching of a premillennial eschatology. For those who worked in the heat in a cotton field in the American South or in the bowels of the earth as a Welsh coal miner, the concept of Christ's imminent return to relieve them of their physical suffering would have been a most attractive prospect.

Rev. A.A. Boddy (1854-1930), the Anglican incumbent of Monkswearmouth, Sunderland, had a particular interest in revivals. Boddy had heard about the experiences of Thomas Ball Barratt (1862-1940), an English-born Norwegian evangelist who had been influenced by the teachings of the Azusa Street Revival during a preaching campaign in the United States. Boddy invited Barratt to hold special services in his Sunderland church and these became highly important in the development of the nascent Pentecostal movement, including the Apostolic Church. It was never Boddy's intention to start a new denomination. However he soon found that the excitement and novelty of the new movement was inimical to the traditional structures of the Anglican Church and soon small groups of Spirit-filled individuals sprang up all over the UK. One person who rose to prominence within these groups was William Hutchinson (1864-1928).⁷

After having his own intense Pentecostal type spirit baptism in Sunderland, Hutchinson returned home to Bournemouth where he gathered interested friends together in order to share the experience. The first person he laid his hands on was baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. Several more baptisms, along with tongues, quickly followed.⁸ Eventually Hutchinson and his friends opened the Emmanuel Hall in Bournemouth as a permanent building for the local congregation and as a home for conferences which were becoming

Great Azusa Street Revival: the Life and Sermons of William Seymour (Fort Lauderdale, FL.: Wilmington Group Publishing, 2006).

⁷ Kent White, *The Word of God Coming Again* (Bournemouth: AFC, 1919).

⁸ Kent White, *The Word of God Coming Again* (Bournemouth: AFC, 1919), p.48.

increasingly popular in spreading his brand of Pentecostal teaching. The hall was dedicated on 5 November 1908 and *Confidence* recorded that this was the first Pentecostal building to be erected in the British Isles.⁹ Hutchinson's influence grew as different people visited Bournemouth. I will return to this later in the dissertation.

One central tenet of Hutchinson's teaching was the understanding of God speaking directly to the church through the charismata. This led to the view that through such gifts as recorded in 1 Cor.12 God would bring new teaching as well as prophetic words of direction to both congregation and individuals. On one occasion Hutchinson is recorded as saying:

If you do not believe what the gifts of the Holy Ghost are saying to you - for it is God speaking - then you make Him out to be a liar . . . We say it again - we have acted upon the spoken word of God through the gifts for over two years and have not found God once tell us an untruth, neither lead us astray . . . If we cannot trust the gifts, what can we trust? Do you think His gifts are going to lie to you? Never! There have been some awful mistakes made, but these mistakes have not been made through the gifts. I am holding on to the gifts of God as telling the truth and they will only speak of God and from God.¹⁰

This belief, that prophecy was infallible, increasingly differentiated the Apostolic Faith Church (AFC) from the wider Pentecostal movement and caused eventual isolation. This subject will be discussed in detail in the body of the dissertation. It also changed Hutchinson's movement from holding a more mainline evangelical position to being wholly centered on pneumatology with an emphasis upon the immediate word of God presented through the gifts of the Spirit. I will return to this later.

As Pentecostalism grew in the UK, many of the larger groups of individuals developed their own independent churches. Most lacked leadership and any experienced ministry. Many were attracted to Hutchinson and his people either through attending AFC conventions or through reading the increasingly popular journal *Showers of Blessing*.

Of interest at this juncture is the linking of Daniel Powell Williams of Penygroes, Carmarthenshire with the happenings in Bournemouth. Later I will deal with the personal account of D.P. Williams' conversion, his exposure to Pentecostal experiences, his withdrawal from the chapel in which he grew up and the establishment of the 'proto-

⁹ White, *Word*, p.51; *Confidence Magazine* (available on CD-ROM (<https://pentecostalarchives.org/collections/confidence>)).

¹⁰ M. Hathaway, 'The Role of William Oliver Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church in the formation of British Pentecostal Churches', *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 16 (1996), 41-57 [44].

Apostolic' group in Penygroes. Whether it was Williams who made the first contact with Hutchinson by visiting the Bournemouth conference or whether it was Hutchinson who made the first move is uncertain. Hutchinson visited Penygroes in 1910 with his assistant James Dennis, directed there by a prophecy. Their ministry was effective and acceptable. During the visit Dennis prophesied that Williams should be the pastor of the small Evangelical Hall where the 'Children of the Revival' from Penygroes were meeting. Without consulting the church and wholly on the basis of the prophecy, Hutchinson ordained him immediately. Prophecies in the church confirmed Williams' call and he was appointed pastor at the end of the year.¹¹ James Worsfold records:

It seems to this writer, after examining the relevant documents that D.P. Williams was in submission to Hutchinson at Bournemouth. In 1911 he became a minister in the Apostolic Faith Church under Hutchinson, and in 1914, after prophetic ministry in a London Apostolic Faith Church convention, he was ordained by Hutchinson to be an apostle and overseer of their congregations in Wales.¹²

William K. Kay relates the relationship between Hutchinson and Williams:

The influence of Hutchinson on Williams and the young Apostolic Faith Church was considerable. Hutchinson's views on the value of prophecy as a method of guiding and governing the church were largely, if not completely, accepted and his view of the role of the present-day ordination of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers became foundational in the AFC's understanding of itself.¹³

A division between Hutchinson and Williams took place in 1916, and what seemed initially to be a personal disagreement between the two men resulted in Williams, together with several other Welsh leaders, seceding from the AFC and forming the Apostolic Church of Wales.¹⁴ I will return to this later.

The Apostolic Church (AC), as distinct from The Apostolic Church of Wales, came into being at a convention in Bradford during the Easter period of 1922.¹⁵ Gathered at the

¹¹ This appointment did not suit everybody meeting in the Evangelical Hall and Williams and his supporters were eventually locked out. This matter will be discussed in further detail later in the dissertation.

¹² J. Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church in Great Britain* (Wellington NZ: Julian Literature Trust, 1991), p.56.

¹³ W.K. Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000), p.18.

¹⁴ An English translation of the diary of D.P. Williams outlining the crisis is attached as Appendix I.

¹⁵ In 1916 D.P. Williams led the Penygroes AFC and several other Welsh assemblies to secede and to form the Apostolic Church of Wales. During 1917 another eight assemblies were opened. During 1918 Andrew Turnbull, the leader and founder of the 'Burning Bush' assemblies heard of a group of "Pentecostal believers in Wales, who were convinced of the 'efficacy of directive prophecy'. D.P. Williams and W.J. Williams were invited to Glasgow. They paid another visit a year later during which the leaders of the "Burning Bush" decided to join in with the Welshmen. In that same year William Guest of the Pentecostal Assembly in Smethwick, Birmingham

convention were the leaders from several like-minded groups. The process by which Hutchinson's group in Bournemouth changed to become the Apostolic Faith Church, the process by which D.P. Williams and his associates seceded from Bournemouth to form the Apostolic Church of Wales and the process that led to the formation of the 'Burning Bush' fellowship will be discussed in much more detail later in the dissertation. Those that attended the Easter meeting included D.P. Williams his brother William Jones Williams (known simply as 'Jones') from the Apostolic Church of Wales; Andrew Turnbull and his son Tom who represented a number of churches known as the 'Burning Bush' assemblies from around the Glasgow area. H.V. Chanter acted as host of the convention and represented the Apostolic Church of God. This group was a splinter from Smith Wigglesworth's Boland Street Mission where there had been a division over the issue of directive prophecy. Frank Hodges was also present representing a church group from Hereford. Whether these men, who eventually would become the backbone of the AC, planned to meet at this convention or whether their attendance was seen as being divinely directed in a specific way, is uncertain. Gordon Weeks is of the opinion that these men were directed independently by prophecy¹⁶ but from the verbatim records of discussions, it can be ascertained that this meeting had been previously arranged.¹⁷ However, H.V. Chanter, the chairman, would later write:

. . . this coming together without premeditation was so remarkable that we could only say that it was the Lord; there must be some purpose in which we were all concerned.¹⁸

Initially their discussions were about jointly sending overseas missionaries but soon the discussions turned to the appointment of a group leader and Daniel Powell Williams (D.P. throughout) was chosen. Andrew Turnbull was the first to nominate Williams. This may be because he (Williams) had been previously ordained as an apostle in the AFC or it may have been because he had a greater influence than the others within the group. The records do not show that Williams balked at the idea even though one of the primary factors in the secession from the AFC had been over hierarchical attitudes.

also decided to join as well. In 1918 Frank Hodges from Hereford decided to visit the August Penygroes Convention because he had heard that they were practising directive prophecy. He came back to the 1919 Convention and afterwards he invited D.P. Williams and others to minister in the Hereford Church. The first Glasgow Convention was held in 1920. D.P. Williams ministered there. Andrew Turnbull had been in correspondence with Pastor B. Fisher of the Pentecostal Church, Great Victoria Street, Belfast and he too decided to become part of this new movement.

¹⁶ G. Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two* (Barnsley: The Author, 2003), p.75.

¹⁷ National Archives of the AC, verbatim record of the ad hoc meeting held in Bradford during the Easter convention 1922.

¹⁸ *Herald of Grace* (December 1947), 549.

After nominating D.P. Williams Andrew Turnbull explained that, although each of the represented groups had their own prophets, it would be his (Williams') role to:

. . . enquire of the Lord through the prophet that has been so mightily used of God in bringing this work to him and to us and to know the mind and the will of God.

Turnbull was making provision for D.P to call his brother Jones to prophesy by stating:

It is not the time to say I believe any prophet . . . but . . . the government is on my friend's shoulders . . . and . . . I am glad to let him . . . take the reins.

He further commented:

We never tie the Lord's prophets, but when a man is used in enquiring of the Lord through the anointed prophet that has been so long used, I think it is for the senior apostle to enquire of the Lord why the Lord has brought us together.¹⁹

The National Administration Centre of the AC estimates that in 2010 membership of the denomination was between ten and eleven million worldwide.²⁰ Writing about the Plymouth Brethren, W.B. Neatby describes the body as 'a small sect but this, so far from diminishing the importance of their history, greatly enhances it'.²¹ What Neatby says of the Plymouth Brethren can be equally said of the AC in the UK. It was born in an obscure Welsh village at the beginning of the twentieth century and is the smallest of the mainstream British Pentecostal groups, yet its ecclesiology is 'now found worldwide in thirty denominations, stressing complex hierarchy of living apostles, prophets, and other charismatic officials.'²² Although the AC is recognized as one of the mainstream British Pentecostal denominations it has always been considered by the other groups as standing somewhat apart. This is because of its regimented structure and reliance on a hierarchy of ministries. There has also been disagreement and sometimes conflict between the AC and other Pentecostal groups over the theology and practice of directive prophecy. Kay records that in 1924 the leaders of the other burgeoning Pentecostal groups in the UK (Elim and the Assemblies of God (AoG)) discussed

¹⁹ National Archives of the AC, verbatim record.

²⁰ Mrs Helen Moore, The Apostolic Church Administration Centre, P.O.Box 51298, London, SE11 9AJ.

²¹ W.B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren* (Stoke on Trent: Tentmaker, 2001), p.16.

²² V. Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal, 1901-2001* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001), p.399. D. Densil Morgan considers Williams and this expanding group worthy of more than a cursory mention stating that: 'Although unsophisticated, it afforded ordinary people a taste of the vitality and excitement of New Testament faith at its most elemental. It, too, had its contribution to make to the wider religious scene' (D. Densil Morgan, *The Span of the Cross: Religion and Society in Wales, 1914-2000* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), p.14).

working together but finally agreed to operate separately.²³ The Apostolics were not part of those discussions. On 23 February 1923 Donald Gee wrote to Elim pastor E.J. Phillips:

It is on my heart to do what I can to strengthen the unity between our Scottish work and the other Pentecostal Assemblies. We are very isolated in Scotland and have practically got our backs to the wall in contending against the advance of the erroneous practices of the Apostolic Church.²⁴

In an article entitled *The role of Pastors should not be undermined* Gee warned against going to prophets for guidance.²⁵ In his book regarding the history of the Pentecostal Movement he commented that

‘To bestow New Testament titles of offices upon men and women and then consider that by doing so we are creating apostolic assemblies parallel to those of the Primitive Church is very much like children playing at churches.’

He further commented ‘The mere distribution of Scriptural names of offices in the church does not automatically produce true apostolic assemblies of Christians’.²⁶ In a 1936 pamphlet entitled “*The Apostolic Church Error*” Nelson Parr, of British Assemblies of God, published another major attack on the practices of the AC.²⁷ Its publication further added to the entrenchment of the Apostolics and their withdrawal into isolation.²⁸ It must be stressed at this point that the other Pentecostal groups were not opposed to prophecy per se but would definitely be opposed to the practice of directive prophecy.

As will be discussed in greater detail below, the initial years of the AC saw remarkable growth nationally and internationally. Directive prophecy had a major role in this growth, inspiring many to travel to far off lands.

Some journeys were in response to enquiries inspired by readers of the AC journal, *The Riches of Grace* which was published from 1922 onwards. The November edition reported that there was a total of 70 assemblies in Britain, five assemblies in Ireland and a new work in Tucluman, Argentina.²⁹ By 1923, Denmark and the USA were added to the list of mission fields followed soon after by China and France. In terms of domestic growth, the AC reached

²³ Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain*, p.29.

²⁴ Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two*, p.80.

²⁵ *Elim Evangel*, Nov. 1922, 16-45.

²⁶ Donald Gee, *Wind and Flame* (Croydon: Heath Press, 1967), pp.74 & 105.

²⁷ A transcript of the pamphlet is attached as Appendix II.

²⁸ Warrington actually suggests that ‘increasingly, it is more accurate to identify Pentecostalism in the plural form Pentecostals as there is no longer an adequate framework into which all Pentecostals easily fit’. *Pentecostal Theology*, p.12.

²⁹ *Riches of Grace* (Nov 1922), pp.31-3.

its peak by the early 1950s. Since then numerically it has declined and contracted. Whereas in 2010 the AC worldwide could count its membership in millions, the UK membership was approximately 5,500,³⁰ far fewer than any of the other traditional Pentecostal groupings in Britain. The disparity between these two facts and the role that directive prophecy has played in this dichotomy will be examined throughout this dissertation.

Directive prophecy in practice throughout the history of the Apostolic Church

For the purposes of this dissertation I developed a working definition of directive prophecy: *Directive prophecy is prophecy that instructs the recipient with regard to actions to be taken, location to serve in or steps to be taken that will lead into a greater sense of the purpose of God. It would normally be confirmed by an apostle but not necessarily by the individual before being acted upon.* This definition was accepted by the vast majority of ministers who took part in a survey and will be discussed in detail further into the dissertation.

Throughout its history, directive prophecy has been one of the foremost characteristics in the thought and practice of the AC. In some way it could be said to be definitive of the church's essence. Its first formal constitution, produced in 1937, was intended to present the national and international structure of the denomination in a highly prescriptive way; including all necessary patterns for every conceivable situation in the life of a local assembly. In the matter of prayer for the sick, for instance, it was stipulated that, owing to fears of inappropriate behavior: 'The laying on of hands for healing must be confined to the head only'.³¹ It then went on to report on a specific directive prophecy confirming this instruction:

Therefore I would make it an understanding with you generally when you are laying on hands before the people, that ye shall lay hands on the head only . . . keep back from using thy hands upon their bodies . . . knowing the danger that threatens to come upon some.³²

It was through the words of prophecy rather than verifiable criteria open to objective analysis that the work of the denomination during its initial stages progressed.

This same level of prescription undergirded by the specifics of directive prophecy became operative in the church's mission overseas. The Apostolic Church Missionary Movement was inaugurated in 1922. The AC saw significant expansion beyond its own heartlands in South

³⁰ Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain*, p.20.

³¹ *The Principles and Practices of the Apostolic Church* (Penygroes: Apostolic Publications, 1937), p.268.

³² *The Principles and Practices of the Apostolic Church*, p.269.

Wales and Scotland to the north east of England, Yorkshire and Kent during its first fifty years, but its real passion was for overseas mission. Much of its overseas progress has come about following directive prophecy or as a result of enquiry into its understanding of directive prophecy. N.H. Thomas, then chairman of the AC's Missionary Board, referred to the 'tears, sweat, toil and death that have been given to see the work developing'. He referred to the conviction that must be found in the heart of the prospective missionary that '...confirms that a call is of God...'³³ This confirmation was often instigated by directive prophecy and invariably by the National Council made up of apostles and prophets, in which missionaries obeyed a call which they believed to be given directly by God through his chosen prophet.³⁴

During the early years this understanding of prophecy was open to abuse; this was particularly true during the time of the 'Latter Rain' outpouring of the early 1950s to which I will return later. The AC and the Latter Rain Movement shared a common understanding of directive prophecy and as a result the two groups were drawn closer together than either would be to the other Pentecostal groups. R.M. Riss refers to the Latter Rain Movement as being "highly controversial and whose impact and effects were felt worldwide".³⁵ At first the Apostolics welcomed the liberty and the sense of immediacy that the Latter Rain experience brought, but when some glaring mistakes occurred and the apostles realized the emotional and theological costs of continuing to support Latter Rain they took a strong stance against it. The resulting backlash was extremely painful with many several high-profile ministers as well as a whole mission field of 100,000 members in Africa's Gold Coast resigning from the church en masse. The experience further marginalized the AC in the eyes of the other mainstream Pentecostal groups in the UK.

The Latter Rain crisis brought internal pressure upon the Apostolics to review their practices regarding directive prophecy, but the external pressures far outweigh internal sources of pressure. Societal changes such as new attitudes to culture, religion and discipline, for example, have altered congregational expectations dramatically over the past hundred years.

³³ N.H. Thomas, *The Expanding Vision: a Souvenir Booklet Produced to Celebrate Fifty Years of Missionary Work* (Penygroes: Apostolic Church, 1972), preface.

³⁴ For example Gordon Weeks (1929 -2015), one-time Vice President of the AC was directed to go as a missionary to Nigeria in 1979. He returned in 1982 and in the subsequent International Convention he testified that when he was sent he had no conviction whatsoever to go but having been part of the process of sending others abroad he felt an obligation to go out of obedience. His continued testimony was that God honoured his obedience and blessed the work while he was there. Many others may have had similar testimonies but others may have had bad experiences but were not happy to go on record.

³⁵ R.M. Riss, 'Latter rain', in Burgess and McGee (eds), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), p.532.

This dissertation will investigate and attempt to evaluate the level to which contemporary practice within the UK church remains reflective of that established by its founders and to what extent changes have been made to accommodate developing theology and societal evolution.

Methodology

Research questions

This dissertation seeks to answer a number of central questions. Why and how did the Apostolic Church emerge from the Apostolic Faith Church? How did the Apostolic Church refine the theology regarding apostles and prophets that it bought with it from the Apostolic Faith Church? The formative leaders of the Apostolic Church adopted the position that once a directive prophecy had been confirmed by an apostle or by the National Council, the recipient was expected to conform to its requirements. Did they come to this conclusion of their own volition? Does this position conform to Biblical teaching? Is this still the practice of the fellowship? The AC referred to prophecy and particularly directive prophecy as ‘Word of the Lord’. Prophecies were delivered in the first person singular. Does this mean that they are to be given the same status as Scripture? Certainly for Hutchinson this was the case and also for many of the early Apostolics. I will consider this later.

A further question that the dissertation seeks to answer relates to directive prophecy in the contemporary AC. The AC is fast approaching its first centenary as are the other major British Pentecostal groups. This provides us with sufficient time to observe how its core values have been maintained in the context of a number of challenges. This period is long enough to identify trends as to how the denomination and its principles have spread so rapidly across the world but short enough to provide evidence to help to answer our primary questions from the experience or recollections of the offspring of the founders and many who sat under their ministry. In some cases it is possible to find people who are just one generation away from the pioneers of the movement. The dissertation will examine the Apostolic Church’s approach to directive prophecy. This will include an evaluation of the social and religious/theological conditions in the early 20th century which may have influenced this specific denominational distinctive. Further I will offer some analysis of the subject in its 21st century setting. Has the Apostolic concept needed to evolve to satisfy current generations or has it simply become more established through robust review? Is there

any conflict between generations or between ministers and congregations regarding teaching practices on this subject? The cultural conditions that prevailed when the AC emerged may have been influential in the establishment of the denomination. British culture has changed significantly in the past 100 years and so one has to ask whether or not the premise of unstinted obedience to directive prophecy is still relevant. This is an area I will consider later.

Explanatory notes

It is important to establish that Christian history includes many references to the supernatural, miracles, prophecy and to the answering of prayer.³⁶ The difficulty lies in verifying the facts and whether a miracle did or did not occur. Historians differ in their perception of supernatural miracles. Some suggest that those involved in such matters were deluded or wanted to delude others,³⁷ Other historians will allow for the possible occurrence of miracles. For the purposes of this dissertation I accept that whether the phenomenon was miraculous or not is not as important as the fact that those championing the events believed in their authenticity which led to them taking specific actions because of their belief.

Early Apostolics believed that God had told them to undertake actions such as setting up new mission fields and therefore requiring personnel to travel to the new locations in order to serve. Their belief that God had spoken to them directly provided sufficient motivation for them to consider such issues as personal safety, security and sometimes even family requirements to be secondary to fulfilling God's will. Many of these pioneers took risks that so impressed later generations that they too would be prepared to take the same risks themselves. For many Apostolics to be 'called' in prophecy to move home was one of the most noble and humbling of experiences. I, personally, have been the recipient of such instructions and have moved my family from one city to another but further into the dissertation I will discuss the results of a survey where this was one of the primary questions.

Primary sources

All serious academic historical research requires sufficient source material; the primary source material for this dissertation includes minutes of AC Council meetings, the AC Constitution, and correspondence particularly relating to the Latter Rain issue There are also the results of minister's questionnaires and private interviews with various contemporary AC

³⁶ David Allen, *There is a River* (Milton Keynes: Authentic, 2004).

³⁷ Wayne Grudem, *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996).

leaders and members. My personal observations following my involvement in the AC as a pastor and Dean of Studies at the Apostolic School of Ministry, Penygroes (2002-10) will also be used to add to the picture.³⁸

Council minutes

The primary authority on all doctrinal and practical matters within the AC has always rested with National Council. The early councils discussed the primary belief systems of the fellowship and the minutes of these meetings contained verbatim records of discussions. The minutes not only contain the record of discussions but also contain directive prophecy addressing specific issues. One of the early members of the AC was Tom Davies (1882-1957) who had been an articled clerk in a solicitors practice in Llanelli. Davies joined the Apostolic Church, moving his family to Penygroes Headquarters. His abilities in taking down sermons and prophecies in shorthand both in English and Welsh led to his being called 'The Scribe'. The work of Davies is the main reason that such detailed records were kept during the early council meetings.

Correspondence

Various official letters from General Headquarters are referred to in the dissertation but the most significant is a file of correspondence between the National Leaders of the Apostolics in the UK and those that had been sent to pioneer the Apostolic testimony in Canada and the USA. The correspondence was written at the end of 1950 and specifically relates to the Latter Rain issue, which was going to be discussed initially in the 1951 Council. The file includes communication from both protagonists and antagonists of what was to become a controversial and direction-changing matter in the history of the Apostolic Churches, particularly with regard to directive prophecy. These letters were written by men who had direct experience of Latter Rain in Canada.

Empirical studies and personal interviews

Determining the 'official' understanding of how directive prophecy has evolved within the AC is best done by searching through archives and other historical documentation. However determining the contemporary influences is a far more difficult task for the researcher.

³⁸ My great grandparents were converted in the Welsh Revival, my grandparents were both ordained as lay leaders in the Apostolic Church and my parents were both lay members. I have served the fellowship for 50 years, part of the time in a lay capacity and latterly as a paid member of staff. It is not my intention to justify the teaching and practice of the Apostolic Church but to critically examine its roots and to consider whether it is 'fit for purpose' for the coming generations.

Therefore I have undertaken a series of empirical studies to assist in the research of this divisive issue.

The purpose of the first study was to determine what the current AC ministers believe and practice. A questionnaire was sent out to the 150 personnel listed in the *Apostolic Church Ministers' Manual*.³⁹ The questionnaire was sent irrespective of whether or not the minister was retired or stipended and whether the recipient functioned as an apostle, prophet, pastor or teacher. The questionnaire was sent with a letter of explanation, and a stamped and addressed envelope was provided for return. In order to preserve the confidentiality of the ministers, the questionnaires were not numbered and no follow-up was possible in the case of no response. Completed questionnaires were returned by 93 respondents, indicating a 62% response rate. The results of this questionnaire are discussed later.⁴⁰ The response rate was not high enough to base authoritative assertions on but was sufficient to provide indications of the 'mood' of the ministers of the denomination.

An invitation was sent to all functioning apostles in the AC irrespective of whether they were retired or not, asking them to complete a supplementary questionnaire.⁴¹ 36 invitations were sent out with an accompanying explanatory letter and a stamped and addressed envelope for the return of the completed questionnaire.⁴² 22 were received back representing a 61% return. Once again this meant that the response rate was insufficient to form a basis for authoritative assertions but was sufficient to provide general indications. The information in respect to those who function and are recognized by the AC as holding the ministry gift of prophet was obtained by means of personal interviews. The purpose of each interview was clearly outlined and there was a 100% take-up on the requests for assistance.

The same questions were put individually and included:

- Who was the greatest influence on your developing ministry? In this context, particular note was made of whether the named person was from within the AC or not.
- What is directive prophecy?

³⁹ This list is available to all Ministers of the denomination. It is supplied by the National Administration Centre, postal address P.O. Box 51298, London, SE11 9AJ.

⁴⁰ A caveat on the form made it clear that the information would be collected for academic purposes and some ministers asked that they be kept informed of any results.

⁴¹ Again the form contained a caveat making it clear that the information would be collected for academic purposes.

⁴² Two men were particularly ill and so they were never sent copies of the questionnaire.

- Is there a prophetic ‘mode’ that had to be adopted before the prophetic message can be accepted? (For example, does the person delivering the prophecy need to do so in a prayerful voice and posture?)
- What is your biggest frustration?
- What is your greatest joy?

It was important that I did not ask any leading questions, and I wanted to give each of the men the opportunity to be as open as they could in responding to my enquiries. I was particularly keen to get beyond superficial responses and emphasized my own Apostolic credentials in my conversations.

At this point, the nomenclature of AC ministers should be outlined. Firstly, all ministers within the AC carry the title ‘Pastor’; this is irrespective of the particular ministry in which they have been recognised.⁴³ Traditionally all ministers have been addressed in public as ‘Pastor [surname]’.⁴⁴ Irrespective of titles, the AC has clearly recognised the difference between the five “ascension ministries” listed in Eph. 4:11.⁴⁵ All ministers who receive a stipend take primary responsibility for a church or a group of churches and then they have added responsibility related to their perceived calling. Apostles are given additional supervisory responsibility. In the National Council they are the only group allowed to vote on doctrinal matters and matters related to ‘callings’.⁴⁶ They judge directive prophecy and thereby validate it. Prophets are also primary leaders of their local congregations but bring prophetic insight in larger public meetings as well as in larger business meetings and National Council.⁴⁷ Evangelists, who receive a stipend, are normally primary leaders of their local congregations but are expected to be available for evangelical campaigns or crusades as appropriate. Pastors are simply required to be primary leaders of their local church.⁴⁸ Teachers are primary leaders of a particular church, or a group of churches, but would have been expected to deal with doctrinal issues in special preaching events, in publications, or in

⁴³ In West Africa it is quite common to differentiate apostles by giving them the title ‘Apostle . . .’

⁴⁴ Over the past twenty years or so it has become less common for ministers to be given a formal title in public. There are two main reasons for this: the introduction of non-stipendiary ministers has made the differentiation between clergy and laity much less clear and the influences of postmodernity and its attendant informality has also had a major impact on this practice.

⁴⁵ The dissertation will seek to show that the AC is moving towards an understanding of four-fold ministry rather than a five-fold ministry which has been a core understanding in the past.

⁴⁶ It has already been shown that the normal practice within the AC is to invite men into ministry rather than for a man to go for training leading to a ministry appointment.

⁴⁷ Although since Latter Rain they are restricted regarding directive prophecy being given in public.

⁴⁸ There are currently very few pastors who receive a stipend who are not recognized as having additional calling or ministry beyond their calling as pastor.

committee. Over the past 25 years a number of ministers have been called into ministry that has not been supported by a stipend. Most of them are called as pastors and have responsibility for local churches but there are now a number of apostles, prophets and evangelists that have been appointed in this lay capacity.

A further questionnaire was sent out with the purpose of determining the attitudes of congregations. On this occasion letters were sent to the leaders of every congregation in the AC in the UK, 180 in all. The letter explaining the purpose of the empirical study and was accompanied by a copy of the questionnaire. Local leaders were asked to photocopy the questionnaire which was to be completed at a specific time. It was left entirely to the local leadership as to whether or not they would assist. One minister reported that he had always wanted to ask the questions himself but had not had the courage to do so. He found that taking his congregation through the questionnaire provided him with much insight into those in his ministerial care. Other congregational leaders simply ignored the request.

Altogether some 300 questionnaires were completed. This represents approximately 5% of people currently attending Apostolic churches on a regular basis. Approximately 5% of the total population does not really provide a representative sample and is more of a random sample. As such it would be wrong to say that the results of the survey are conclusive. They are simply indicative of trends that may be being followed. The sample for the group that has been analyzed by age is 283. The sample for the group analyzed by denominational loyalty is 287. The reason for this slight difference is because three people responded who were over 80 and thus formed a cohort that was too small to be conclusive, and one person preferred not to give their age. The data provided by these four people could be appropriately considered in the second exercise. Those from Scottish Apostolic churches as well as Welsh Apostolic churches co-operated as did those from Kent and the south coast. Sadly, none of the fast-growing black Apostolic congregations were willing to participate. If the exercise were to be repeated in the future, gaining cooperation from these churches must be considered as a priority.

The response level was disappointing but the but the diversity of the respondents' ages and geographical locations suggests that the results are sufficient to be able to make general comments only regarding trends. It would, however, be incorrect to attempt to draw firm conclusions from this cohort. Again the observations from this study are contained in the body of the dissertation.

Secondary sources

Although none of the original founders of the AC are still alive, many of their family members were happy to contribute anecdotes that illustrated the exploits of previous generations. The danger with such interviews is that they can give a biased understanding of the past. Selective memory and the desire to tell a story in a way that is intended to inspire faith give rise to an emphasis on the positive and disregard of the negative. For the storyteller there will be no question that the highlights which are reported took place, but there is more than one way of looking at the event and others bearing witness to the same original incident might dispute the interpretation. Kay states that 'To say . . . that history is the accumulation of "neutral" or unselected and therefore unbiased facts is absurd.'⁴⁹

This means that this writer has had to be discerning in reviewing historical evidence and attempting to find at least two sources to corroborate facts. Sources that have been available have included the following:

Written prophecies

The only vestiges of Hutchinson's Apostolic Faith Church that remain in the UK are in Bournemouth where Hutchinson established his headquarters. Any prophecy received at the 'branches' was written down and copies were sent to Bournemouth.¹ The Bournemouth Group currently consists of only a few elderly people. The current Chief Apostle, Mr. Duncan Lee, agreed to be interviewed for the purposes of this dissertation. One of the buildings on the Bournemouth site is called 'The William Hutchinson Memorial Hall'. Mr. Lee was happy to show Hutchinson's Bible, copies of magazines that were published in Hutchinson's time and a plethora of written prophecies received from the 'branches' in the past. Following the schism which led to the establishment of the AC, D.P. Williams followed the practice of writing down prophecies that were received on significant occasions. Any prophecies received in the National Council or in the National Executive meetings of the AC were (and still are) transcribed and circulated to all members of the ministry staff as are prophecies received in major public conventions.

⁴⁹ W. Kay, 'EPTA Bulletin', in *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*, Vol. XI (1992), p.70.

Literature review

Kent White wrote his biography of William Hutchinson,⁵⁰ and T.N. Turnbull wrote biographies of D.P. Williams and Jones Williams⁵¹ as well as his father Andrew Turnbull.⁵² Ian MacPherson also wrote a biography of Andrew Turnbull.⁵³ Since the main purpose of each of the writers seems to be related to the demonstration of divine providence and vindication of the subjects that they were writing about, the objectivity of these books may be deemed suspect. However, each book contains a certain amount of useful material that can be gleaned with discernment. In 2006, an English translation of a Welsh manuscript written by D.P. Williams was published.⁵⁴ The document relates primarily to the life of Jones Williams, and is most significant in demonstrating the close bond between the two brothers.

In 1988 the AC published a book entitled *Introducing the Apostolic Church: a Manual of Belief, Practice and History*.⁵⁵ Although many of the constitutional issues have been superseded, the doctrinal section explains how the belief system has evolved, although it emphasises the positive aspects of the story without reference to the negative.

T.N. Turnbull wrote the first history of the Apostolic Church.⁵⁶ His writing tends to be triumphalist. It was not until 1991 that James Worsfold, one-time national leader of the AC in New Zealand, wrote any scholarly work on the subject.⁵⁷ It was Worsfold who was the first historian of the movement to link Williams with Hutchinson and to explain the division between the Apostolic Faith Church and the Apostolic Church. As a reaction to this book, Weeks published his own history in 2003.⁵⁸ Gordon Weeks (1929-2015) served the Apostolic Church as a pastor, apostle, missionary and Vice president of the Fellowship. The Denomination did not sponsor his book and so he published it himself. He gave it the unusual title of *Chapter 32-Part Of*. In the Introduction he explained that there were 28 chapters in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 29 might have recorded Paul's remaining ministry up to the point of his death, Chapter 30 might have included the development of the church from Polycarp to the Wesleyan revival, Chapter 31 might have included the missionary zeal of the

⁵⁰ K. White, *The Word of God Coming Again* (Bournemouth: AFC, 1919).

⁵¹ T.N. Turnbull, *Brothers in Arms* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1963).

⁵² T.N. Turnbull, *Apostle Andrew* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1965).

⁵³ I. MacPherson, *Ploughman's Progress* (Penygroes: Apostolic Publications, 1936).

⁵⁴ D.P. Williams (ed. P.K. Yeoman) *Cradle of Mystery* (Kingdom First: Ystradgynlais, 2006).

⁵⁵ D.R. Dicks et al. *Introducing the Apostolic Church: a Manual of Belief, Practice and History* (Penygroes: Apostolic Publications, 1988).

⁵⁶ T.N. Turnbull, *What God Hath Wrought* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1959).

⁵⁷ J. Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church in Great Britain* (Wellington: Julian, 1991).

⁵⁸ Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two*, self published, 2003.

nineteenth century and particularly the development of the Catholic Apostolic Church, whilst Chapter 32 might have recorded the development of Classical Pentecostalism, mass evangelical campaigns and, of course, the main subject of his book, *The Apostolic Church*.

A plethora of pamphlets and leaflets have been produced by the Apostolic Church on the subjects of prophecy and directive prophecy. However the most important book that is foundational to this dissertation is D.P. Williams' *Prophetic Ministry in the Church* (1931)⁵⁹ which was the first work to be written by a British Pentecostal leader on the subject of prophecy. Another book worth considering is *One Lord, One Faith*⁶⁰ written by W.A.C. Rowe. Rowe (1901-60) was at the inaugural meeting of the Apostolic Church Council in Bradford in 1922 and was eventually appointed as President of the church in Australia where he wrote the one and only attempt at codifying the denomination's doctrine. His work was published posthumously. While T.N. Turnbull's *Prophecy in the Church Age* (1971) is also relevant it is basically a reworking of the Williams book. Turnbull was the son of Andrew, the founder of the Scottish 'Burning Bush', the precursor to the AC in Scotland. At the time that this book was published Tom Turnbull was recognized as an apostle within the AC, having been ordained as such in the 1950s. However, prior to his ordination as an apostle, he was most noted within the AC as a prophet.

It is also necessary to consider the work of David Rennie entitled *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit*.⁶¹ Rennie (1896-1976) was known as a rationalist. He was disciplined by the National Council with regard to the 'Latter Rain' issue and refused an instruction to go as a missionary to China. Nevertheless he became national leader of the AC. Although he wrote in a very eloquent style he did not add anything substantial to the subject.

A third and later source of Apostolic expositions on the subject are the lecture notes produced by Iorweth Howells in 1991. Howells had been a missionary in Italy and eventually national leader of the Italian AC. He was keen to develop a mature prophetic ministry throughout the church in Italy, leading many seminars on the subject and giving many opportunities for previously inexperienced men to develop under his supervision. He was eventually invited to

⁵⁹ For comparison, Elim's early position was stated in William Henderson, *Church Organization and Ministry* (London: Victory Press, 1931). Donald Gee presented the AoG understanding in *The Ministry Gifts of Christ* (Gospel Publishing: Springfield MI, 1930) and *Concerning Spiritual Gifts* (Gospel Publishing: Springfield MI, 1972) and Harold Horton did so in *Gifts of the Spirit* (Nottingham: AOG, 1934).

⁶⁰ W.A.C. Rowe, *One Lord, One Faith* (Puritan Press: Bradford, undated).

⁶¹ D.T. Rennie, *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1967).

return to the UK, again as the national leader. While in the UK, he taught on this subject of prophecy in the Church's Bible School in Penygroes.⁶²

The problems with methodology involving prophecy

When dealing with the issue of prophecy in this dissertation there are a number of problems that present themselves as being of primary importance. The dissertation is intended primarily as an investigation into the history of the Apostolic Church with a particular emphasis on its practice of directive prophecy. This requires a comparison between the AC's emerging theology and Scripture because its founders believed that they were following biblical precepts. It must be recorded that, on the whole, the founding fathers of the Apostolic Church had only received rudimentary biblical and theological training. They were definitely not academically trained theologians, but neither were they fools. Therefore they would have understood prophecy primarily by reference to the plain text of the Bible. Williams himself was brought up as a Congregationalist and so would not even have been familiar with any formal Confession of Faith.⁶³

These people were not only convinced that they were being loyal to Scripture but they were equally convinced that they were experiencing a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In this context, the comments of William Kay are apposite:

Pentecostal history is full of accounts of miraculous events of various kinds: some of these concern simple answers to prayer, others refer to dramatic miracles of healing or guidance or conversion and, woven with these into the general tapestry of Pentecostalism is the recurrent attestation of *glossolalia* which, by its nature, is an interactive process which is both natural and supernatural, and therefore providential.⁶⁴

Fee puts it more succinctly when he states that even in the contemporary churches 'experience tends to precede exegesis in most cases'.⁶⁵

⁶² I. Howells, Lectures 1-9 'Prophecy in Doctrine and Practice', Apostolic Church Training School, Penygroes 1991.

⁶³ Although at the time he launched his own group in Penygroes, he delivered a leaflet to every house in the village explaining what the new group believed. The primary beliefs that were laid down in this leaflet went on to become known as the 'Tenets of the Apostolic Church'. For further information see *Apostolic Faith Church in Wales* booklet issued by Pastor D.P Williams in 1914, *Showers of Blessing* No. 12, 1914, p.9-10, *Riches of Grace*, No.1, 1916.

⁶⁴ W.K. Kay, 'EPTA Bulletin', *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association*, XI 1/2 (1992), pp. 58-70.

⁶⁵ G. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 1995), p.21.

David Aune objects to the indiscriminate blending of theological (i.e. normative) processes together with the historical (i.e. descriptive).⁶⁶ He even objects to the concept of treating the subject of biblical prophecy as a single entity. His objections are based both on the fact that there are so many different nuances in the Old Testament prophets and also the fact that reference to New Testament prophecy comes from disparate sources which were written at different times with at least one hundred years between them. The early Apostolics would not have had such a refined understanding, and so we must treat the Scriptures in the same manner that they did - as a single Canon. Certainly by 1931, when Williams wrote his treatise on prophecy (which will be referred to later in this dissertation), he was increasingly aware of some of the writings of the Early Church and, for instance, was happy to discuss Montanism.⁶⁷

Summary

In this chapter I have outlined some of the major figures and issues surrounding the emergence and establishing of the AC. Particular attention has been paid to the divisive yet highly influential aspect of directive prophecy. In the next chapter I will undertake a more detailed historical survey. I believe it necessary because there is very little in the literature regarding the origins of the Apostolic Church and there is even less about their understanding of the twin ministries of apostle and prophet. This will include the biographies of the leading figures which helps set the context for the debate regarding directive prophecy. It will also discuss the reasons why D.P. Williams and William Hutchinson separated, causing Williams to form the Apostolic Church of Wales one of the main groups that went on to form the Apostolic Church.

⁶⁶ David Aune, *Prophecy in the Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), p.15.

⁶⁷ D.P. Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church* (Penygroes: Apostolic Publications 1931), p.94.

Chapter 2 Key historical figures

Introduction

A significant period for the Apostolic Church (AC) was 1916-1922; during these years the denomination began to take on its own identity. The schism between D.P. Williams (AC) and William Hutchinson of the Apostolic Faith Church (AFC) took place in 1916 with the major result being the formation in the AC of Wales under the leadership of Williams. However the evolving of this group into the AC proper would continue for some time; these early years were important for the development of much of the denominational structure, theology and practice. This initial period of activity culminated in the first National Council held in 1922, as has already been dealt with above. In this chapter I will examine the historical development of the AC from the perspective of its two major bases Wales and Scotland; giving particular attention to those significant individuals who were pivotal in the emerging denomination. The experiences of five key figures: William Hutchinson (1864-1928), Daniel Powell Williams (1882-1947), William Jones Williams (1891-1945), Andrew Turnbull (1872-1937) and Thomas Turnbull (1895-1980). had significant impact on the Church; and in particular the practice of directive prophecy.

Events surrounding the Welsh Revival (1904-05), Azusa Street (1906) and the Sunderland Conventions (1908-14) preceded the official formation of the AC by a number of years; however their legacies had a remarkable impact. One of the most significant results of these revivals was that a number of people left their churches and denominations and formed new ones; this was the case for many involved in the embryonic AC. Vinson Synan, writes;

The 1904 Welsh revival under Evan Roberts, which is often regarded by European writers as the origin of the worldwide Pentecostal movement, prepared the way for British Pentecostalism, especially apostolic-type teaching resulting in 1908 in the Apostolic Faith Church (Bournemouth), from which a schism in 1916 formed the Apostolic Church (HQ in Wales). Apostolics are now found worldwide stressing complex hierarchy of living apostles, prophets, and other charismatic officials.¹

Synan is being rather simplistic here however he does make an interesting observation in respect to the links between the Welsh Revival and Pentecostalism. There is certainly evidence that some of the future leaders of British Pentecostalism were converted in the

¹ Vinson Synan, *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins* (Plainfield, N.J.: Logos International, 1975), p.399.

Welsh Revival but whether or not there was any proto-Pentecostal activity is a matter of debate amongst church historians.

David Bundy comments regarding Donald Gee, who became a key figure of the Assemblies of God, relating how as a fourteen year old, Gee had heard Welsh Revival preacher Seth Joshua preaching in Finsbury Park Congregational Church in London in 1905. It was there that Gee was converted.²

Desmond Cartwright records the conversion experience of Stephen Jeffreys also being due to the direct impact of the Welsh Revival:

It was the impact of the Revival and a real experience of conversion of some of his fellow miners that caused Stephen to consider his own position before God.

On Sunday morning 20th November, Cartwright records; he and his younger brother George were converted under the ministry of Glasnant Jones.³ Stephen went on to be a primary evangelist with the Assemblies of God and his younger brother went on to become one of the founders of the Elim Movement. In regard to the AC leaders the details of the conversions and lives of the Williams brothers and of Andrew Turnbull will be dealt with later in this chapter; suffice to say all three could trace their conversion to the Welsh Revival.

Tensions grew between those that were carried along with the spirit of the revival and those that were sceptical.⁴ The differences in theological thought and praxis resulted in the enthusiasts often separating themselves and setting up their own groups with their own ecclesiology. They became known as the 'Children of the Revival'. Morgan rightly points out that the late nineteenth century saw a development of the Brethren Movement and certainly as far as the Penygroes group were concerned, their small hall was run on Brethren lines.⁵ (It

² David Bundy in Burgess and McGee (eds.), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), pp.330-332.

³ Desmond Cartwright, *The Great Evangelists* (Basingstoke, Marshall Pickering 1986), p19.

⁴ David Allen, *The Unfailing Stream- A Charismatic Church History in outline* (Tonbridge: Sovereign World, 1994) p. 120; Brynmor Jones, *The Kings Champions-Revival and Reaction 1905-1935* (Gwent: Gwent Pub, 1986), p.62; Noel Gibbard, *On The Wings of a Dove* (Bridgend: Bryntirion, 2002), p.184-90.

⁵ Those historians who link 'Children of the Revival' directly with proto-Pentecostalism include: David Allen *The Unfailing Stream*, p.109-12; William Kay, *Inside Story: History of British Assemblies of God* (Doncaster: Mathersey Hall, 1990), p.11; Richard Massey, *Another Springtime, Donald Gee, Pentecostal Pioneer* (Guildford: Highland, 1992), p.8; Eifion Evans, *The Welsh Revival of 1904* (Bridgend: Evangelical Press, 1987), p.194.

See also Brynmor Jones, *The Kings Champions*, p.12, Robert Pope, *Building Jerusalem: Nonconformity, Labour and the Social Question in Wales 1906-1939* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2014), p 14-30; Densil Morgan, *The Span of the Cross*, p.13-15.

is not correct to understand that all ‘Children of the Revival’ turned to emerging Pentecostalism; some remained in their traditional denominations and others as Morgan states joined the rising Brethren Movement and other Independent Mission Halls.

In Chapter 1 I introduced the subject of the Sunderland conventions that are considered to be the origins of British Pentecostalism. As with the Welsh Revival divisions of opinions also followed the events of the Sunderland conventions; with some supporters being ostracised in their own church groups. In the case of D.P. Williams he left his original Chapel to join the local ‘Children of the Revival’ he was further rejected when he started to practice glossolalia and prophecy. Williams’ journey will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Alexander Boddy (1854-1930), the leader of the Sunderland conventions was opposed to the establishment of a British Pentecostal denomination.⁶ Nevertheless, despite his disapproval and because many that had experienced the new Pentecostal Spirit baptism felt isolated in their home churches, they began to meet together in house-groups and other mission halls and fellowships. Eventually the leaders of these proto-Pentecostal groups began to surface. Many of these new leaders had been influenced by both the Sunderland conventions and the Welsh Revival.

An interesting and significant characteristic, shared by both the ‘Children of the Revival’ and the early Pentecostals, was that neither group had trained and formally educated clergy. Referring specifically to the ‘Children of the Revival’ who met in Penygroes, as has already been stated, they mostly developed a ‘Brethren’ ecclesiology. When the Apostolic Church of Wales grew out of this group, they brought with them a Brethren understanding of the Breaking of Bread, dispensationalism and pre-millennialism all of which were common theological themes within the wider embryonic Pentecostalism. The original Tenets of the Apostolic Church are included as Appendix 4.

For further reading: Noel Gibbard, *RB Jones Gospel Ministry in Turbulent Times* (Bridgend: Bryntirion, 2009), p85-89. Yr Efenglydd & those involved such as R.B. Jones in maintaining an evangelical fervour.

⁶ Boddy was born into an ecclesiastical family: his father was a vicar. Although he trained to be a solicitor, a religious experience at the Keswick Convention convinced him he should become ordained into the Church of England. He was appointed to All Saints Church in Monkwearmouth, Sunderland in 1884. Boddy was inspired by the Holiness Movement and he had an intense religious experience in 1892. In 1904 he visited Wales during the Welsh Revival and the following year he travelled to Oslo, where T.B. Barratt was leading a religious revival modelled on the events of the Azusa Street Revival. Barratt was invited to Boddy’s church, and subsequently Boddy and his wife began to experience glossolalia. His regular conferences and his *Confidence Magazine* were both significant in publicising Pentecostalism throughout the UK. Boddy taught that the purpose of the Holy Spirit was to emphasise Christ. He warned against exaggeration as regards healing testimonies. He also believed that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent. Alexander Boddy, *A Vicar’s Testimony: Pentecost at Sunderland* (Kindle version).

It has been suggested that British Pentecostalism accepted the general mainstream tenets of evangelical theology with a superimposed pneumatology which was imported from USA via Sunderland.⁷ However in its infancy, there was a tendency to enjoy the experience without rationalising the process.

So far as the AC is concerned, its story can best be told through the lives of five key individuals who were instrumental in its initial growth. These key individuals are William Hutchinson (1864-1928), Daniel Powell Williams (1882-1947), William Jones Williams (1891-1945), Andrew Turnbull (1872-1937) and Thomas Turnbull (1895-1980).

William Oliver Hutchinson (1864 -1928)

Hutchinson's parents were devout Primitive Methodists both of whom died when Hutchinson was eight years old. He, together with his four siblings went to live with their maternal grandparents in Blanchland, Northumberland, where he spent his teen years. The grandparents were also Primitive Methodist, and so the young Hutchinson's association with this group continued.

Primitive Methodism was not noted for its sophistication. It originated after a day of prayer held in Mow Cop, which is an area of the Potteries, Staffordshire, on 31 May 1807. This led to two groups, the 'Camp Meeting Methodists, led by Hugh Bourne, and the 'Clowesites' led by William Clowes, joining together in 1811 with Primitive Methodism being the outcome. Both Clowes and Bourne were energetic evangelists and the new Movement grew rapidly because of this. The Wesleyan Connexion were most disparaging about these open air camp meetings which often lasted all day and involved public praying, preaching and love feasts.

Primitive Methodist preachers and communities differed from their Wesleyan counterparts. According to J.E. Minor, Primitive Methodist preachers were less educated and more likely 'to be at one with their congregations' or even be 'dominated by them'.⁸ He goes on to say that the Primitive Methodist preachers were plain speaking, in contrast to Wesleyan preachers whose sermons were 'embellished with literary allusions and delivered in high-flown language. Wesleyan congregations were more likely to be from a lower middle class,

⁷ Christopher Palmer, *A historical, theological evaluation of the early development of the Assemblies of God denomination in South East Wales with special reference to Crosskeys and Newbridge* (PhD Dissertation, University of Wales Trinity St. Davids, August 2013).

⁸ J.E. Minor, 'The Mantle of Elijah: 19th century Primitive Methodism and 20th century Pentecostalism', *Proceedings of the Wesleyan Historical Society*, 43 (1982), 141-9 [142].

or artisan in contrast to the Primitive Methodists who emerged from the farms mills, and mines.

Primitive Methodism exalted its poor congregations by glorifying plain dress and speech for two reasons. Firstly they thought plain dress was more in keeping with the gospel, and secondly, because it made them distinctive from everybody else. In a time when Wesleyans sought assimilation and respectability, Primitives wanted to stand out as a ‘peculiar people’, making a virtue out of their poverty and humility.

Their services were conducted with an overt zeal that Wesleyan leadership would have found embarrassing. The hymns they sang were heavily influenced by popular culture and not considered respectable. They were often sung to popular tunes, and they were full of references to heaven as a place of opulence. All their members were considered equal, and were addressed as brother or sister; even children were able to participate fully.

Minor explains that in 1803 the Wesleyan Conference condemned female ministry and effectively removed opportunities for women to preach. By contrast, Primitive Methodism allowed the poor, the young, and women to be involved in public worship. The Primitives were more receptive to concepts regarding the supernatural while Wesleyans were trying hard to distance themselves from superstition, and superstitious popular culture. The Primitives engaged with popular beliefs in their presentation of God as one whose powers could be called upon by preachers.⁹ By the age of seventeen Hutchinson was greatly influenced by this type of preaching, and, according to White, ‘had a very conscious experience of the Lord’s indwelling presence, and entered into the usual Christian activity of a young Church member’.¹⁰

Although Hutchinson did not maintain his links with Primitive Methodism when he pursued a career in the army, its early influences would remain with him. Many of the distinctives of Primitive Methodism would later reappear when he began to establish his version of Pentecostalism, appearing both in the AFC and the AC. Practices such as extended prayer

⁹ For the general history of Primitive Methodism see A. Armstrong, *The Church of England, the Methodists and Society 1700–1850* (London: University of London Press, 1973); R. Colls, *The Collier's Rant* (London: Croom Helm, 1977); D. Hempton, *Methodism and Politics in British Society 1750–1850* (London: Hutchinson, 1984); John Kent, *Holding the Fort* (London: Epworth Press, 1978); John Lowther, *Primitive Methodism* (Sunderland: CIL Press, 2003); Geoffrey Milburn, *Exploring Methodism: Primitive Methodism* (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 2002).

¹⁰ Kent White, *The Word of God Coming Again* (Bournemouth: AFC, 1919), p.32.

times, revivalism, reaching out to the working classes, regard for the supernatural, egalitarianism, and the acceptance of women and young people in ministry were all evident with many being conducive to the development of our atmosphere for giving and receiving prophecy. Another practice adopted from the Primitive Methodists was the preaching circuit; which was later developed as a fundamental tool in AC until the mid-1990s. In a preaching circuit, people would be expected to visit other local churches within the denomination, to preach. It also meant that a full-time minister who was responsible for several churches would be able to take one sermon around several churches, this greatly reducing the amount of time allocated to sermon preparation. It is also interesting to note that when the Apostolic Church opened its first church in the Potteries, members of the new church had originally been converted in the Primitive Methodists in Mow Cop.¹¹

Hutchinson made a personal confession of faith at the age of seventeen years and joined the Grenadier Guards in 1883 (aged nineteen). While serving in the Guards he found it difficult to maintain Christian disciplines.¹² However he went to hear Charles Spurgeon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Taking a seat in the large auditorium he found himself on about the same level as the great man in the pulpit. Hutchinson was greatly impressed by the vastness of the arena and by the large congregation. Spurgeon took his text from Eph.5:14; ‘Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light.’ According to White, Spurgeon made his opening remarks and then, in his unique way, cried loudly ‘Awake thou!’ and paused, and then again, ‘Awake, thou that sleepest - you sitting behind that pillar!’ at the same time pointing his finger toward Hutchinson.¹³ This was a great moment of personal awakening and renewal for Hutchinson; and he determined to give his whole life to God; this including confessing Christ before his comrades, something he felt he should have done previously.

He married at the end of December 1888, and, shortly afterwards, his wife was appointed to the role of running the Soldiers Home in Buckingham Palace Road, London. Hutchinson was made a sergeant in his regiment and was stationed in London. He and other sergeants were invited to attend a large gathering of Wesleyan ministerial students at their church in Westminster. Also present was the Wesleyan Chaplain General. Hutchinson was invited to be one of the speakers, and, at the close, someone suggested to the Chaplain General that

¹¹ Personal interview with Mrs Sheila Powell whose paternal grandmother was a case in point, 25 June 2012.

¹² White, *The Word of God Coming Again*, p.36.

¹³ White, *The Word of God Coming Again*, p.37.

Hutchinson should be released from the army to enter the college to train for the ministry. Hutchinson seems to have had natural ability in the pulpit, but the suggestion did not find favour with the Chaplain General by whom it was rejected.

Hutchinson advanced in the army to the rank of staff-sergeant. He might have gone further in the army, but his health failed and he returned to civilian life. He took a position as an officer in the NSPCC and, eventually, he was sent to the Bournemouth district. Continuing to hanker after a permanent role as a preacher, he left the NSPCC, believing that God would supply his needs. For the first time there is evidence of Hutchinson's weakness in financial management, which would be a major factor in the disagreements between Williams and him. He bought furniture for his new home on credit even though the payments were difficult to meet. This caused him much embarrassment, and eventually a benefactor paid off his debts.

According to William Kay, sometime after 1903 Hutchinson was baptized by total immersion and joined a Baptist Church.¹⁴ White records how Hutchinson visited the Welsh Revival in 1906 and suggests that he had some sort of 'Pentecostal' experience there.¹⁵ As I have previously stated, I will return to the subject of whether or not there was evidence of the charismata and glossolalia in the Welsh Revival further into this Chapter when discussing the experience of D.P. Williams during this same revival. After the impact of Wales, Hutchinson soon heard the Azusa St revival. He then received an invitation to visit Sunderland, to attend a conference hosted by Alexander Boddy. He travelled to Monkwearmouth Sunderland to attend the Whitsuntide conference in 1908. On his arrival he encountered many people rejoicing that they had been baptized with the Holy Spirit and had received the sign of tongues. While kneeling, in one of the meetings, he had a more powerful spiritual encounter than he had in Wales. He experienced a Pentecostal Spirit baptism which was to have a profound affect upon him.

With circumstances being hard and yet him not feeling that various available opportunities were from the Lord, he prayed for further guidance. If he was still to continue on the course that he was taking then some ordained minister would lay his hands on his head and pray for him, without his being asked to do so. On the last day of the conference he apparently went to the vicarage to bid goodbye to Alexander Boddy, the convener of the conference. As they parted Boddy raised both hands and placed them upon his head. He prayed that God would bless him, and make him stand.¹⁶

¹⁴ W. K. Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000), p.15

¹⁵ White, *The Word of God Coming Again*, p.44

¹⁶ White, *The Word of God Coming Again*, p.48.

Returning to Bournemouth with a new found spiritual energy, Hutchinson began to gather a small group around him who supported his theological position and eventually they were able to open a new building to accommodate their ministry. They believed that the organisation was much stronger now that it had its own building; Hutchinson began his own conventions which eventually attracted interest from around the UK. From this increasingly secure base, three significant changes took place in the network: its name changed; its theology changed and Hutchinson's personal control was strengthened.

Originally, when the new church was opened, it was known as Emmanuel Mission Hall, but in the spring of 1911 Hutchinson announced, in the periodical *Showers of Blessing*, and without explanation, a change of the name to 'Apostolic Faith Assembly'. There is evidence that the word 'Apostolic' was being used by others,¹⁷ but Hutchinson seems to have taken this phrase for his own use. By the summer of 1911 the group was known as the Apostolic Faith Church and this name remains to the present day.¹⁸

Assessing the life and contribution of Hutchinson, M. Hathaway observes that the Bournemouth group did not adopt an apostolic ecclesiology when they adopted the new name and it was not until 1913 that the group's doctrine crystallised into an apostolic one.¹⁹

There is evidence that Hutchinson's pneumatology in the early stages was in line with other Pentecostals.²⁰ He originally held to a three-stage Christian experience of salvation, sanctification and Spirit-baptism; the understanding being that the Holy Spirit had come to the original disciples on the Day of Pentecost after they had 'had tarried and come to a place of unity' (Acts 2:1). Testimonies to this effect were published in the early issues of both *Showers of Blessing* and *Confidence*.²¹ In common with other British Pentecostals,

¹⁷ Parham, used 'Apostolic Faith' as the title of the first accounts of the New Year's Day occurrences in Topeka which he called 'The Latter Rain: The Story of the Origin of the Original Apostolic Faith or Pentecostal Movements'. He used the phrase, too, in the first Pentecostal newspaper *The Apostolic Faith* in 1899. William Seymour adopted the name for his church which was the centre of the Azusa St, Los Angeles, revival but there was certainly no formal link between Hutchinson and Parham.

¹⁸ The last contact that I had was in 2008 and at that time a small company were still meeting in the 'William Hutchinson Memorial Hall as of February 2016 they have an active website www.afc-bmth.co.uk.

¹⁹ M. Hathaway, 'The role of William Oliver Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church in the formation of British Pentecostal Churches', *Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 16 (1996), pp.41-57.

²⁰ For reference to Pentecostal Pneumatology see: D. Petts, *Body Builders Gifts to make God's people grow* (Mattersey: Mattersey, 2002); Kenneth McGee, *What is Pentecost Really Like?-The Gifts Of the Spirit and the Benefit of Speaking in other Tongues* (Oklahoma: Tait, 2004).

²¹ *Showers of Blessing* (January 1910), 2-6; *Confidence* (April, 1908), p.5.

Hutchinson soon contracted the three stages to two; salvation and Spirit-baptism.²² The themes of healing, the charismata and the Parousia were developed on similar lines to Boddy's. Although Boddy produced many leaflets and pamphlets on such subjects he was not a strong theologian but more of a pastor and evangelist.²³ However, differences emerged which were to draw followers of Hutchinson closer to each other, and away from the broader Pentecostal movement. Hathaway lists some of the theological differences that developed between Boddy and Hutchinson. These differences included a move towards recognising Hutchinson as an apostle, a different understanding of the gifts of tongues, interpretation and prophecy and, after the schism, an interesting understanding of British Israelism.

Hutchinson's apostleship

In a short time, the understanding of the Apostolic Faith Church regarding the 'spoken word' was to change their ecclesiology from congregational or presbyterian to apostolic. This is signified by officers being chosen through prophetic utterance, as had been the case with Edward Irving's Catholic Apostolic Church eighty years earlier. White is adamant that Hutchinson did not push himself forward for the office of chief apostle. Apparently:

he manifested no ambition for the place; indeed he was in danger of drawing back, and was exhorted through the gifts, over and over again, not to do so [that is... to drawback].²⁴

Following his appointment Hutchinson embraced the status and authority that it afforded him. The appointment of Hutchinson as apostle effectively constituted the Apostolic Faith Church as a denomination either tacitly or deliberately withdrawing from the influence of Alexander Boddy and the other Pentecostal groups throughout the UK. The implications of Hutchinson's appointment and the new ecclesiology were worked out over the next year. At Whitsun 1914 the full apostolic structure began to take shape at the London conference.²⁵ Here the ecclesiology was expounded and the role of Hutchinson was firmly established. After an exposition of the fourth chapter of Ephesians, Musgrave Reade spoke from Acts 4:31-37. *Showers of Blessing* reported:

²² Hathaway, 'The role of William Oliver Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church in the formation of British Pentecostal Churches', p.4.

²³ revival-library.org/shop/index.php/.../364-the-works-of-alexander-boddy.

²⁴ White, *The Word of God Coming Again*, p.64.

²⁵ It was at this conference that Williams was called and ordained as apostle to Wales and Murdock as apostle to Scotland.

This was the signal for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the meeting. Without any other invitation than the Word of the Lord, almost all the congregation came forward and laid their all at the Apostle's feet, Pastor W. Hutchinson, God's anointed Apostle.²⁶

Hathaway states that from this moment forward prophetic utterances were to take on a different dimension, even being considered to carry greater authority than Scripture.²⁷ In the next Chapter I will explain how D.P. Williams had to persuade others that had left the AFC with him that this was not correct but how remnants of this idea still taint thinking within the AC.

Tongues, interpretation and prophecy

As the nascent Pentecostal movement struggled to formulate its doctrine it was common to see tongues as real languages (*xenolalia*).²⁸ This theological position had caused problems particularly within Pentecostal missions; where people had left for foreign countries with no language training and were unable to preach in the native language.²⁹ As a result of this wrong theological interpretation the embryonic Pentecostals had to modify their theological position on tongues. A re-defined understanding developed; the belief was promoted that *glossolalia* was seen as the initial evidence of Spirit-baptism.³⁰ This was a separate use of tongues to that outlined in 1 Cor. 12. Here, the 'gift of tongues' was seen to operate in tandem with the 'gift of interpretation' within corporate worship, giving a message of encouragement or exhortation from God. Paul instructs the Corinthians that they should not speak in tongues unless there is an interpreter present (1 Cor. 14: 27-28). For Hutchinson, and those who associated with him, the two gifts of tongues and interpretation were intended to bring new teaching as well as congregational and personal direction.³¹ It was a short step from this understanding to Hutchinson's authoritarian, totalitarian control of the AFC that led to the eventual schism. Reflecting on the schism some time later, D.P. Williams' observed:

²⁶ *Showers of Blessing* 8 (1914), 1-3.

²⁷ Hathaway, 'The role of William Oliver Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church in the formation of British Pentecostal Churches', p.5.

²⁸ Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit*, p.44.

²⁹ David Courey, *What has Wittenberg got to do with Azusa?* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), p.87. Courey outlines the instance of Mr and Mrs Garr who went from Azusa St. in 1907 to Calcutta, fully expecting to be able to speak Bengali without learning the language.

³⁰ Mark Cartledge; *Speaking in Tongues, Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2006).

³¹ Hathaway, 'The role of William Oliver Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church in the formation of British Pentecostal Churches', p.4.

I venture to say that . . . I do not think that everyone that is called through the Spoken Word is eternally elected . . . the Lord called Apostle Hutchinson; he made a terrible blunder.³²

There is no expansion on this observation by Williams, so it remains unclear whether he was suggesting that God committed “the blunder” (unlikely) or whether it was the prophets who incessantly bombarded Hutchinson with the notion, or whether it was Hutchinson himself for acceding to the pressure and taking on this role.

Hutchinson's understanding of the Man-Child referred to Revelation 12

Here is an example of the extreme heterodox thinking that began to influence Hutchinson. Hathaway explains that the interpretation of Revelation 12 has intrigued generations of Christian theologians. Most Christians see the woman as representing Israel or the Church. Interest in Revelation 12 is seen in articles in both *Confidence* and *Showers of Blessing*. For Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church, the passage became an obsession and led to the development of a major tenet of theology.

Issue 3 of *Showers of Blessing* reprinted an article entitled “The Bride in Mystery” which defined the woman as the Church and the “man-child” as the overcoming company of the elect, the Bride of Christ. The ‘elect’ was seen as the Pentecostals stating:

...that Pentecost, the power of the Holy Spirit, as at the beginning will break out in every Church, so that those who are honest and seeking the Lord will have an opportunity to come in, and if, as a body, they reject the Holy Spirit, they will have to take their discipline under the Antichrist.³³

This was a blatant attempt to rally the troops by mixing a Restorationist view of eschatology with the AFC’s brand of Pentecostalism. Musgrave Reade, the theologian of the movement, expounded the pre-tribulation, partial rapture theory in 1912, taking the 144,000 as a symbolic number. By 1914, the doctrine had been incorporated in the statement of faith. This year was the high-water mark of the denomination, which now exuded confidence in its calling and destiny. Addresses by Hutchinson and Reade reinforced the sense of a unique purpose as did the movement’s own hymns.

Hathaway continues to explain that by June 1915, Hutchinson was declaring that the Lord would tell his bride when he would be coming back, stating ‘Since the Holy Ghost has been

³² *Convocation of Apostles and Prophets of the AC, 1929*, p.173.

³³ *Showers of Blessing*, Issue 3, Feb. 1912.

speaking through Tongues and Interpretation and Prophets and Prophetesses we know that we shall not be caught napping as a thief in the night ... the Lord will let us know'. In the same article, he sees the Man-child as the new incarnation of Christ, a doctrine developed in many subsequent issues. It was a small step from this to reject the Parousia and see the second-coming as realised in the Man-child. This position was reached, through prophecy, in 1919. Here, Hutchinson explains that the Man-child is Christ come in the flesh again, appearing to rule. This was the manifestation of the Sons of God, and the establishing of a theocracy. The overcoming company was under the headship of the Chief Apostle and his powerful word, to whom all others must submit.³⁴

Hutchinson stated:

It will no longer satisfy to regard the body of Christ as invisible; no, no, the body of going to sleep invite David if Christ is to be seen, and who have a feeling that they do not want a man to rule them, I say distinctly that it is not a man that rules over them, it is God ruling over them, for the word of the apostle is the word of God... it has a head to it... apostles first, and until we see this we will see no body...³⁵

Hathaway concludes this part of his paper by stating:

The thinly veiled cultic tendencies of this position were to become transformed by the adoption of the British Israel theory at the end of the year. Then, increasingly, the Man-child was associated with Hutchinson himself.³⁶

British Israelism

Another example of Hutchinson's increasingly eccentric theological outlook was his acceptance of the erroneous teachings of British Israelism.³⁷ British Israelism embraced the notion that the British royal household descended from a daughter of Zedekiah who was forcibly taken to Egypt with Jeremiah the Prophet. British Israelites believed that she subsequently sailed to Ireland and married one of the kings, thereby becoming an ancestor of the British royal household. It would follow that the biblical promises to ancient Israel were extended to the British nation. The main protagonist of British Israel teaching was Reader

³⁴ Hathaway, 'The role of William Oliver Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church in the formation of British Pentecostal Churches', p.7.

³⁵ Unfortunately, Hathaway does not specify the original source of this quotation.

³⁶ Hathaway, 'The role of William Oliver Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church in the formation of British Pentecostal Churches', p.7.

³⁷ Hathaway, 'The role of William Oliver Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church in the formation of British Pentecostal Churches', p.7; Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two*, p.47.

Harris KC, but Hollenweger traces the concept back to the mid nineteenth-century and links its popularity to the rise of Pentecostalism.³⁸

Somehow, Hutchinson managed to link this teaching with his apostleship, seeing himself as some sort of executor of God's will that would result in the King of England being revealed as some divine emperor. Apostolics still concern themselves as to whether or not Williams, and the other early leaders of the AC, were influenced to any extent by the teaching. Eventually a statement was published by them, written by one of its senior apostles J.B. Clyne, entitled *British Israelism 'a Fantasy of the Flesh'* which provided convincing, theological evidence that the phenomenon was an aberration. Progressively less and less interest was shown in the subject. It is not possible to date this leaflet but a copy is held in the national archives of the AC. Apostolics still concern themselves as to whether or not Williams, and the other early leaders of the AC, were influenced to any extent by the teaching. Clyne provided convincing, theological evidence that the phenomenon was an aberration. Progressively less and less interest was shown in the subject.³⁹

Hutchinson was relatively unknown within AC circles until Worsfold published his history of the Apostolic Church in 1991.⁴⁰ There are several possible reasons for this discrepancy in AC history. Firstly those who developed the AC regretted their links with him because of his increasingly heterodox teaching and behaviour.⁴¹ Another possible reason could be that the early Apostolics wanted to tie their origins to the events of the Welsh Revival.⁴² Still further others promoted the position that they received direct revelation from God; this would have added weight to their theological position; especially in relation to the charismata and ascension ministries. Not only did the Apostolics remove Hutchinson from their history but his name is not even mentioned by Donald Gee in his *History of the Pentecostal Movement*⁴³ or by Ernest Boulton in his 1938 account of Elim's origins.⁴⁴ Similarly, he was apparently

³⁸ Walter. J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (London: SCM Press, 1972), p.22.

³⁹ It is not possible to date this leaflet but a copy is held in the national archives of the AC.

⁴⁰ James Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church in Great Britain* (Wellington NZ: Julian Literature Trust, 1991).

⁴¹ Jones Williams son-in-law, Pastor John Evans (1911-2006), who went on to hold high office in the AC, told me just prior to his own demise of the opinion that Hutchinson died an alcoholic. There is no way of confirming or denying the suggestion.

⁴² In 1933 the Apostolics opened a new building in Penygroes to accommodate the annual International Convention. The building was known as the 'Temple'. On the front façade there are plaques one in English and one in Welsh celebrating the 1904-05 Revival.

⁴³ Donald Gee, *The Pentecostal Movement -A Short History* (London: Victory 1941).

⁴⁴ Ernest Boulton, *The Jewels of the King* (publisher unknown, 1938).

unknown to Hollenweger ⁴⁵but his AFC was the parent of the Apostolic Church in Wales as well as being influential, both positively and negatively, in the formation and structure of the Elim Pentecostal Alliance and the British Assemblies of God. Although Hutchinson may not have had direct contact with the Apostolic Church he certainly had contact with some of the precursors particularly The Apostolic Church of Wales. It was he who recognised D.P. Williams' leadership skills, developing them to the point where, within the Apostolic Faith Church, Williams was recognised as the apostle to Wales. Hutchinson may well have been responsible for the development of Williams' world-view and the possible opportunities for wider ministry. Eventually it was Hutchinson who became the focus for dissent which led to the schism between the Apostolic Faith Church and the Apostolic Church.

Daniel P. Williams (1882-1947)

Daniel Powell Williams was born in the village of Penygroes in Carmarthenshire. If he were to return to the village today, he would still recognise it; the house where he and his eleven siblings were born is still standing. A number of his relatives still live in the village. Although it has been extended over hundred years its core geography is still the same. Today the village is largely a dormitory for the nearby city of Swansea.

Williams made most journeys by foot occasionally he would have travelled by horse or train but primarily he would have walked. When recording his conversion experience he reported that he attended revival meetings in Loughor on Christmas Day 1904. Williams would more than likely have walked the twenty miles from his home to Loughor. As he developed a preaching ministry and began travelling great distances, these journeys may have been made by train: local trains stopped in Llandybie which is three miles from Penygroes. The railway station in Ammanford, which is five miles away, would have given access to the mainline service. As the AC developed he was inundated with requests to visit far-off lands. This man, who was brought up in a small community that could be reached by foot, would soon be travelling extensively throughout Europe, America, Asia and Africa.

If he were to visit contemporary Penygroes, he would be surprised to find that the language of the village is now increasingly English. In his day the language of the village was Welsh. Although he would go on to write, speak and preach in English, those who remember him recall that his English was at best rudimentary. This was to become one of the primary

⁴⁵ Walter Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*.

frustrations between him and Hutchinson, exacerbated by the fact that, when Hutchinson visited any AFC church in West Wales, he would not have been able to comprehend what was being preached, what was being prophesied or what was being decided. It may be that Williams' upbringing in Welsh Congregationalism with its foundational independence from the English eventually had some negative influence particularly as the relationship between the two men began to break down.

Ernest Gentile comments on tensions caused by 'nationalism' leading to the eventual schism, when he writes:

The eventual split between the Apostolic Faith Church (AFC) and the Apostolic Church (AC) is a story too long to be told here, but we can say that certain issues became controversial enough to bring division [including] Welsh national sentiment; the particular way in which the Welsh were using prophecy to guide the affairs of the Church; and the ominous foreboding of the first World War.⁴⁶

A third observation regarding the 21st century Penygroes would be that there are no longer any coal mines in the area. Williams came from a mining family and would be expected to follow friends and family into that odious industry. During the early 20th century Wales was dependent upon king coal for economic survival with almost every village being home to a coal mine.⁴⁷ Williams commenced work in the coal mine at the age of twelve. He found relief from this harsh lifestyle by entering competitive concerts and eisteddfods. He was very successful in these cultural events Turnbull records;

...he almost reached the topmost pinnacle as an elocutionist' and 'this cultivation of his voice and 'platform training' proved of great value in later years with his oratorical skill being used to enhance his power over vast congregations who listened to him gives with rapt attention.⁴⁸

In his youth Williams would not have had the benefit of mass communication such as television or radio the BBC was not incorporated until 1922. The main source of national news would have been from newspapers which would have been accessible to the majority following mass education at the turn of the nineteenth century. The railways would have acted as couriers bringing the world news to West Wales. Welsh language newspapers would have been preferred and those sourced in Cardiff would have taken precedence over the London editions.

⁴⁶ Ernest Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), p.277.

⁴⁷ John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London: Penguin Books, 1993).

⁴⁸ Tom Turnbull, *Brothers in Arms* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1963), p.16.

Turnbull indicates that Williams' father was stern, austere and unrelenting in his discipline, ruling his family with a rod of iron.⁴⁹ This austere upbringing which required unstinting obedience and loyalty to his natural father, influenced him in later life where he believed, and practiced, unstinting obedience and loyalty to prophecy which he believed came directly from his heavenly father. At the age of 34 years his father contracted rheumatic fever and gradually he became blind. Despite his disability, he provided for his children by gardening, cobbling, basket making and by digging and chiseling stones.⁵⁰ In his youth, apparently Williams had an uncontrollable temper. Later in life, when the nastiness of this temper had largely abated he would maintain that he inherited it from his grandfather.⁵¹

According to Turnbull beneath the stubborn, rebellious nature there were deep religious sensibilities, due 'no doubt to the gracious influence of his mother'.⁵² The late nineteenth century would have seen parts of South Wales being badly affected by social disorder, unemployment and the abuse of alcohol. Williams was not unduly influenced by these issues. This may be partly because of the self-contained nature of the village of Penygroes, partly because of his strict upbringing and partly because of the overshadowing influence of the chapel. There is no record that Williams was riotous or drunken and he maintained a good employment record.

Penygroes was strictly Sabbatarian. Everyone able to do so attended morning and evening services as well as Sunday school in the afternoon. The chapel was central to village life; one's social status was dependent not only on chapel attendance but on which chapel one attended. *Capel Sgwar* the local colloquial name for the chapel attended by Williams was at the centre of the village both geographically and socially.⁵³

Religious context: *Annibynwyr* Welsh Congregationalism and Independents

Capel Sgwar was and remains *Annibynwyr* this can be translated as Welsh Congregational or Independent. The term 'Independent' as it applies to the history of Welsh Christianity does not merely mean independent of other groups. In fact Independent (Congregational) Chapels are in close association with other chapels of similar persuasion; almost in the manner of a

⁴⁹ Turnbull, *Brothers*, p.14.

⁵⁰ Turnbull, *Brothers*, p.14.

⁵¹ Turnbull, *Brothers*, p.15.

⁵² Turnbull, *Brothers*, p.14.

⁵³ Formally this is known as Capel Penygroes, Heol Norton, Penygroes, SA14 7PF.

denomination. The term means ‘independent of the Anglican Church’ and therefore, by strong implication, in the Welsh context, independent of English influence.

It is generally accepted that Congregationalism was started by Robert Browne (1550-1633) in 1580. Its basic tenets were: the priesthood of all believers; the autonomy of the local church; democracy, and most importantly for this dissertation, no formal statement of faith or creed.

Welsh Congregationalism traces its origins to the religious dissent in Wales around 1639. Robert Tudur Jones traces the source of the problem to Henry VIII’s secession from Rome. At the same time Thomas Cromwell was determined to make Wales an indivisible part of Henry's English kingdom.

Tudur Jones coins the phrase ‘Welsh squirearchy’ for a group of sycophants who were prepared to prostitute their ‘Welshness’, accepting bribes of land that had been confiscated during the dissolution of the monasteries and given the status afforded to the highest echelons of society provided they spoke English. He continues:

Little by little, the Welsh squirearchy grew apart from the ordinary people and a new peasantry began to emerge from the mingling of the descendants of the Serfs and those of the minor gentry. Social changes as basic as this are never without their spiritual effects. It is hardly surprising then that the lamp of faith burned so low in the middle years of the 16th century.⁵⁴

Welsh Congregationalism (*Annibynwyr*) was born to fill the spiritual vacuum that was being created. Not only did it embrace the ecclesiology of mainstream Congregationalism but also celebrated the Welsh language and culture. This then was the religious environment in which Williams grew up.

John Davies records that many chapel-goers regarded the Christian faith as ‘an aspect of Welsh cultural recreation’⁵⁵ and either despite or because of this range of activities there was a question about the depth of religious conviction held by those involved. This was one of the uncertainties that fired desire for revival. Wales had not felt nationwide revival since 1859; it came in 1904.

Until that time Williams’ chapel experience was one of recreational integrity rather than spiritual insight. It is unlikely that he would have heard any of the grand sermons on the new

⁵⁴ Robert Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004), p.24.

⁵⁵ Davies, *A History of Wales*, p.504.

themes suggested by Eifion Evans.⁵⁶ He may have attended an adults' Sunday School class where the only aids were a Bible and a concordance. He would later admit that at that time he was spiritually dead. But personal revival was coming.

It is not our purpose to undertake a major analysis of the Great Welsh Revival of 1904-05. It has been the subject of many academic studies as well as many emotional and moving accounts. C.E. Jones, refers to it as the 'cause celebre of turn of the century Anglo-American Evangelicalism.'⁵⁷ Brynmor Jones comments:

Much energy has been wasted in trying to trace the source of the Welsh Revival of 1904-5. Jessie Penn-Lewis was sure that it came from the world-wide 'chains of prayer', whereas R.B. Jones saw it as a kind of 'holiness movement' and F.B. Meyer claimed it as a spiritual child of Keswick teaching. Welsh Presbyterian writers linked it with their Forward Movement, while Baptists saw strong links with the infant Christian Endeavour. In recent Pentecostalist books and magazine articles, the events in Wales are seen as parallel with signs and wonders throughout the world.⁵⁸

Events of 1904-05 were partly inspired by the campaigns of Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899) and Ira Sankey (1840-1908) who had visited the UK from the USA, initially in 1872 but then again in 1874-75. These visits were later followed by similar visits by Charles A. Alexander (1867-1920) and by Reuben A. Torrey (1856-1928). These too were American revivalists.

These visitors to Wales preached an evangelical message calling for sinners 'to be saved' or 'converted'. Their understanding of 'conversion' was defined in terms of the doctrine of justification by faith. Sinners had to recognise that they were helplessly guilty in the eyes of God and were thus totally reliant on the forgiveness which was mediated only through Jesus, the Son of God. Mankind was evil and repulsive (fallen) in the eyes of his creator, God. Once the individual had admitted this condemned state one had both to accept in humble faith the forgiveness that God offered and to confess that this acceptance was itself really another divine act for which one ought to be truly grateful.

What was required was more than simply the giving of one's intellectual assent to these propositions however; one had to walk by faith in the understanding that God's grace had renewed the individual physically, emotionally and spiritually. One was required, henceforth,

⁵⁶ Eifion Evans suggests that influences on the chapels included higher criticism, the developing science of psychology which challenged the long held of understanding of original sin and the new science of evolution, Evans, *The Welsh Revival*, pp.9-10.

⁵⁷ C.E. Jones, Welsh Revival, in Burgess and McGee (eds.) *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1989), p.881.

⁵⁸ Brynmor Jones, *Voices from the Welsh Revival* (Bridgend: Bryntirion Press, 1995), p.13.

to live through an experience of dying to the old nature which had left one without God and without hope and then, living according to the new nature. It was asserted that the truly religious individual whom God wanted to save found that a new personal level of meaning had been added to what before had been only an intellectual awareness of the forgiveness that God offered in Christ. The person then felt that Christ had died for them personally, that they were no longer rejected by the Father and that life was starting all over again. This message was eventually stir the emotions of Williams. It would become the primary message of his own preaching and would bring him, eventually, into conflict with the Welsh Congregationalists.

Williams' conversion experience

During November 1904, revival meetings were being held in Ammanford and Williams went to one of the services. There were spectacular scenes to be observed with people confessing their sins and testifying to salvation. Initially Williams found this all nonsense because, he believed, nobody could know the assurance of salvation. Williams was persuaded by friends to stay in the service and soon came under deep conviction of sin. Gordon weeks relates that Williams had previously had some longing to be a minister of the gospel but his life was a continual moving between godliness and ungodliness. Now great waves of religious emotion rolled over him and he was continually confessing his sins to friends and relations.⁵⁹

On the occasion that he went to Loughor to listen to Evan Roberts he asked for the latter to pray for him. Williams began to cry out, 'There is no hope for me. My sins are too great.' Slowly he began to realize that his sin was dealt with and his cry changed to, 'I have seen him, I have found him.'⁶⁰ From then on Williams claimed that as his conversion experience.

His experience at the revival stirred within him a passion for a more adventurous expression of his faith that would also challenge him to a greater commitment. He would give himself wholeheartedly to training for the lay ministry of the *Annibynwyr* and his tireless efforts would see his health break for a short while but it seems that his frustrations boiled over on some occasions and while some were impressed by his passion, others were not happy with his attempts to disturb the status quo.

⁵⁹ Gordon Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two* (Barnsley: The Author, 2003), p.13.

⁶⁰ Worsfold, *Origins of the Apostolic Church*, p.12.

Following the experience in Loughor, Williams gave himself wholeheartedly to developing a deeper spiritual understanding and relationship with God. The minister of Capel Sgwar suggested that he should become a local preacher. So began a particularly hectic schedule that he would maintain for the rest of his life. Williams regularly preached in almost eighty chapels. To maintain such a life-style of coal mining, studying and preaching as well as the simple act of walking to the various engagements would eventually take its toll. Turnbull records that as a result he had a complete breakdown in his health. In 1909 he was taken to Aberaeron, a seaside resort on the west coast of Wales, for respite.⁶¹ While he was there he met some people who were praising God in the open air. Williams fell on his face and was baptised in the Spirit and began to practice *glossolalia*.⁶² Williams was now exposed to the Pentecostal teaching and experience which was to shape his theological future.⁶³

The Penygroes ‘Children of the Revival’ opened their Evangelical Hall in February 1910. A photograph taken at the opening ceremony clearly shows D.P. Williams as an attendee at the event.⁶⁴ How closely he was involved with this group at this stage is uncertain. He was happy to identify with them but at the same time he was training for the lay ministry with the *Annibynwyr*.

His links with the *Annibynwr* were finally and permanently severed when he heard that the ‘Children of the Revival’ in the Evangelical Hall were baptising adults by total immersion.⁶⁵ He too was totally immersed.⁶⁶ Contemporaneous notes written by Tom Davies (see the notes on Davies in Chapter 1) recently came to light in D.P. Williams’ nephews’ garage. Davies had recorded that;

Meanwhile, at Penygroes in the year 1910, an evangelical hall was built where the Lord gathered His people and where the voice of the Spirit was heard through prophetic channels. To Dan came the following word: ‘It is I, the Lord your God who has led you, My young servant, into this place . . .’ Further, another prophetic word came, ‘Tomorrow, you shall be buried with your Lord.’ The following day Dan was

⁶¹ Turnbull *Brothers In Arms*, p.32.

⁶² Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church*, p.15.

⁶³ *Confidence* listed locations where it was being distributed. In Wales that included Aberaeron (April 1908 pp. 3,13 &15; June 1908, p4; Aug 1910), p.24.

⁶⁴ Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church*, p.16.

⁶⁵ The *Annibynwyr* practised paedobaptism.

⁶⁶ Despite Hutchinson's upbringing as a Primitive Methodist, he was baptized by total immersion prior to his involvement with Alexander Boddy circa 1903. T.B. Barratt also changed his view from Methodist to Baptist. Boddy wanted to maintain his Anglican heritage and so became increasingly ostracised from the emerging Pentecostal denominations over this subject; Gavin Wakefield, *Alexander Boddy: Pentecostal Anglican Pioneer* (London: STL, 2007), p.185.

immersed in the waters of baptism taking him a step further from the Congregationalists who did not practice baptism by immersion . . .⁶⁷

Both Eifion Evans and T.N. Turnbull are of the opinion that the Evangelical Hall in Penygroes was built to accommodate early Pentecostals. They write:

. . . those who believed in the baptism of the Spirit. In 1910 this latter group built an 'Evangelical hall' and Williams separated from the Congregationalists to join it.⁶⁸

The company of those who had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit had grown greatly. Eventually they built the Evangelical Hall at Penygroes [sic].⁶⁹

However I submit that this group were not early Pentecostals but they were people from the established chapels, having been deeply affected by the events of 1904-05, they were looking for deeper spiritual experience than that on offer in their home chapels.

Williams decided to visit Hutchinson in Bournemouth and Hutchinson paid a return visit, apparently directed by prophecy.⁷⁰ His assistant, James Dennis, prophesied that Williams should be appointed as the pastor of the group. Williams accepted the call and Hutchinson ordained him there and then. Hutchinson would later ordain him, following directive prophecy, as an apostle. The occasion was the AFC 1914 Easter Convention which was held in London.

This initial act of ordination led to a crisis amongst the group that was meeting in the Evangelical Hall. It was initially governed by elders, all of whom had equal status. Tensions grew between those who gladly accepted the prophecy and therefore accepted Williams as their leader and those who were sceptical about the Pentecostal experience and much preferred either an alternative leader or leadership by elders. Williams and his supporters turned up for a communion service one Sunday morning to find that they were locked out. Williams later reported, 'We were thrown out of the little hall which we were worshipping in'.⁷¹

On the day of the lock-out and despite it being winter, the sixty aspiring communicants held their communion service in the open air. When the first church building was erected by Williams and his followers for their exclusive use, it would be built on the opposite side of

⁶⁷ T. Davies (ed. P.K. Yeoman), *Born in the Fire* (Ystradgynlais: Kingdom First, 2008), pp.76-77.

⁶⁸ Evans, *The Welsh Revival*, p.194.

⁶⁹ Turnbull, *Brothers*, p.34.

⁷⁰ Gordon Weeks, <http://www.apostolic-church.org/index.php/about-us/history>.

⁷¹ In 1933 the 'Apostolic Temple' was opened and a booklet was published as a souvenir of the occasion. In this booklet, Williams tells the story of his conversion and call. This is where he recounts this story.

the same road. I have already traced how Williams was ordained as ‘the apostle for Wales’ by Hutchinson in the Whitsun Convention of the AFC in 1914. Of the relationship between Hutchinson and Williams at that time, Kay writes:

The influence of Hutchinson on Williams and the young Apostolic Faith Church was considerable. Hutchinson’s views on the value of prophecy as a method of guiding and governing the church were largely, if not completely, accepted and his view of the role of the present-day ordination of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers became foundational in the AFC’s understanding of itself.⁷²

Worsfold records:

It seems to this writer, after examining the relevant documents, that D.P. Williams (during the years that he was reporting) was in submission to Hutchinson at Bournemouth. In 1911 he became a minister in the Apostolic Faith Church under Hutchinson, and in 1914, after prophetic ministry in a London Apostolic Faith Church convention, he was ordained by Hutchinson to be an apostle and overseer of their congregations in Wales.⁷³

By 1916, relationships had deteriorated significantly. Weeks considers the primary cause to have been Hutchinson’s informality in dealing with finance. He gives further details of the prophecy that was given at the AFC conference in 1914 when Hutchinson was revealed to be the chief apostle. The prophecy instructed ‘bring your treasure to the Apostles’ feet’. Over £3,000 were received in the special offering. A coal miner may have been expected to earn around £3 a week at the time. D.P. Williams suggested that a committee of seven men should be responsible for its wise use. Apparently William Hutchinson flatly refused this suggestion, stating that it was his money to use as he pleased.⁷⁴

Other tensions were seething under the surface and it is not possible to prioritise them but clearly Williams was not happy with Hutchinson's financial accountability. I referred to Hutchinson’s significant personal financial debt when he moved to Bournemouth above; it appears his lack of financial accountability carried over to his church life. If the Welsh group were expected to make a financial contribution from their meagre earnings to the more affluent English group this would have been a difficult matter to accept. The linguistic and cultural tensions have already been commented on and this financial tension added to the problem. Thirdly, Hutchinson's theology was becoming more and more eccentric and he

⁷² Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain*, p.18.

⁷³ Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church*, p.56.

⁷⁴ Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two*, p.43.

called for a crisis meeting to be held in Ammanford on 8 January 1916. At that meeting Hutchinson declared himself to be the chief apostle, threatening to withdraw the calling from all who refused to follow him. That was the breaking point.

Weeks states that Williams compiled two separate records of what happened. What is particularly interesting is that Hutchinson, who had been such a strong protagonist of directive prophecy, forbade its operation in the meeting. Weeks quotes Williams thus:

Pastor Hutchinson spoke for three and a half hours and said that he had come there as the Chief Apostle. No one else was to open his mouth, neither prophet nor interpreter, nor anyone else as he alone had the authority over everything at that time. Mrs Evans of Mountain Ash wanted the Word of the Lord through the prophet to explain the authority of the Apostleship.⁷⁵

In that meeting, as a result of Hutchinson's attitude, Williams explained that he could no longer work with him and he left the meeting. He resigned his position with the AFC and commenced to pioneer the Apostolic Church of Wales. The vast majority of AFC leaders in Wales either followed him immediately or subsequently took the decision to join the emerging new Fellowship.

Hutchinson had taught the importance of directive prophecy and the role of prophetic ministry but immediately there was a crisis and there was a call for prophetic direction to remedy the crisis Hutchinson refused the call. It is not clear whether Hutchinson was afraid that any prophetic words in the meeting would have come from supporters of Williams and the position he was taking whether he was concerned that the prophecy would have been in Welsh which he would not have understood.

Kent White does not discuss D.P. Williams nor does he discuss the split between the AFC and the AC specifically. However, the following extract from his book seems to cover the situation adequately:

Some brethren outside of the English membership, who came into the work, went out desiring to be independent; they did it in the face of strong words of exhortation, formerly spoken through the gifts in use among themselves, declaring that in no wise should they separate from the movement of Bournemouth: that in it was the plan and order of God for them. While they claimed to believe the word, they thought that new conditions had created a change in God's plan for them.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two*, p.45.

⁷⁶ K. White, *The Word of God Coming Again*, p.70.

White here highlights the cultural issues by referring to those ‘outside the English membership.’ The underlying issue of cultural differences was a contributory factor in the eventual breakdown between Hutchinson and Williams. As Hutchinson's influence over the proto-apostolics shrunk following the schism, Williams’ influence intensified. At the same time the AFC itself began to contract. Something gave Williams an urge to attain more in life than simply to be a coal miner. It remains unclear whether this was his sense of a calling from God or innate natural ambition? Before his rather dramatic conversion he had already commenced a process of self-improvement. Although he did not know it at the time those new skills would become most useful in the ministry. Following his conversion at first he gave himself over to training for the lay ministry within the *Annibynwyr*. But eventually he found he had more in common with the other ‘Children of the Revival’ eventually being called by directive prophecy to be their pastor but finding himself and his supporters being ejected by those who refused to accept the authenticity of the prophecy and the ecclesiology pertaining to it.

Williams learned much from Hutchinson but as the AFC became increasingly heterodox, he took the lead in the secession resulting in many other like-minded individuals following him. When Williams wrote his autobiographical article in the booklet celebrating the opening of the Apostolic Temple, he makes no reference to his contacts with Hutchinson or the AFC. In a similar manner, Hathaway suggests the possibility that George Jeffreys was also ordained by the AFC in Maesteg. If this is the case, Jeffreys never mentioned it later and was ordained in Belfast in 1915.⁷⁷

Evidence of *glossolalia* and the other *charismata* in the Great Welsh Revival 1904-05

The issue of whether or not *glossolalia* and the other *charismata* were experienced during the 1904-05 Revival is of great interest and debate. One of the few primary sources suggesting this is the case is in D.P. Williams' account where he writes:

Men and women were mowed down by the axe of God like a forest. The glory was resting for over two years in some localities. Ministers could not minister, like Moses, when the cloud of Glory came down on the Tabernacle. The weeping for mercy, the holy laughter, ecstasy of joy, the fire descending, burning its way to the hearts of men and women with sanctity and glory, were manifestations still cherished and longed for in greater power. Many were heard speaking in tongues and prophesying . . . It was

⁷⁷ Hathaway, ‘The role of William Oliver Hutchinson and the Apostolic Faith Church in the formation of British Pentecostal Churches’, p.52, where Hathaway cites a letter from George Jeffreys to Hutchinson’s magazine, *Showers of Blessing* in September 1910, appearing to say that Jeffreys had been baptized in the Spirit and had spoken in tongues whilst at Emmanuel Mission Hall in Bournemouth.

likened to a motorcar in the hands of a child. Confusion and extravagance, undoubtedly, were present.⁷⁸

Commenting on Williams' statement, Gibbard says:

Though speaking in tongues was not a characteristic of the Welsh Revival, yet the few examples of the phenomenon in Penygroes (D.P. Williams's observation) . . . do connect with the experiences of the Pentecostals in relation to a baptism in the Spirit with tongues following.⁷⁹

It is not easy to corroborate Williams' account but it is possible to find evidence of charismatic activity at the time from an unusual source. R. Tudur Jones cites several examples of what he calls the eccentric behaviour and outbursts of Evan Roberts but which Pentecostals would interpret as the operation of spiritual gifts as outlined in 1 Cor. 12. Here are a selected few examples.⁸⁰

He [Evan Roberts] halted the meeting and said the place 'must be cleansed' because there were some present who could not forgive those who had trespassed against them. One of the young leaders of the 'Free Church of the Welsh' rose to his feet and prayed earnestly that God would humble people to work together in brotherly love. However, Evan Roberts insisted that there were some present that were resisting the Holy Spirit and were refusing to forgive one another.⁸¹

Pentecostals might describe this as a Word of Knowledge.

Evan Roberts suddenly announced that the spirit had withdrawn and that there were five people present, three of them ministers, who were envious because the work of salvation was being accomplished there. The congregation became very agitated and considerable tension developed between the chairman, John Williams, who wished to draw the meeting to a close, and Evan Roberts who forbade this.⁸²

Again, this incident and Roberts' response may well be described as a Word of Knowledge to a Pentecostal.

The 6 and 7 of April was [sic.] strange days. In the evening he was to address a meeting at the Sun Hall in Kensington, which could seat 6000 people. From the onset of the meeting, Evan Roberts was restless and ill at ease and his face was distorted in agony. After the introductory parts of the service, [he] interrupted the petitions and said in English 'There is an English

⁷⁸ D.P. Williams, *Prophetic Ministry*, p.99.

⁷⁹ Noel Gibbard, *Fire on the Altar: A history and Evaluation of the 1904-5 Welsh Revival* (Bridgend: Bryntirion Press, 2005), p.184.

⁸⁰ R. Tudur Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004), p.335.

⁸¹ Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation*, p.322; unfortunately, Jones does not reference the primary source of this information.

⁸² Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation*, p.323.

friend in the meeting and he is trying to hypnotise me this very moment. Will you leave the building at once or ask the Lord to forgive you?’ The congregation of thousands was astounded and all leapt to their feet as one, while hundreds offered prayer. He was trembling from head to toe and collapsed helplessly into his chair laying his head on his arms on the table in front of him. After the congregation had sung a hymn, Roberts rose his feet and said ‘some of you are praying to the Lord to save this person. I cannot do this. I can pray for him to be removed from the face of the earth, but I cannot ask the Lord to save him . . .’ On the following day, Dr. Walford Hodie, a well-known hypnotist and entertainer who was performing in the Lyric Theatre at the time, admitted that he had sent a member of his staff to the Sun Hall to try to hypnotise Evan Roberts. The following services went well.⁸³

It would be wrong to dismiss these events as being 'eccentric behaviour' as R. Tudur Jones does. They do not provide clear evidence of the operation of the gift of the Spirit during the Welsh Revival, but they do suggest that the Revival was based on more than simple emotionalism.

William Jones Williams (1891-1945)

Nine years younger than his brother Daniel, William, known by his second name Jones, was the seventh child of the family. Biographies tend to favour Daniel and so it is not so easy to put together a picture of Williams' personality and personal life experiences. His background would have been very similar to that of his brother. Turnbull records that Jones was converted at the age of fourteen and found that he was noted for his earnestness in prayer.⁸⁴ Apparently, after the initial fervour of the Welsh Revival, Jones became spiritually cold and for a period of six years was not the least interested in the Christian gospel.⁸⁵ He was in this poor spiritual condition when, in February 1911, his brother brought a challenge to him to join him in Christian service.⁸⁶ He responded positively to the challenge.

Worsfold refers to a meeting that he had in 1970 with a Mr. A. Ashford who was then 95 years of age. Mr. Ashford had witnessed an AFC meeting in Bellevue, Swansea in February 1913, when the prophet Ernest Blackman prophesied that Jones Williams too would be a prophet. Hutchinson, who was present in the meeting, responded by immediately ordaining him.

⁸³ Jones, *Faith and the Crisis of a Nation*, p.322.

⁸⁴ Turnbull, *Brothers in Arms*, p.28.

⁸⁵ Turnbull, *Brothers in Arms*, p.36.

⁸⁶ Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church*, p.24.

There are many stories of how the brothers operated as apostle and prophet. One story told within the AC involves a request for the brothers to preach in special meetings in Abergavenny. The train taking them to Abergavenny had to pass through Beaufort where, coincidentally, there was a Christian group that was newly formed having just come into a Pentecostal understanding and experience. This group was keen for either or both of the Williams brothers to minister to them. The leader of the group was Jacob Purnell. He had distributed leaflets to say that the Williams brothers would be ministering in Beaufort at a convention even though he had not got an understanding from them that they would honour this arrangement. He then went to Beaufort station at the time that the brothers were passing through and prevailed on them not to go on to Abergavenny but to stay and minister in the village. Apparently the travelling group consisted of two apostles and two prophets including the Williams brothers. Purnell showed the party a copy of the leaflet that had been freely distributed. Immediately D.P. prayed ‘Lord, what shall we do?’ Jones Williams prophesied ‘The apostle who prayed and the channel should stay over to the Sunday. The other apostle and prophet are to come on Monday.’⁸⁷ Purnell concluded his recollection by reporting that from that event in 1920, twenty churches were established in north Gwent by 1933.

Although several others would be recognised as apostles and as prophets, these two brothers epitomised the functioning of apostle and prophet ministry both in a practical sense⁸⁸ and, as will be shown in the next chapter, in establishing AC theology and doctrine on the subject.⁸⁹

Andrew Turnbull (1872-1937)

The Apostolic Church as it is known today has its roots in Wales, and the Williams brothers were the founding apostle and prophet. However, it should be recognised that the story of the AC in Scotland is just as important in defining its theology of directive prophecy as the Welsh Apostolics; in Scotland Andrew Turnbull (1872-1937) and his son Tom Turnbull

⁸⁷ Purnell relayed the story in his old age to Mr. Colin Evans of Ebbw Vale. Evans transcribed the story and a copy of the transcript is attached to this dissertation as appendix III.

⁸⁸ ‘Jones’ Williams normally accompanied his brother on the gruelling international tours and died of exhaustion (heart failure) at the age of 53.

⁸⁹ As an addendum to this statement, on 30 August 1922, D.P. Williams, A. Turnbull, F. Hodges and W.J. Williams sailed from Liverpool on the ‘Carmania’ bound for New York and on to Philadelphia. The name of the ship is interesting in the context of directive prophecy. At the AFC Convention in Bournemouth in August 1913, D.P. Williams uttered the word ‘Carmania’ several times. A Prophet then prophesied that this was the name a ship on which those present would travel to another land. Enquiries were made and it was found that no ship with such a name existed. The ‘Carmania’ was launched in 1922. *Riches of Grace Magazine*, July 1922 p. 5; *Souvenir of the opening of the Apostolic Temple, Penygroes*, pp.16, 36 & 53.

(1895-1980) where the key figures. Andrew Turnbull was recognised as the first apostle of the AC in Scotland in 1922.

Whereas D.P. Williams is often mentioned in the literature, there are just a few biographies of Andrew Turnbull in publications produced by the AC. Williams may be spoken of so much more because of his close association with the Welsh Revival, because of his role in the schism and because the AC headquarters and International Convention were established in his home village.⁹⁰ This is not the case with Andrew Turnbull but his contributions to denominational developments were significant. Having developed his own network of proto-apostolic assemblies around Glasgow known as the Burning Bush, by 1919 the Apostolic Church of Wales and Burning Bush had merged with groups from Bradford, Hereford and the Midlands until the denomination was formalised in 1922.

Turnbull's conversion

When he was 20 years of age, Turnbull's mother died her death affected him badly. According to his biographer Ian MacPherson, he had started to enjoy the excesses of alcohol prior to his mother's death and he convinced himself that he was responsible for her early demise.⁹¹ As a result he went into a severe depression but found some relief by attending Evangelical services that were being held in Crailing near Dumfries. It was in one of these services that he expressed a desire for assurance of salvation but though he attended every service, he did not receive it. In February 1894, when he was a month short of his twenty-third birthday, he found that peace that he had longed for.

Turnbull's preparation for ministry

Following his conversion a group of 'pilgrim evangelists' from the 'faith mission' held services in the area advocating a message of personal holiness. The young Turnbull was so impressed with their message that he attended every service. He then asked the missionaries if he could join them, expressing his willingness to do anything as long as he could become involved. He became an invaluable accessory to the Pilgrims and soon became their leader in open air services.⁹² In 1902, by then married, he moved to Hawick where he joined a Baptist church remaining loyal to the Baptists for eight years, working in particular for the Railway

⁹⁰ The Finance Office was originally located in Glasgow and the Missionary Office was located in Bradford although currently, all Administration is carried out from the London Administration Office.

⁹¹ I. MacPherson, *Ploughman's Progress* (Penygroes: Apostolic Publications, 1936), p.46.

⁹² Ian MacPherson, *Ploughman's Progress*, p.55.

Mission.⁹³ This work was achieved in a lay capacity Turnbull was employed as a carter with one of his particular responsibilities being to deliver coal around the town. Apparently, if ever he drove past anyone not known to him as a Christian, he would leave his cart and horses and engage them in conversation intending to lead the stranger to Christ.

Turnbull was clearly a zealous evangelist who was being increasingly consumed by a passion for souls. According to MacPherson:

He (Turnbull) was one of these religious individualists to whom no one denomination can be wholly satisfying and to accommodate whom no one denomination is big enough- for whom indeed denominationalism as such does not exist.⁹⁴

Turnbull and charismata

In 1908 Turnbull met a Baptist minister, the Welshman Fred Clark, who was visiting Hawick.⁹⁵ In his account of the history of the Apostolic Church in Wales, H.B. Llewellyn records:

Early in 1908 a series of mission revival meetings was conducted by the Rev. Fred Clark. Clark was a Baptist minister active in the Welsh Revival and had received a *special anointing* from God. His sermon on 'Have ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed' made an impression on Turnbull who realised that he lacked this experience.⁹⁶

The subject of Clark's sermon challenged Turnbull so deeply that he began to seek for his own Pentecost. On 18 February 1908 Turnbull spoke in tongues for the first time it is not clear if this was through the direct ministry of Clark or a private affair. Records state that later instances of tongues used by Turnbull were both *glossolalia* and *xenolalia*. MacPherson cites the following example as evidence of the latter:

In 1913 Turnbull attended the convention at Sunderland in the North of England, presided over by... Alexander Boddie [*sic*] . . . and the messages delivered there dealt mostly with the Higher Life and with the supernatural element in Christianity. Spiritual gifts were in operation in the services and the atmosphere was similar to that of the revival services in Wales. Turnbull spoke in tongues with the interpretation

⁹³ The Railway Mission was founded in 1881 based in mission halls, and now operates a chaplaincy service through the provision of The National Rail Chaplaincy Service (NRCS).

⁹⁴ MacPherson, *Ploughman's Progress* p.81.

⁹⁵ Tom Lennie, *Glory in the Glen: A History of Evangelical Revivals in Scotland 1840-1940* (Tain: Christian Focus, 2009), pp.213- 222.

⁹⁶ H.B. Llewellyn, 'A study of the history and thought of the Apostolic Church in Wales in the context of Pentecostalism', unpublished M. Phil dissertation, University of Wales, 1997, p.42.

being given by Mrs Crisp a contributor to the Christian Herald and a teacher in the PMU Training Home in London.⁹⁷

MacPherson further comments that following the interpretation a lady who was a newly returned missionary from the Congo stood to explain that originally been sceptical about Pentecostalism. However she was now convinced of its authenticity because Turnbull who had spoken in tongues had used the language of a Congolese tribe which had been translated impeccably by the interpreter.⁹⁸

As with Williams, Turnbull's Spirit baptism drove a wedge between him and his Baptist friends and he felt that it was time to move on. He moved the family to Portobello in Edinburgh and it was here that he and the Pastor of this new group began to develop a Pentecostal theology, inviting William Hutchinson to bring ministry. During this period Andrew Turnbull first had the experience of divine healing operating through him. MacPherson gives a number of examples and is keen to give details of prominent physicians who were able to verify the authenticity of these cases.⁹⁹ This particular ministry of healing would be a significant part of his future as it was and remains so within the wider Pentecostal/Charismatic denominations. At the same time his family grew to include four sons and two daughters although one daughter had died in infancy. He was very strict about the 'family altar'. It was this environment that had a major influence on his children with all four sons eventually following him into ministry in the AC.

MacPherson records that nobody in the Portobello group practised the gift of interpretation of tongues. This hampered the operation of the gift of tongues.¹⁰⁰ Apparently the minister of this young Pentecostal group prayed that the gift might be given to someone within the church. Andrew's pre-teenage son Tom began to interpret tongues and eventually to prophecy. MacPherson gives several examples of how his words exposed sin in the church and gave instructions to his father regarding his own ministry.¹⁰¹ This development apparently caused consternation among the group on two levels. Some questioned whether the principle of directive prophecy was authentic while others queried if it was correct for somebody so

⁹⁷ MacPherson, *Ploughman's Progress*, p.88.

⁹⁸ MacPherson, *Ploughman's Progress*, p.89.

⁹⁹ MacPherson, *Ploughman's Progress*, p.100.

¹⁰⁰ 1 Cor. 14 strictly instructs that the gift of tongues should not be used unless accompanied by someone in the congregation possessed of the gift of interpretation.

¹⁰¹ MacPherson, *Ploughman's Progress*, pp.105-6.

young to be giving such authoritative prophetic instructions. Regarding Tom's youthfulness, Gordon Weeks records that when he was a youngster he prophesied to the family thus:

I would have My servant go to a large city in the West of Scotland. He is to rent a large house conducting services in one of the rooms. A large spiritual fire will be lit in the West of Scotland, and the sparks will fly out, and ignite, and commence many assemblies in Scotland.¹⁰²

Under the patronage of a rich spinster called Elizabeth Howard, the family moved to Armadale Street, Dennistoun two miles from Glasgow. Elizabeth Howard had made a particular study of directive prophecy after she had prepared for the foreign mission field but had been unable to take up her call due to ill-health. She had apparently visited Portobello without the slightest knowledge of what had been transpiring in that place. When she heard the youngster prophesying she respected the genuineness of the message and when she heard about the prophecy regarding the family moving west she encouraged Andrew to accept it.

The house in Dennistoun would provide domestic accommodation as well as a large meeting room for any potential group that Turnbull would draw around him. Initially few were attracted to the simple preaching or the prophecy of young Tom; however in time the congregation grew. I stated above that D.P. Williams was naturally eloquent and articulate in the pulpit and that he had developed great skills as an orator. Turnbull, on the other hand, had to work hard to develop these skills. Primarily through his open air preaching and personal visitation the congregation grew, eventually requiring dedicated premises. The name of the assembly is significant in the history of the AC. Turnbull named his new fellowship; The Burning Bush Assembly.

Eventually the Scots would join the Welsh group and all Apostolic Church historians tell this story in a very romantic fashion. MacPherson says, for instance, 'in 1919 it was discovered that there existed in Wales a company of people whose views were to all intents and purposes identical with those of the members of the Burning Bush'¹⁰³ Tom Turnbull, writes:

In 1918 the Burning Bush Assembly heard of a group of Pentecostal believers in Wales, who were convinced of the efficacy of directive prophecy. A message from the Holy Spirit came to the Pastor and people declaring that He was about to bring them a step further into His perfect will by sending two of his servants from the

¹⁰² Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two*, p.41.

¹⁰³ MacPherson, *Ploughman's Progress*, p.139.

South. Pastor Turnbull, though he had seen some of these leaders at a Pentecostal conference in Scotland, did not know them; now, however he wrote to them.¹⁰⁴

Ian MacPherson further develops the history stating that when the Welshmen met the Scots at Glasgow Railway Station, though they had no idea of how they would identify each other, they recognized each other 'in the Spirit'. Given the fact that both Turnbull and Williams had been greatly influenced by Hutchinson, James Worsfold tells an altogether more plausible story stating;

In 1918 Andrew Turnbull a sometime Scottish ploughman and now the highly motivated leader of the Burning Bush Pentecostal congregation in Glasgow, invited D.P. and Jones Williams to conduct a series of services. Turnbull had heard the brothers in 1914 when they were ministering in Glasgow under the auspices of the Apostolic Faith Church.¹⁰⁵

Worsfold's source of reference is Williams. But when Williams recalled the event for the opening of the Apostolic Temple in Penygroes in 1933 he presented the story in a romantic way:

We were invited . . . to Scotland (1919) by Pastor Andrew Turnbull. It appeared that the Lord had commenced speaking among them through various channels in an assembly called 'The Burning Bush.' The Lord said to them that a day was coming when that name would be changed. They were told, through a prophetic channel, that their deliverance would come from the Little Nation, and they were directed to us. Correspondence led to a visit. They were days of great blessing. Although strangers to us, we were knitted together in love and the Will of God.¹⁰⁶

The main factor that persuaded the leaders of the Burning Bush Assembly to join the proto-Apostolics was Williams' exposition on divine order. Apparently the operation of spiritual gifts had caused chaos within the Scottish group. When Williams explained how spiritual gifts were to be subject to the authority of ministry gifts his explanation was so plausible that the decision was made, there and then, for the two groups to be amalgamated. Williams was appointed as the leader of the Welsh group and Turnbull leader of the Scottish group. Apparently Jones Williams then prophesied recognising Andrew Turnbull as a pastor in the Body of Christ, and calling for the name of the Scottish group to be changed from 'Burning Bush Assembly' to 'Apostolic Church'. In 1922 Andrew Turnbull was recognised as an apostle in the AC.

¹⁰⁴ T.N. Turnbull, *Apostle Andrew* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1965), p.48.

¹⁰⁵ Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church*, p.196.

¹⁰⁶ D.P. Williams in *Souvenir from the Apostolic Church, commemorating the opening of the Apostolic Temple, Penygroes*, 1933, p.14.

A comparison of experience: A. Turnbull and D.P. Williams

Turnbull and Williams had similar backgrounds; both Celts; from large families and both worked as artisans.¹⁰⁷ Another remarkable similarity is in relation to their pre conversion state; both men carried a significant amount of guilt that led to their conversion: Williams, because of his outbursts of temper, and Turnbull, because of his excessive alcohol consumption.

However their conversion experiences were not similar. Williams' upbringing was in a very religious environment but Turnbull's was not. Williams' was a very public affair while Turnbull's was very private. Williams' was very much influenced by one of the main protagonists of the Welsh Revival while Turnbull was only influenced by an observer of the revival later in his Christian experience. Both were ostracised by the church groups that they were attending when they were baptised in the Holy Spirit and began to practice *glossolalia*. Prior to his conversion, Williams was an experienced public speaker; however Turnbull though gifted in personal counsel struggled initially with public speaking. Williams worked closely with Hutchinson and was mentored by him; Turnbull had very little contact with Hutchinson. Williams' experience with the AFC and the fact that he brought more groups to the merger may be the reason that Turnbull was happy to recognise Williams as the senior man even though he was ten years older. The merger of the Welsh and Scottish groups predated the formation of the AC by some three years. As a result, when the various groups met in Bradford in 1922, Andrew Turnbull already had experience of working with D.P. Williams and this may have been the reason why he was quite comfortable to suggest the latter as overall leader of the new Fellowship.

Turnbull and the early understanding and practice of directive prophecy within the Apostolic Church

Although Williams, in his role with the AFC and later in the formative years of the AC, was prepared to take on responsibilities as indicated by directive prophecy it was Turnbull who was first to be prepared to take major decisions. This is illustrated in his decision to move his family across country as directed through prophecy. This further laid the foundation for an expectation amongst ministers and eventually even amongst lay leaders that once confirmed by an apostle they should be obedient to the call and be prepared to move.

¹⁰⁷ In so many ways they were both the opposite of William Hutchinson, the imposing, military, middle class Englishman.

Thomas Napier Turnbull (1895-1980)

Thomas Turnbull was initially recognised as a prophet during the ‘Burning Bush’ times but in the early 1950s was recognised as an apostle and went on to become General Secretary of the AC. He was a prolific writer, not only producing some of the histories of the AC, along with many pamphlets and leaflets on the subject of AC’s concept of directive prophecy however he largely reiterated D.P. Williams’ words as found in *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*.¹⁰⁸

Just as Williams worked closely with his brother as apostle and prophet, so too father and son Turnbull worked closely being particularly responsible for the direction given to ministers and lay leaders regarding their movement between churches, family issues such as locations for housing or even moving to new countries. All of this direction was offered through the use of directive prophecy which became a distinctive feature of the AC and which later caused some major problems within the denomination.

The Scottish Apostolic Churches held a major convention every New Year with the last one being held in 2001-02. Supporters and members would gather in their thousands in anticipation of hearing from the Lord through the Prophet. A central aspects of the convention was the area of prophetic instructions with regard to future avenues and locations for service.

Samuel McKibben, who served as a Vice President of the AC in the UK, was closely associated with the AC in Scotland during its formative years. He recalls:

Back in the thirties when the Scottish national convention was held in the Town Hall in Airdrie a prophecy came . . . [The] Lord began to call men into offices and move others from one church to another. In one prophecy there was a total of 78 calls and moves throughout Scotland without a single mix up of places or people. At the end of the prophecy the Lord called ‘His servant Walker’ to be a deacon in the church in Airdrie. Pastor Andrew Turnbull was concerned about this call as he did not know of a man by that name. On the platform he consulted with the other Pastors regarding a man of this name, but no one knew him. He then spoke to the congregation asking if there was a man of this name. A man stood up in the back of the Town Hall and said that he was Mr Walker and that he was a Christian who had come in for the first time to an Apostolic Church service and had decided to make this church his home.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Thomas Turnbull, *What God Hath Wrought* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1959); *Brothers in Arms* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1963); *Apostle Andrew* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1965); *Prophecy in the Church Age* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1971).

In an interview with Mrs Maisie Rankin (1925-) she recalled that she was often the witness to such events.¹¹⁰ She also related, anecdotally, several instances of people who were unknown to the prophet being called into some sort of office within the church. She explained how that it was through directive prophecy that she was challenged to become a Christian and how it was through the ministry of the apostle and prophet that she and her husband were sent as missionaries to Nigeria.

By the mid-1960s the practice of publically proclaimed directive prophecy with regards to callings and movements of presbyteries had, to a large extent, fallen into a formality although the practice seems to have continued in some form in Scotland, it was becoming very formal and contained a certain amount of dread for the potential subjects.

Alvan Beaton (1952-) is the son of one of the families that could have been the subject of such 'prophetic instruction'. He recalls:

On one occasion as a young lad [I was]]sitting in the meeting when the prophet (at which time there used to be an area prophet as well as a district prophet, if I remember correctly) called a Deacon to move from one church in the Clyde valley to another church in the same district. This Deacon and his wife, who was the organist, were to travel some 10 miles which in these days meant two buses, a ferry crossing plus another bus, that was just one way so this poor old chap and his wife in the depth of winter, would have to make this special journey two nights a week plus a Sunday (double trip) while passing his local church in Clydebank to take up his office in Renfrew as Deacon some 10 miles away.¹¹¹

The notion of publicly proclaimed directive prophecy followed by immediate ordination led to something of an international crisis within the AC by the early 1950s when they got embroiled in the Latter Rain affair. I will return to this contentious issue later.

This chapter has addressed the historical context of the establishment of the AC in Britain tracing its heritage to some of the proto-Apostolic groups that appeared in Britain. I have further highlighted the important figures who were instrumental in helping to establish the new denomination in particular through the operation of directive prophecy. In the next chapter I will turn attention to the biblical understanding of Apostles and Prophets.

¹¹⁰ The date of the interview was 17 January 2016. Mrs Rankin of 38 Maes Yr Haf, Dyffryn Road Ammanford, SA18 3TR, is the widow of Jack (1921-95) who served the AC as an apostle, missionary to Nigeria and General Secretary.

¹¹¹ Alvan Beaton is now a Deacon in the AC in Bridgend, South Wales. Emails were exchanged 11 October 2011.

Chapter 3 Apostles and Prophets

The two primary ministry gifts emphasized by the Apostolic Church (AC) are Apostles and Prophets; these two roles were paramount in the establishment and continuation of the denomination. The biblical background to these roles will be examined in this dissertation in order to formulate an understanding of the AC acceptance of their roles within the area of directive prophecy. In this chapter I will summarise the biblical perspectives on these roles; evaluate the possible antecedents of the AC theological distinctives and further assess whether they have a place in the contemporary church.

Apostles in the New Testament

The term *ἀπόστολος* refers to ‘one who is sent’ but in the NT it is more commonly associated with a particular form of ministry. Throughout the Book of Acts references are confined to the original twelve disciples/Apostles plus Matthias and Paul. There is also a brief reference to Barnabas possibly being recognised in the role of apostle (Acts 14:14). Other figures in the writings of Paul are also possible candidates for recognition as apostles. They include Apollos (1 Cor. 4:6-9), Timothy and Silvanus (1 Thess.1:1 and 2:6), Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25) and two unnamed individuals (2 Cor. 8:23).¹ The reference to Andronicus and Junia in Rom. 16:7 creates further debate.² Hebrews 3:1 designates Jesus Christ ‘the Apostle and High Priest of our profession’ referring to his fulfilment of the ultimate apostolic office.³

In order to ascertain the characteristics of an apostle in the NT it is necessary to consider Paul’s own ministry and that of the other apostles mentioned. John Stott, commenting on Ephesians 4:11, recognises three different ‘classes’ of NT apostles.

Once only it seems to be applied to every individual Christian, when Jesus said: ‘A servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent (*apostolos*) greater than he who sent him.’ [Jn 15:20] So every Christian is both a servant and an apostle. The verb *apostellō* means to ‘send’, and all Christian people are sent out into the world as Christ’s ambassadors and witnesses, to share was formed the tent you, the in the

¹ Walter A. Elwell (ed), *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1984), pp.70-71. F.F. Bruce, R.V.G. Tasker, J.I. Packer, D.J. Wiseman (eds.), *The New Bible Dictionary* (London: IVP, 1962), pp.48-50.

² There is debate as to the gender of Junia (feminine) or Junius (masculine). Were they noted apostles (KJV, NIV etc.) or were they ‘well-known to the apostles (ESV)? Chrysostom (died A.D. 407) referred to this person as a woman (*Homily on Romans* 31.7; NPNF 1, 11:555) but Origen (died A.D. 252) referred to Junias as a man (MPG 14: 1289), and Epiphanius (died A.D. 403) uses a masculine pronoun of Junias and seems to have specific information about him stating that ‘Junias, of whom Paul makes mention, became bishop of Apameia of Syria’ (*Index discipulorum* 125.19- 20).

³ Ben Witherington, *Jesus The Seer: The Progress of Prophecy* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999).

apostolic mission of the whole church. This cannot be the meaning here, however [Eph. 4:11], for in this sense all Christians are ‘apostles’, whereas Paul writes that Christ gave only ‘some’ to be apostles. Secondly, there were ‘apostles of the churches’, messengers sent out by a church either as missionaries or on some other errand. And thirdly there were the ‘apostles of Christ’, a very small and distinctive group, consisting of the Twelve (including Matthias who replaced Judas), Paul, James the Lord’s brother, and possibly one or two others. They were personally chosen and authorized by Jesus, and had to be eyewitnesses of the risen Lord. It must be in this sense that Paul is using the word ‘apostles’ here, for he puts them at the top of his list, as he does also in 1 Corinthians 12:28 (‘first apostles’), and this is how he has so far used the word in his letter, referring to himself (1:1) and to his fellow apostles as the foundation of the church and the organs of revelation (2:20; 3:26).⁴

Whilst Stott cannot see the validity of contemporary apostleship, I concur with Fee who does accept the possibility of such apostolic roles within the structure of the church, and whose analysis is of assistance in the identification of the qualities and character of an apostle. Commenting on the list of gifts in 1 Cor. 12: 8-10 Fee states:⁵

It is no surprise that Paul should list ‘apostles’ first. The surprise is that they should be on this list at all, and that he should list them in plural. As noted in 1:1, for Paul this is both a ‘functional’ and ‘positional/official’ term. In keeping with the other members on this list, it is primarily ‘functional’ here, probably anticipating the concern for the ‘building up’ of the body.⁶

Fee is highlighting two of the primary requirements of an apostle: authority and functionality. Paul did not shrink from asserting his own authority, even when it came to disagreements with the original twelve. His conflicts with Peter are well recorded.⁷ His advice to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 8:4) appears to be in direct contravention of the ruling of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). It is also worth noting John’s authority in dealing with Diotrephes as this indicates that it was not solely Paul who carried such apostolic authority.⁸ Fee further suggests that the ‘functionality’ of apostleship includes the role of setting the churches in order. In Rom. 1:11 Paul reminds the local church of his desire to establish order amongst them. Apostles corrected error and established good practice. Examples of this include Paul’s letter to the Galatians, who were being influenced by Judaizers, and Jude’s appeal to his readers to contend for the faith due to the false doctrine that had arisen. Another example

⁴ John Stott, *God’s New Society: The Message of Ephesians* The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester: IVP, 1979), p.161.

⁵ Here Paul selects some gifts from his 1 Cor. 12 *χαρισμ* list and some from his Ephesians 4 *δοματα* list to further emphasize the need for unity through diversity. On this occasion he uses the collective term *φανέρωσις* (manifestation [of the Spirit]).

⁶ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p.620.

⁷ Galatians 2:11.

⁸ 3 Jn. 9-10.

relates to the Jerusalem Council which established good practice for Christians who were not Jewish (Acts 15).

In 2 Cor. 11:5-6, Paul warns the Corinthians about another group of 'super' apostles. Their identity is an area of debate, but Paul cannot be referring to those that he considers to be orthodox, since he himself had already stated that he and they preach the same gospel. Rather, he is referring to those recently arrived 'apostles' who claim superiority over Paul on the basis of the greater distances they have travelled (10:12-13) and on the 'abundance of revelations' they have experienced (12:1, 7). He concedes no superiority to these ministers. With regard to the super-apostles that Paul challenges, Paul Barnett explains that the apostle has chosen or even invented this word which the Authorized Version translates as 'superlative' and the NIV as 'super' (*hyperlian*) with care.

Within chapters 10-13, where he particularly interacts with his opponents, there are a number of compound words formed of *hyper*, 'above', 'beyond'. Paul writes of their missionary imperialism 'going too far', as 'overextending' themselves (10:14) (*hyperekteinein*) into 'regions beyond' (10:16) *ta hyperekeina*. They boast of 'surpassingly great revelations' (12:7) (*tē hyperbolē tōn apocalypseōn*) and the resultant 'super-elation' or 'conceit' (*hyperairesthai*). To expose their boastfulness Paul boasts of being 'more' a servant of Christ (11:23: *hyper*), by which he means one who has suffered greater ignominy. Truly Paul's opponents are hyper-men, aptly described as 'very superior', *hyperlian*. It was their belief, apparently, that God's power would come upon their power, making them men of hyper-power. In their eyes Paul had no power of his own and therefore none from God; he was quite power-less, 'weak' and lacking in 'competence' (cf. 3:5-6; 11:21).⁹

Whilst Fee considers the primary qualifications for apostleship to be authority and functionality, Barnett would add to the qualifications humility, self-sacrifice and being full of the Holy Spirit with some evidence of the miraculous. Weakness of the flesh and inability to speak eloquently did not bar a person from being recognised as an apostle. When Paul wrote 1 Corinthians he was confident in his own apostleship (1:1). However, in 2:1-4 he advised his readers that he came in weakness, great fear and trembling. He further states that his preaching was not with wise and persuasive words but with the demonstration of spiritual power.

Fee and Barnett help to provide what I submit to be a working definition of an apostle. An apostle is not an appointee but one who has natural authority and functional leadership. An

⁹ Paul Barnett, *The Message of 2 Corinthians: Power in Weakness (The Bible Speaks Today)* (Leicester: IVP, 1988), pp.164-166.

apostle does not need to elevate himself but by humility and self-sacrifice can demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit with some evidence of the miraculous. If one accepts this working definition of an apostle it could serve as a springboard for understanding how the AC developed their later praxis. For the AC their position on apostles was an acceptance of a biblical standard that had not been withdrawn from the purposes of God for the Church.

Apostles in the contemporary church

The subject of spiritual gifts in the church is an area of contention. The two main divisions in thought are cessationism and continuationism. Cessationists contend that apostolic ministry and other charismatic gifts ceased at the close of the apostolic age.¹⁰ F.F. Bruce puts the cessationist position when he states:

In the churches of the first generation the apostles and prophets discharged a unique role, which in some essential features has been taken over by the canonical writings of the New Testament.¹¹

John Stott further emphasises this position when he states: ‘We should not hesitate, therefore to say ... that there are no apostles today’.¹² Advocates of the cessationist theory would uphold the sufficiency of the Bible as the complete revelation and foundation of God for the Church. Hence for them there is no need for an on-going ministry for those foundational gifts and ministries as recorded in the NT.¹³ Continuationists argue that, Ephesians 4:11-12 illustrates that the ministry gifts are required throughout history. Vincent Cheung expresses the continuationist position when he states:

[The] denial that apostles and prophets could exist today does not come from sound doctrine or orthodoxy. Rather, it comes from unbelief, especially in conjunction with the heresy of cessationism, and from the false assumption about the relationship between apostles, prophets, and the writing of Scripture.¹⁴

J. Rodman Williams expands on this view when he states:

¹⁰ John Calvin arbitrarily speaks of some of the ministry gifts in the past tense but others in the present tense (John Calvin, *Commentary on Ephesians 4* (biblehub/commentaries/calvin/ephesians/four.htm; cf. Charles Hodge, *The Epistle to the Ephesians* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1991).

¹¹ F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Ephesians: A Verse by Verse Exposition* (Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1978), Kindle Locations 1420-1423.

¹² Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, p.161.

¹³ Wayne A. Grudem, *Are Miraculous Gifts For Today?* (Grand Rapids, MI.; Zondervan, 1996); Richard B. Gaffin, *Perspectives on Pentecost* (Phillipsburg, NJ; P&R Publishing, 1979); Benjamin Scott, *Apostles Today-Making Sense of Today's Apostolates* (Pickwick: Eugene, Oregon, 2014).

¹⁴ Vincent Cheung, *Commentary on Ephesians* (self-published, 2014), Kindle Locations 2443-2447.

Such appointments [that is, the appointment of apostles] must refer to more than an act or acts of past history - especially since Paul continues other appointments that indicate an ongoing occurrence. Hence, whether apostles are spoken of as Christ's gift or God's appointments, they do have vital significance for the life of the church at all times in history.¹⁵

The Apostolic Church holds to the continuationist position accepting that the twin ministries of the apostle and prophet are inter-related and important for the contemporary church. The AC would also accept the necessity of pastors, teachers and evangelists, but their distinctive tenet focusses on the vital role of apostles and prophets.

The AC arrived at its doctrinal position within the theological melee of the early-twentieth century and with a particular influence from the Pentecostal revival in Los Angeles which was supported in Britain through the Sunderland Conventions of A.A. Boddy. However there were other influences upon the leaders of the embryonic AC which had a more direct relevance to the issue of directive prophecy. I will now turn my attention to these specific proto-Apostolic groups that may have had a more direct impact on AC polity. The important influences upon AC theology that I intend to examine are The Catholic Apostolic Church, Apostolic Faith Church and the two other classical Pentecostal denominations in the UK, namely Elim and AoG.

The Catholic Apostolic Church¹⁶

Edward Irving (1792-1834) and his Catholic Apostolic Church resurrected the concept of modern-day apostles.¹⁷ A native of Annan in south-west Scotland which, incidentally, was the birth place of future AC leader Andrew Turnbull, Irving was most noted for his work in London where he was originally sent as a Church of Scotland minister. While he was there he preached on and encouraged the practice of *glossolalia*. This was considerably earlier than the events involving Parham in Topeka or Seymour at Azusa Street. David Dorries records that:

... Irving taught that tongues were 'the standing sign' and the 'root and stem' out of which flowed all the other gifts of the Spirit. To Irving, tongues were the 'outward

¹⁵ J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: The Church, the Kingdom, and Last Things* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), p.170.

¹⁶ Grayson Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals. Protestant Secessions From the via media, c. 1800–1850* (Oxford: OUP, 2001); Columba Flegg, *Gathered Under Apostles; A Study of the Catholic Apostolic Church* (Oxford: OUP, 1992); Edward Miller, *The History and Doctrines of Irvingism or of the so-called Catholic Apostolic Church (1878)* (London: Forgotten Books, 2015).

¹⁷ Gordon Strachan, *The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1973); A. Dallimore, *The Life of Edward Irving, the Fore-runner of the Charismatic Movement* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1983).

and visible sign of that inward and invisible grace which the baptism of the Holy Ghost conferreth.’¹⁸

Although people continued to speak in tongues for some months in the church, to Irving's disappointment he never experienced tongues. In time the Church of Scotland issued charges against him for allowing women to speak in church and for heretical views concerning the Person of Christ. Irving was dismissed from the Church of Scotland in 1833; however he was encouraged to commence an independent group. This new ‘charismatic’ church would evolve into the Catholic Apostolic Church. Here he not only taught that all the charismata had been restored, but that the apostolic office had been restored for the end times.¹⁹ Irving founded the Catholic Apostolic Church, yet he was never recognized as an apostle, mainly because he never experienced speaking in tongues. He was removed from the leadership of the church and died three years later; the apostles of the church decided that their order was unique and that there would be no successors. This attitude stands in direct contrast to the initial theological position of accepting an on-going apostolic type ministry and could be considered to have compounded the enigma surrounding Edward Irving. When the last apostle died in 1900, no one was chosen to continue the role; as a result the church ceased to function in the form Irving had established. There have been attempts to link the origins of the Apostolic Church (AC) with the Catholic Apostolic Church. James Worsfold attempted to argue that the AC was the progeny of the Catholic Apostolic Church.²⁰ Some within the AC considered Worsfold’s hypothesis in a positive manner. D.P. Williams mentions the possible influence of Irving himself: ‘The writer of this booklet has been confirmed by, and has found many lessons in, the history of his labour that are of great benefit’.²¹

Walter Hollenweger makes reference to Worsfold’s hypothesis by providing a summary followed by an interesting response. According to Hollenweger Worsfold has argued, firstly, that the AC is not a motherless child but that its mother was the ‘famous Catholic Apostolic Church of Edward Irving’; secondly, that the Church of Jesus Christ must recover the

¹⁸ David Dorries, ‘Edward Irving and the ‘Standing Sign,’’ in Gary McGee (ed.), *Initial Evidence: Historical and Biblical Perspective on the Pentecostal Doctrine of Spirit Baptism* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991), pp.37-38.

¹⁹ Gordon Strachan, *The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving*, pp.193–201; also see Larry Christenson, *A Message to the Charismatic Movement* (East Weymouth, Mass.: Dimension, 1972); ‘Pentecostalism’s Forgotten Forerunner,’ in Vinson Synan, *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins* (Plainfield, N.J.: Logos International, 1975), pp.15–37.

²⁰ James Worsfold, *The Catholic and Apostolic Ministry of the Apostle and Prophet* (Paraparaumu: Kataritzo, 1981), pp.42-55.

²¹ D.P. Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church* (Penygroes: Apostolic Publications, 1931), p.96.

ministries of apostles and prophets as set out in the documents of the New Testament, and finally, that the AC and other churches at large can only gain from such a return to apostolic New Testament principles.²² Having summarized Worsfold's theses Hollenweger then gives his response:

I would like very much to convince myself that the AC and its apostles are able to and called to contribute to such a worldwide apostolic ministry. In order to carry some weight, however it would seem to me that certain apostolic ministries and qualities would have to become visible in the AC.²³

He further suggests the following challenges to Worsfold's assertions: Firstly, that Worsfold does not deal with the issues of comparison between the Christology of the AC and Irving.²⁴ Secondly that he does not address the AC position regarding apostles outside of its own denomination. In the early years of development and growth the Apostolic Faith Church (AFC), and subsequently the AC, only recognized apostles within their particular context. However with the emergence of the Charismatic Movement and its recognition of apostles, the question remains as to how the AC relates to these other 'apostles'? It is not clear if Hollenweger was aware of the AC non-acceptance of female ministries; but he does make the point that this would be particularly interesting if these new apostles were female. He asks, 'if there were female apostles in the early Church what is the specific contribution of the AC to the worldwide emergency [*sic*] of female ministry in church and theology?'²⁵ Hollenweger raises questions about the perspective of the AC (with its strong Protestant heritage) on apostolic ministries in the Roman Church. Since the Second Vatican Council the Catholic Church has been reaching out to the wider body. Hollenweger is keen to know how the AC would respond to this position.²⁶ Hollenweger's final issue focusses on how the AC makes its insights available to the wider body of Pentecostal believers. He claims that this is probably the most significant of his questions. He is aware that the AC is not in full fellowship with the other classical Pentecostal denominations in the UK. This has been an issue since the inception of the AC in the early twentieth century and continues to the present day. However

²² Response by W. Hollenweger to Worsfold, a paper given at AC Bible College, Denmark, 1988, National Archives of the AC.

²³ Hollenweger to Worsfold 1988, p.4.

²⁴ Irving was excommunicated from the Church of Scotland when he declared that Christ was capable of sinning because otherwise his temptations in the wilderness were not genuine (Luke 4: 1-14). The opposing argument is based on the fact that because of his deity it was not possible for him to sin. Worsfold had not indicated where the AC stands in the peccability - impeccability debate.

²⁵ Hollenweger to Worsfold 1988, p.4.

²⁶ Considering the explosion of apostolic networks across the globe and including Roman Catholic groups, this is a particularly significant point to be made.

it could be suggested that the differences of opinion and scepticism between the classical Pentecostal groups are less apparent today. In his discussion of the ministries of apostle and prophet Michael Harper commended the AC for being one of the few denominations that openly recognised the role. However he noted that they ‘had had little impact on the Pentecostal movement let alone the body of Christ in particular’.²⁷ I will return to the tensions between the AC and the other British Pentecostals below. I will also return to Walter Hollenweger’s rebuttal of James Worsfold’s hypothesis below as his insights regarding the AC are still relevant in the twenty-first century.

The Apostolic Faith Church

In ch.2 I have shown that William Hutchinson was ‘called’ into the apostolic office by directive prophecy. Initially he was reticent to accept this position but as his doctrine became more heterodox he embraced it and claimed the title of ‘Chief Apostle’, adopting a domineering attitude and becoming more authoritarian. This attitude was a significant factor in the eventual separation of the proto-Apostolic Church from his denomination. Nevertheless the AC retained the position of hierarchical leadership. They did, however, protect themselves from the notion of a single ‘chief apostle’ taking overall control.²⁸ Hierarchical leadership has caused much debate in theological circles. George Kurian partly legitimizes the concept of a hierarchy within the ministry gifts stating that the term ‘prophet’ can be defined as an ‘Order of ministers, next to the apostles, and above evangelists, teachers, and pastors, within a local congregation with the special gift of prophecy (1 Cor. 12:28)’.²⁹

There are however other hypotheses that are equally valid. In 1 Cor. 12 I submit it was Paul’s intention to teach unity in diversity amongst the various ministries in the church. In Eph. 4 Paul was again emphasizing the need for unity in the church and outlined the various ministry gifts that were/are available for the equipping of the church in order for it to fulfill its ministry. In both cases Paul was keen to highlight the gifts that have been provided to bring about unity within the body rather than to define a hierarchical structure.³⁰

²⁷ Michael Harper, *Let My People Grow* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977), p.176.

²⁸ The individual that is appointed as National Leader of the AC (originally nominated as President) is reviewed every four years. The longest that anybody served in this position was Tom Saunders who was president for 12 years from 1969-81. Whenever a new person was introduced to the National Convention the congregation was reminded that the newly appointed person was President of the Council and not president of the church.

²⁹ ‘Prophet’ in George Kurian, *Nelson's New Christian Dictionary* (Nashville Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 2001) (electronic version).

³⁰ Stott, *God's New Society*: p.161.

Apostles in the classical Pentecostal churches in the UK

Keith Warrington states that ‘Pentecostals have a preference for restoring that which they perceive to be apostolic Christianity’.³¹ He explains the difference between the original apostles who were appointed directly by Jesus and other NT apostles. He recognises that there is little substantial evidence on which to base a person’s nomination as an apostle. However he considers that two of the primary factors are their foundational roles and their influence on other believers. He concludes:

Many Pentecostal leaders function analogously to the early apostles in their leadership of churches and denominations. In the best examples of this model, they remain accountable to the churches they lead and whom they ultimately serve.³²

Benjamin Scott has undertaken an analysis of all the classical Pentecostal UK denominations that were formed before 1950.³³ The analysis was based on their understanding of what he calls ‘the charismatic apostolate’.³⁴ Scott concludes that although these denominations share similar DNA they have developed their own understandings of the charismatic apostolate. Elim is committed to the full range of gifts and ministries of the Holy Spirit; their commitment to this is highlighted on their website:

We believe in the ministries that Christ has set in His Church, namely, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and in the present operation of the manifold Gifts of the Holy Spirit.³⁵

Scott confirms that within Elim there has not been serious divergence from their original stance which was set in opposition to the Apostolic Church’s view ‘that apostles were

³¹ Keith Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology* (London: Clark, 2008), p. 138-140; Donald Gee, *The Ministry Gifts of Christ* (London: AoG Publishing House, 1930), p.28, identifies the gifts mentioned in Eph.4:11 as those given to the church by Jesus for its ‘spiritual growth and activity’ and are to be differentiated from the other gifts granted by the Spirit; Petts, *Body Builders*, p.17.

³² Warrington, *Pentecostal Theology*, p.140.

³³ The main Pentecostal churches in Britain before the 1950s were the Apostolic Church, the Assemblies of God, and the Elim Church. They were given the added designation ‘classical’ about 1970 to distinguish them from the ‘Neo’ Pentecostals in the mainline churches and the ‘charismatic’ Pentecostals in the Roman Catholic Church. Allan Anderson observed in 2004 that ‘The fastest growing churches in Britain today are the “new churches”, mostly independent Charismatic churches, sometimes led by former Anglican ministers and forming loose associations. These have probably outstripped the classical Pentecostal churches in influence and extent.’ Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.95.

³⁴ Benjamin G. McNair Scott, *Apostles Today: Making Sense of Contemporary Charismatic Apostolates: A Historical and Theological Appraisal* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014).

³⁵ www.elim.org.uk/Articles/417857/Our_Beliefs.aspx.

integral to the local church and should be titled.³⁶ Scott interviewed the present superintendent of Elim in the UK, John Glass, who explained the current view:

Elim churches would recognize the contemporary role of Apostle as those who plant churches and oversee them. We have five Regional Leaders who each oversee around a hundred churches in the UK and we would recognize an apostolic ministry in them.

Glass continued:

I have planted three churches during my forty years of ministry and have overall responsibility for the 550 churches in our denomination. My role would be seen as apostolic. . . . What we do not do is append titles to individuals as we deem that function is more important than office.³⁷

On another occasion Glass explained that

Even though there is antipathy within Elim to people calling themselves “apostles,” it is well known that there are two individuals that have often been referred to as apostles by Elim generally: George Jeffreys and Percy Brewster. Nevertheless, Elim UK has not officially shifted from the views it inherited from its forefathers.³⁸

Scott also considered the Assemblies of God UK where he concluded that there is general agreement, based upon their statement of faith; that apostles are still being given today.³⁹ He conducted an interview with David Petts,⁴⁰ who stated the position of the AoG:

In practice we have always believed in apostles today, although we have sometimes been hesitant in recognizing them. Nevertheless there has been more talk in recent years of the need for apostolic ministry today and although opinions vary, there is certainly general agreement as to the existence of these important gifts in our churches.⁴¹

Both Elim and AoG make reference to accepting an apostolic type ministry within the Christian community, but they are both reticent on the issue of stating exactly who may be categorized as Apostles. This differs considerably from the AC position which I will evaluate in the next chapter.

³⁶ Benjamin Scott, *Apostles Today*, Kindle Version, location 1134 of 7492.

³⁷ email to Scott from Glass August 21, 2009.

³⁸ email to Scott from Glass August 25, 2009.

³⁹ www.aog.org.uk/about-us/what-we-believe.

⁴⁰ David Petts was Principal of Mathersey Hall, the Assemblies of God Bible College, for 27 years, and for 20 years the Chairman of the Executive Council of AoG.

⁴¹ Petts' email to Scott August 25, 2009.

Apostles in the Charismatic Movement

The contemporary Charismatic Movement traces its origins to Dennis Bennett (1917-1991) who was an Episcopalian minister. In 1959 he announced to his church (St Marks Church, Van Nuys, California) that he had been baptised in the Spirit and was practicing glossolalia. He was put under pressure to desist and so he resigned his position. He took a post in St Luke's Episcopal Church, Seattle. It was a struggling parish when he commenced ministry however within ten years it became the worldwide centre for the emerging Charismatic Movement.⁴² In the UK, Bennett's story was virtually replicated by David Watson (1933-1984).⁴³ Exponents of contemporary apostles and apostleship within the Charismatic Movement in Britain include Bryn Jones (1940-2003)⁴⁴ and Terry Virgo (b.1940).⁴⁵ Although the term 'Charismatic' is a popular term for 'Neo-Pentecostalism', John Stott objects to it, arguing that 'according to the New Testament the whole church is a charismatic community.'⁴⁶

Traditionally, Pentecostalism has generally been interpreted in terms of its most characteristic feature, *glossolalia*; this has been true both inside and outside the movement.⁴⁷ Similarly, the critical literature has tended to denounce Pentecostalism with the epithet, 'the modern tongues movement.'⁴⁸ I am persuaded, however, that although all Classical and neo-Pentecostals may be united by their practice of *glossolalia* and although there may be some theological agreement amongst traditional Pentecostals, the 'newcomers' have brought their own theologies with them. Classical Pentecostals might like to think of the neo-Pentecostals as being 'their representatives in the more established churches' but in fact the sharing of the practice of *glossolalia* has no influence on sharing a common doctrine.

⁴² Larry Christenson, in Burgess and McGee (eds.), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), p.53.

⁴³ Teddy Saunders and Hugh Sansom, *David Watson, A Biography* (Sevenoaks: Hodder, 1992), Edward England (Ed), *A Portrait by his Friends* (Godalming: Highland, 1985), Matthew Porter, *David Watson: Evangelism, Renewal, Reconciliation* (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2003).

⁴⁴ In 1968, Bryn Jones (1940-2003) became pastor of an independent church in Bradford where he covenanted together with other church leaders after receiving a vision to restore the New Testament Church which should include the five ministry gifts. He became senior apostle of the Harvesttime network of churches based in Bradford. The group became most popular for their Dales Conferences. 'Peter Hocken', in Burgess and McGee (eds), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), p.511.

⁴⁵ William Kay states of New Frontiers, the movement started by Virgo had 'by the end of the 1990s ... become the largest Apostolic network in the UK'. William Kay, 'Apostolic Networks in the UK: the dynamics of growth', *Journal of the European Pentecostal Association* (2005) 25: pp.25-38.

⁴⁶ Stott, *God's New Society*: p.161.

⁴⁷ Carl Brumback, *What Meaneth This?* (Nottingham: A.O.G. Publishing, 1949).

⁴⁸ J. Hyles, www.Jesus-is-savior.com.

According to Donald Dayton, the major unifying factor between Classical Pentecostals has been the so-called 'Foursquare Gospel': Jesus is Saviour, Jesus is Healer, Jesus is Baptizer and Jesus is Coming King which is, Dayton suggests:

grounded in a distinct hermeneutic, a distinctively Pentecostal manner of appropriating the Scriptures. In contrast to magisterial Protestantism, which tends to read the New Testament through Pauline eyes; Pentecostalism reads the rest of the New Testament through Lukan eyes, especially with the lenses provided by the Book of Acts.⁴⁹

In this assertion he is in agreement with Walter Hollenweger who comments: 'The Pentecostals and their predecessors based their views almost exclusively on the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles.'⁵⁰ As difficult as it is to define a core theology for Classical Pentecostalism, it is far more difficult to define the theology for the 'newcomers'. This is because of the disparate core doctrines that the various groups hold to. For example, in June 2011 the Rev. Champion, a charismatic Anglican was asked in a personal interview how he related Anglican theology and ecclesiology to his understanding of charismatic praxis. He reported:

It's a really important/interesting/difficult question! From the teaching I've received on through New Wine (a Church of England based renewal movement), I believe that at baptism God answers the minister's prayer for the Holy Spirit to indwell (even when Christening infants) and again at confirmation sometime later when a bishop lays his hand on the candidate's head. When sometime later a baptized/confirmed person finds themselves speaking in tongues or singing in the Spirit, this is not a second 'baptism in the spirit' but rather the release of the Holy Spirit who was already indwelling the person. In my case the speaking and praying in tongues was sporadic until I asked a friend to pray for me and from that time onwards the gift of tongues could be exercised as often or as little as I chose.⁵¹

South African David du Plessis (1905-87) is the one person from a Classical Pentecostal background who largely responsible for reaching out to the other denominations with the Pentecostal experience. He was ordained into the ministry at twenty five and became General Secretary of his denomination (which denomination)in 1936. In the same year the unconventional British evangelist Smith Wigglesworth (dates) was working in South Africa and du Plessis was acting as his interpreter. Kay reports:

⁴⁹ Donal W. Dayton, *The Theological Root of Pentecostalism* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Pub., 1987), p.23.

⁵⁰ Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (London: S.C.M. Press, 1972), p.335.

⁵¹ Personal interview with Rev. Champion.

One morning Wigglesworth arrived in du Plessis's office, pinned him against a wall and prophesied to him. The exact words of the prophecy are a matter of debate, particularly as du Plessis did not speak about the matter until 1951, but their general import is clear enough. Wigglesworth said 'Young man, you have been in Jerusalem long enough. The Lord says you have to go to the utmost parts of the Earth.'⁵²

In an expanded version, du Plessis later reported that the prophecy continued:

through the old time denominations will come a revival that will eclipse anything we have known throughout history . . . it will eclipse the present day, 20th century Pentecostal revival that is already a marvel to the world . . . the same blessing will become acceptable to the churches.⁵³

Starting by working in a high profile position, within the various classic Pentecostal groups throughout the world, Du Plessis went on to influence the spread of the charismatic message to a wide audience. Culminating in the teaching reaching into the Roman Catholic Church; he was received by Pope John XXIII and was an observer at Vatican II.⁵⁴ Could do with a book ref to Vatican II in a fnt just to show familiarity. And possibly a brief intro of what it was.

Of particular significance to this dissertation is the fact that Kay has highlighted that du Plessis received directive prophecy from Smith Wigglesworth. However stated earlier that the original leaders of the proto-Apostolics had met at a convention in Bradford established by several people who had left Wigglesworth's Bowland Street Mission; reportedly because he disagreed with directive prophecy. Does this suggest a change in Wigglesworth's views or a misrepresentation of the split?

Despite Stott's ambivalence, Benjamin Scott reports that in the last couple of decades, within Charismatic circles there has been a significant interest in the subject of apostles. Scott relates there are a significant number of Christian ministers who are claiming to embody or have this gift.⁵⁵ Nigel Wright's prediction in 1986 that 'within a few years, references to apostolic ministries within the church will seem as acceptable and as natural as references to

⁵² William K. Kay, *Apostolic Networks in Britain* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2007), p.6.

⁵³ David Du Plessis, *A Man Called Mr Pentecost* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1977), p.19.

⁵⁴ The introductory comments circulated in preparation for Vatican II stated:

This sacred Council has several aims in view: it desires to . . . foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ; to strengthen whatever can help to call the whole of mankind into the household of the Church. The Council therefore sees particularly cogent reasons for undertaking the reform and promotion of the liturgy. *Vatican II Documents* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011).

⁵⁵ Benjamin Scott, *Apostles Today*, Kindle Version, location 243 of 7492.

elders' has been fulfilled in large parts of the church.⁵⁶ Scott considers that it is unsurprising that there is increased attention given to apostles in the different sectors of the church in Britain. As in America, Evangelicals and Charismatics are often more in tune with the latest trends and opinions than their own denominational view.⁵⁷ He further suggests that this is partly due to the popularity of interdenominational Charismatic or Evangelical conferences and partly due to the courses, books and online material that are generally available. The various groups that are developing apostolic-type leadership are comfortable to remain within their own denominations and have disparate ecclesiologies, and the term 'apostolic networks' has been coined to accommodate their study.⁵⁸ William Kay has studied the development of apostolic networks over the recent past and concludes that the overall picture is one of growth:

Apostolic networks grew out of the Charismatic Movement, though they also occasionally drew upon Pentecostals . . . and the networks began as churches that met within homes . . . before moving to schools and hired halls before eventually buying their own buildings. So they moved from being 'house churches' to being 'new churches' and eventually as they became configured under apostolic ministry, they became 'apostolic networks.'⁵⁹

Scott made another point that finds resonance with my own studies. He quotes Lynette Mullings who had determined that:

Statistics from the last Church Census in England show that the growth in Black Pentecostal Churches partly accounts for the slow rate of decline in churchgoing. Black people now account for 10% of all churchgoers in England and in inner London alone, 44% of churchgoers are now black.⁶⁰

Scott recalls that he enquired of William Kay as to why he did not include this group in his own research. Kay replied that he did not, due to the lack of statistical data available.⁶¹ Interestingly, when I approached the many black AC ministers and congregations, I too was unable to obtain information.

Having considered the ministry gift of the apostle, I will now turn my attention to the role of prophets and prophecy.

⁵⁶ Nigel Wright, *Radical Kingdom* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1986), p.76.

⁵⁷ Scott, *Apostles Today*, Kindle Version, location 1019 of 7492.

⁵⁸ William K. Kay, *Apostolic Networks in Britain: new ways of being church* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007).

⁵⁹ Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, pp.19-20.

⁶⁰ Scott, *Apostles Today*, Kindle Version, location 1376 of 7492.

⁶¹ Scott, *Apostles Today*, Kindle Version, location 1376 of 7492.

What is a prophet?

There are many examples, both in the biblical text and in other traditions of inspired utterances. Abraham Heschel states:

The prophet is a person, not a microphone. He is endowed with a mission, with the power of a word not his own that accounts for his greatness but also with temperament, concern, character, and individuality. As there was no resisting the impact of divine inspiration, so at times there was no resisting the vortex of his own temperament. The word of God reverberated in the voice of man.⁶²

Heschel here recognises the dependence of the prophet upon the divine inspiration which is essential in the understanding of the operation of the OT prophets who were bringing direct revelation to God's people. The debate remains as to the role, purpose and necessity of prophets in the contemporary church. According to Von Rad, the history of the study of the biblical prophets began in the nineteenth century. From that time prophecy emerged as an independent religious experience. This, he suggests, was because fresh emphasis was being placed on areas of the biblical text which previously had not received much attention.⁶³ Whilst focus on the theological significance of prophecy may well have developed from the nineteenth century onwards, prophetic utterances can be traced over a much longer period of time.⁶⁴ In the ancient Mediterranean world, there is evidence of people consulting with oracles from various religions on differing life issues.⁶⁵ For example the first Israelite priests consulted the Urim and Thummim (Exod. 28:30, Lev. 8:8) for divination purposes.

Prophecy in the Old Testament

There is evidence of prophetic activity early in the Old Testament. One such example was when Moses was sent to speak to Pharaoh prior to the release of the Hebrew slaves from Egypt. Moses believed he was not eloquent enough for the occasion; the response of God is recorded in Ex.7:1: 'Then the LORD said to Moses, 'See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet.' Aaron was to speak on behalf of Moses. From this occasion the principle that a prophet is one who speaks on behalf of another has emerged.

⁶² Abraham Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p.9.

⁶³ Gerhard Von Rad, *The Message of the Prophets*, first ed.1967 (London: SCM Press, 2012), p.2.

⁶⁴ Niels Hvidt for instance gives a non-exhaustive list of prophetic practitioners throughout history, giving over a complete chapter to the subject; Niels Christian Hvidt, *Christian Prophecy: The Post-Biblical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.13-33.

⁶⁵ David Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), p.4.

Until the late tenth and early ninth centuries BCE, early Hebrew thought was based solely on the God of Sinai. Their relationship to God had always centred on following his presence through the Sinai desert. During this time, the Israelite concept of a prophet was ‘one like Moses’ who would lead and direct the nation through communion and communication with Yahweh (Numbers 18:5). This concept is highlighted in Numbers 11, where Moses imparts the prophetic spirit to seventy elders in order to share the burden of leading the nation with them. During the eighth and ninth centuries a new prophetic group emerges in Israel. Von Rad labeled this group the ‘primitive prophets’ or ‘former prophets’, not in any derogatory sense but rather to note their place in history.⁶⁶ The low spiritual state of the nation is evident from the description in 1 Samuel 3 where Eli is depicted as old and tired, virtually blind, and the light in the Tabernacle is diminishing. This description of Eli’s poor physical condition mirrors Israel’s poor spiritual condition especially as Eli’s sons, who were expected to follow him into the priestly ministry, had a reputation for corruption. Von Rad notes that:

devotion to Yahweh was being undermined, almost to the point of disintegration. It was the activity of the prophets that caused it to re-emerge, completely reinvigorated and in a new form.⁶⁷

This period in the history of Israel required a clearer understanding of Yahweh’s word and this would be made available through the emerging prophetic order. Von Rad continues:

Yahwism was being increasingly undermined, and indeed was not far short of disintegration. It was able once again to re-emerge, with almost volcanic force, in a completely new form in the message of the prophets.⁶⁸

Samuel is the first of a new generation of prophets.⁶⁹ This emerging new generation of prophets would develop into a cohesive force, with their own training schools and infrastructure.⁷⁰ This group became moral innovators, speaking with conviction to the people about the covenant established by Yahweh; declaring to the people Yahweh’s standard for morals.⁷¹ According to Lindblom, it is not possible to consider the primitive prophets as a homogenous group because of the diversity amongst them.⁷² A typical feature of the early

⁶⁶ Von Rad, *The Message*, p.13.

⁶⁷ Von Rad, *The Message*, p.1.

⁶⁸ Von Rad, *The Message*, p.1.

⁶⁹ 1 Samuel 9:9 explains that he was called a ‘seer’ before he was known as a prophet.

⁷⁰ cf. 1 Sam. 10:5-6, 19: 19-24; 1 Kgs 18:4-13; 2 Kgs 6:1-4; Ez. 5:2.

⁷¹ In the Priestly tradition of the Old Testament there is the Noahaic covenant (Gen. 9: 8-17) but it is in the dominant Mosaic covenant that we find the source of most prophetic reference (cf. Amos 3:1; Hosea 2:15; Jer. 31:3).

⁷² Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1963), p.82.

prophetic movement was the life they shared in the prophetic school or 'coenobia'. Their main focus was engaging in ecstatic exercises and delivering oracles in a state of inspired exaltation. They lived on the financial or material gifts which they received in return for the oracles they gave to individuals. Others were attached to the royal court and were maintained as part of the royal household. Still other prophets were part of the cultic staff at the sanctuaries, and were maintained by them, like the sacrificial priests and other cultic functionaries.⁷³ Not all prophets belonged to associations. There were also prophets who lived a life of their own. They had their own houses, and lived in the midst of their families. Samuel sometimes lived with other prophets, and on other occasions he operated alone. He is also represented as a priest, suggesting that, in some situations, there was no definite dividing-line between priests and prophets.

The Israelites had evolved an understanding that, as Yahweh's people, they were elected or chosen, but over a period of time they had modified their understanding of the terms of the covenant established at Sinai. Covenants, of which the covenant established between Yahweh and Israel is an example, were based upon the principle that a greater power offered benefits to a lesser power, provided that the lesser power abided by its terms. The prophets understood that responsibility rested with the nation to adhere to the conditions of the covenant in order for them to receive the divine benefits. The decline within Israel, as a nation, had meant they had drifted away from the covenant expectations. This is highlighted in the situation between Nathan and king David where the prophet challenges David leading him to convict himself of his own wrongdoing (2 Samuel 12). Further Ahab is sternly rebuked by Elijah, for bringing about the death of Naboth, in order to take over his vineyard (1 Kings 21). Both of these are examples of conduct which was not in accordance with the covenant established at Sinai and illustrates how the prophet acted on behalf of Yahweh to bring his word to the king and subsequently to his people.

Primitive prophets and ecstasy

Ecstasy amongst the primitive biblical prophets is evidenced clearly in 1 Samuel 10. The chapter commences with the anointing of Saul as king of Israel, and the latter portion of the chapter relates the subsequent prophetic experience of Saul. The role of Samuel as the oracle of Yahweh is seen as he prophetically reveals to Saul the nature of the encounters that will

⁷³ Lindblom considers that one might expect prophets to be 'living in places well known as ancient cult centers', *Prophecy*, p.79.

follow. Reference is made to the use of music in assisting the prophetic gift. This provides the first link between worship and the prophetic. According to some scholars, the worship actually 'induced' the ecstasy, and Lindblom goes as far as to say that 'music seems to have been the most prominent means of evoking ecstasy among the early Old Testament Prophets'.

The comments of C.G. Williams provide an appropriate conclusion to this section. He writes:

Even so, the question of the authorizing of the prophet as speaker remains... in stressing the importance of the call in this connection. This is not to argue for a uniformity of pattern or to ignore the rich variety of prophets and the diversity of prophecy which embraces for instance the valuable contribution of anonymous cultic prophets as well as that of canonical prophets. But where even a little information is provided concerning the life of an individual prophet, and at best it is meagre, the call-experience seems to be of key significance.⁷⁴

The primitive prophets and the messenger formula

When the historical narrators wrote down the oracles of the primitive prophets they frequently introduced them with the formula 'thus says Yahweh' (1 Kings 20:13 etc.).

The expression 'Word of the Lord' (or similar) appears in the OT 219 times. Gen. 1 refers to the 'Word of God' in the initiation of creation. In the Pentateuch 'the Word of the Lord' came to the patriarchs bringing instructions, counsel and guidance (e.g. Gen. 15:1-4; Num.3:16, 51). It was also synonymous with Samuel's calling in 1 Sam.3:1, 7. OT prophecy is often referred to as 'the Word of the Lord' or as the 'Word of God' (e.g. Genesis 15:4, 2 Kings 7:1, Is. 37:21-35). OT messages conveyed by 'the Word of the Lord' included words spoken with authority, words for telling the future, words exposing adultery and words of command. 'God's Word' can also be a general term for the law (cf. Ps 119:105).

The NIV uses the expression (or similar) in the NT 10 times; John refers to Christ as the 'Word made flesh' (John 1:1-5). However in the OT the majority of the instances relate to prophetic utterances, whereas in the NT the phrase is almost exclusively used in the context of preaching the gospel. Peter uses the phrase in 1 Pet. 1:25 but in this case it is a direct reference to Is. 40:6. The phrase is also used as a generic term for conscience (Matt. 15:6).

Lindblom writes:

⁷⁴ C.G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit: a study of Pentecostal glossolalia and related phenomena* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1981), p.2.

It may be that such phrases are employed in imitation of the usage of the later prophets. But at any rate they correspond well to the general conception of divine inspiration in the older traditions.⁷⁵

Although each of the classical prophets had their own preferred form or variation of words, Von Rad has determined a particular pattern that validates the prophetic oracle uttered by all of the classical prophets. He states:

As a rule... the prophets prefaced this messenger formula with another form of words whose purpose was to draw the recipient's attention to the message and which, indeed, gave the first precise designation of those for whom it was intended. In the case of a divine threat, what was prefixed was a 'diatribe', in the case of a promise, an 'exhortation'. These two, the messenger formula and the prefaced clause, must both be present before we have the literary category 'prophetic oracle'.⁷⁶

Claus Westermann conducted a form critical survey of the ancient prophets including the canonical prophets.⁷⁷ Within his survey he considered the comments of earlier scholars who had made major contributions to the subject and had undertaken extensive research. He came to the same conclusion as Cyril Williams.⁷⁸

It is not possible to distinguish between the true words of Yahweh and the prophet's words simply on the basis of introduction by the messenger formula. The same principle applies to the messenger formula of the concluding phraseology of the prophecy.⁷⁹

In the next chapter I will return to this important issue of the message formula and discuss how the prophets of the AC have replicated Old Testament prophetic introductions. The use of phrases such as 'thus saith the Lord' are employed to add gravitas to their utterances. I will also discuss how those within the AC continue to refer to prophecy as the 'Word of the Lord' despite the discouragement to do so from D.P. Williams.

The canonical or writing prophets⁸⁰

Von Rad suggests that at the time of the canonical prophets, both the taxation and civil service systems had brought about a disintegration of the old social order within the tribes of

⁷⁵ Lindblom, *Prophecy*, p.15.

⁷⁶ Von Rad, *The Message*, p.31.

⁷⁷ Claus Westermann, *Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech*. Trans. H.C. White (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House 1967), p.103.

⁷⁸ Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit*, p.8.

⁷⁹ Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit*, p. 2.

⁸⁰ The canonical prophets can be divided into the Major Prophets and the Minor Prophets. The Major Prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel and are considered to be 'major' because their writings are contained in a single scroll each. The writings of the Minor Prophets are all contained on a single scroll.

Israel. One of the most significant changes was that the economy of the twelve tribes was now focused on towns rather than the rural areas. The great landowners, who already lived in the towns, gained control over the country people. The result was severe social injustice c.f. Micah 2:1.⁸¹ The political and social situation in Israel during this period was in a state of flux. The social changes eventually weakened the country's ability to defend its borders eventually leading to the judgment of exile in Assyria and then Babylon. The prophets adopted a variety of ways to appeal to their hearers, and all followed the same principle of not sparing individuals or groups. This is especially true of the administrators of justice. The prophets spoke out against the basic personal and social ethics that were accepted at that time. According to Preston, enough of the prophets' message was heard by people to preserve faith in Yahweh during the time of exile in 586 BCE. That faith was brought back from exile by those that returned and became the basis for the future national identity.⁸²

In summary, the OT initially portrays prophets as those speaking on behalf of another; they are then identified as those that became mouthpieces of Yahweh. Sometimes they verbalized the word of God; sometimes they wrote it down; and on some occasions they enacted their prophecies. They spoke out against injustice and reminded their hearers of the moral law. They spoke not only to Israelites, but also to other groups and nations surrounding Israel. Some operated within their own 'schools' and others operated within the royal courts. The message of the canonical prophets was often one of calling people back to obedience, reminding them of the original covenant given by Yahweh. The prophetic word inspired confidence in a future universal renewal when divine promises would be fulfilled. In both instances the prophetic message was focused on the community rather than individuals and its content was proved to be part of God's unfolding plan.

Do Old Testament prophets have relevance to the contemporary church?

This issue raises some very complex theological and hermeneutical issues which cannot be fully explored here, but a brief comment is required. As Gene Tucker writes; 'If we cannot read the prophets, at least now and then, as if they were speaking directly to us, then we might as well give up on the rest of the Old Testament.'⁸³ Or as Thomas Aquinas states:

⁸¹ Von Rad, *The Message*, pp.10-11.

⁸² Ronald H. Preston, 'The Problems of Prophecy', *Church and Society in the Late Twentieth Century: The Economic and Political Task* (London: SCM Press, 1983), pp.93-114 [94].

⁸³ Gene Tucker in D. Peterson *Prophecy in Israel: Search for an Identity* (London: SPCK, 1987), p.157.

The ancient prophets were sent to establish the faith and to amend morals.... Today the faith is already established, since the promises have been fulfilled in Christ. But prophecy that aims at amendment of morals has not ceased, nor will it ever cease.⁸⁴

According to Tucker and Aquinas, prophets are still needed in order to judge the church for its silence in the face of injustice and oppression.⁸⁵ I would propose that in its widest sense, the contemporary church is called to be prophetic in the same way as the Old Testament prophets. The Church must continue to speak out against injustice and wrongdoing and call people to obedience to the revealed word of God. The church's prophetic message must inspire confidence in a future universal renewal when the divine eschatological promises will be fulfilled. Again, in both instances, directive prophecy must be communally focused, rather than narrowly individualistic, and its contents proved to be part of God's unfolding plan.

Jesus the Prophet

The word *Messiah* מָשִׁיחַ, *mashiyach* translates as 'anointed' or 'an anointed one'.⁸⁶ In the OT a Deliverer is promised under the title of Messiah, or Anointed, (Psalms 2:2; Daniel 9:25, 26) and the nature of his anointing is described as being with the Holy Spirit. (Isaiah 61:1). When Jesus read the Scriptures in the synagogue in Nazareth, he read this passage, concluding with the comment that 'today this prophecy has been fulfilled in front of you' (Luke 4: 18).⁸⁷ The word 'Messiah' is the word used by Andrew when he was explaining to his brother, Simon, who he had just met (John 1:41).⁸⁸ The word is rendered into Greek as Χριστός (*Christos*), cognate to the verb χρίω (*chriō*, 'to anoint'). The appellations of Jesus as the 'Messiah' and the 'Christ' are therefore synonymous. In contemporary Bible translations, the former is sometimes used when the term is functioning as a title (the Messiah) and the latter when the term is functioning as a name (i.e. Jesus Christ).⁸⁹ It is worthy of note that in the Matthew 16 discourse, after Jesus had firstly asked who people generally thought that he was, he then asked the disciples who they thought that he was, and Simon referred to him as the Christ (Matt. 16:16). In this form the word appears 541 times in the New Testament.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II q. 174, a.6, ad3, cited from Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, available from <http://eresources.library.nd.edu/databases/aquinas>.

⁸⁵ The words of Amos (5:15): 'Hate evil and love good and establish justice in the gate.' (cf. Micah 6:8) are still relevant today.

⁸⁶ *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: Nelson, 1985).

⁸⁷ Commenting on this passage, Leon Morris states that 'Jesus application of the words to himself shows that the sense of vocation that came with the heavenly voice at his baptism remained strong'; Leon Morris, *Luke Tyndale Commentary Series* (Leicester: IVP, 1974), p.116.

⁸⁸ Bruce Milne, *The Message of John, Here is Your King The Bible Speaks Today* (Leicester: IVP, 1993).

⁸⁹ *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*.

⁹⁰ David Wallace in Elwell, *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 710-711.

The Synoptic Gospels make early use of the epithet 'Jesus Christ', and John introduces it by Chapter 2. Paul uses it copiously and often begins his epistles by linking his apostleship to 'Jesus Christ'.⁹¹ The other epistle writers also use the term, as does the writer of the Revelation.⁹²

In the Old Testament, prophets, priests and kings were physically anointed.⁹³ It then follows that Jesus, the promised deliverer, who was a prophet, a priest and the king, was anointed by the Holy Spirit for these various ministries.⁹⁴ It is his ministry as a prophet that requires attention within the context of this study. It is of interest to note that many catechisms refer directly to Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King.⁹⁵

There is an inextricable link between Jesus the Word (*logos*) and his prophetic ministry. Bruce Milne explains that this word had a wide usage in the first-century world, touching a range of cultural and philosophical contexts.

In using it John would have made chords resonate in the minds of a wide variety of his readers. Scholars have found it a particularly fruitful theme for investigation to establish possible sources for the *logos* concept, and to decide which one was especially determinative for this gospel.⁹⁶

⁹¹ Cf. Romans 1:1, 1 Cor. 1:1, 2 Cor. 1:2 etc.

⁹² Cf. Jude 4, 17, 21, 25; Rev 1:1, 2, 11:15 etc.

⁹³ Prophets were occasionally anointed to their office, (1 Kings 19:16) and were called messiahs, or anointed. (1 Chronicles 16:22; Psalms 105:15). Priests, at the first institution of the Levitical priesthood, were all anointed to their offices, (Exodus 40:15; Numbers 3:3) but afterwards anointing seems to have been reserved for the high priest (Exodus 29:29; Leviticus 16:32). Anointing was the principal and divinely-appointed ceremony in the inauguration of the Jewish Kings (1 Samuel 9:16; 10:1; 1 Kings 1:34,39).

⁹⁴ Hebrews chapters 7-9 outline his priestly ministry. His kingly ministry is highlighted in that he was a descendant of David, being born in David's town of Bethlehem. He was acknowledged as king in Jn. 1:49 by Nathanael. See also Mt. 2:1-2 by the Magi; Jn. 6:15 by the crowds; Acts 17:7 by Jason of Thessalonica. His kingship is an issue at his trial (Lk. 23:2-3, Mt. 27:11, Mk. 15:2, Jn. 18:33. Pilate's first words to Jesus Christ are the same in all the Gospels). Pilate appeals to the crowd to accept Jesus Christ as their king Mk 15:9. He will rule over the nations Rev. 1:5 See also Ps. 2:7-9; Dan. 7:13-14; Mt 19:28; Mt. 25:31-32; Ro. 15:12; 1 Cor. 15:25; Php. 2:9-10; Rev. 12:5; Rev. 17:14; Rev. 19:11-16.

⁹⁵ It is not the intention of this dissertation to look at the subject of Jesus as priest and as king in any great detail but because the subjects fit naturally into the picture of Jesus as Prophet they need to be at least commented on. Several denominations hold these elements of Christology very highly and a non-comprehensive list includes the following. The Heidelberg Catechism of the Christian Reformed Church interprets the title 'Christ' in terms of the threefold office, in *Lord's Day 12, Question and Answer 31* (www.heidelberg-catechism.org). The Westminster Shorter Catechism (of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church) explains the role of Christ as redeemer in terms of the threefold office in Q.23 (www.opc.org/confessions). The Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church states: 'Jesus fulfilled the messianic hope of Israel in his threefold office of priest, prophet, and king', *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), p.436. The Lutheran Church can also be included in this list.

⁹⁶ Milne, *The Message of John*, p.30.

The primary point of reference is almost certainly the OT and Jewish religion; God ‘spoke ‘creation into being’ (Gen.1: 3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24, 26; Ps. 33:6). Milne goes on to explain that:

The Word of God’ also served as a common replacement for the divine name when the Greek Old Testament was read in the synagogue, and the speaker required an alternative to express the unmentionable Name of the Lord. Generally in the Old Testament ‘Word of God’, *logos*, refers to an action rather than an idea.⁹⁷

Milne further explains that:

While primarily rooted in this Hebrew background, *logos* would also speak to John’s Greek readership. *Logos* had a long history in Greek philosophy going back at least to Heraclitus (around 500 BCE), for whom *logos* was the shaping, ordering and directing principle in the universe. In the first century, Philo, the renowned Jewish teacher in North Africa, who had imbibed much of the Greek philosophical outlook, referred regularly to the *logos* under a wide variety of images, many of which personalized the action of the *logos* (cf. ‘the *Logos* is the captain and pilot of the universe’; ‘the Father’s elder son’; and the like). While some points of contact with Greek usage can be established, John’s understanding departs from it at one crucial point. For Greek thought in general the *logos*, as a participant in the divine order, was by that very fact distinct from the material and historical world. By contrast, for John, the Word is revealed precisely in its ‘becoming flesh’.⁹⁸

As the Word of God Jesus had the authority to be prophetic and was the voice of God speaking from the earliest prophets through to today. There are several examples of the followers of Jesus recognising him as a prophet. For example, after raising the widow’s son at Nain in Lk. 7:16 the witnesses say, ‘A great prophet has arisen among us!’ In Lk. 24:19, Jesus is called a prophet by the people who do not recognize him when they say that he “.....was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people”.

It is further worth commenting on Matthew 26:68 where Jesus is on trial before the Sanhedrin. Some of those that attended the ‘mock’ trial slapped him in the face and said ‘Prophesy to us Messiah (anointed prophet). Who struck you?’ In their derision they were actually acknowledging his status.

The ministry of Jesus is prophetic, but his core message is different from that of the OT prophets. His emphasis is on God’s immediate graciousness; the new age is about to break into the old and its powers are already at work in him.⁹⁹ That message demands a decision from its hearers but its intention is gracious. For those that accept the challenge there lies

⁹⁷ Milne, *The Message of John*, p.30.

⁹⁸ Milne, *The Message of John*, p.31.

⁹⁹ Matthew includes the five great discourses of Jesus (chapters 5-7, 10:5-11:1, 13:1-13:54, 18:1-19:1, 23-25).

ahead the new age with the kingdom of God, which, in one sense, is within them, but, in another, is something to look forward to. This notion does not fit in with preconceived ideas of many of the parties in Judaism at the time. In particular, Jesus deals with the wrongdoing of the people: not by the threat of imminent punishment followed by a distant restoration, but by endeavouring to awaken by his words and actions, insights into God's present graciousness, and by bearing the consequences of the wrongdoing himself. It is the fulfilment of prophecy which negates a good deal of its wrath, just as Jesus fulfils but also negates other aspects of the Old Covenant.

Prophecy in the New Testament

The period between Malachi and Matthew is normally referred to as the 400 years of silence.¹⁰⁰ However, there must have been certain prophets at the time of Christ, because he warned his listeners to beware of false prophets (Matt 7:15); to be hospitable to prophets (Matt 10:41); and rules that John the Baptist was the last of the influential OT prophets (Matt 11:13).¹⁰¹ Ben Witherington discusses the probability of various prophetic groups that operated in and around Israel and the rest of the Empire. He concludes that the presence of Jewish prophets solely within Israel cannot be verified and that evidence for them being more widespread is clear.¹⁰²

The term *prophētēs*¹⁰³ occurs 144 times in the New Testament; of which 86 refer to OT prophets. The word is used of John the Baptist 10 times, of Jesus 9 times, and is used 19 times of early Christian figures. I will return to this later. John 7:39 records Jesus speaking

¹⁰⁰ David Aune suggests that a number of texts from later portions of the OT, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Josephus, and rabbinic literature are frequently cited in support of the contention that prophecy was held in low esteem during the earlier part of the Second Temple period and later vanished altogether. He contends that other documents suggest that prophecy was being heard in various locations at that time and so the notion of there being no prophecy at all is spurious. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* p.103.

¹⁰¹ It should be noted, however, that the Baptist was not simply a prophet of wrath. The note of judgment and wrath is altogether missing from his message. In Matthew John preaches the same Gospel as Jesus: 'Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand' (3:2; 4:17) which can otherwise be expressed as 'the gospel of the Kingdom' (4:23; 9:35) and the promise of the remission of sins cannot be described as anything other than good news (Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3; 1:77) although destruction is certainly threatened (Matt. 3:10; Lk. 3:9). Dunn notes that 'Those who produce fruit that befits or prove their repentance . . . (Matt. 3:8; Lk. 3:8) - presumably exemplified by submission to John's baptism (Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3) - will escape the coming wrath. Again, the picture of winnowing has its 'gospel' side [with] the gathering of the wheat into the granary, as well as the burning up of the chaff'. Dunne concludes that 'there is more room in John's preaching for a gracious Spirit than one would think at first glance', James Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, p.9.

¹⁰² Witherington, *Jesus the Seer* p. 295.

¹⁰³ David Aune suggests that in early Judaism the term was rarely applied to those who were not OT prophets or eschatological prophets. In early Christianity this reluctance to apply the designation to contemporary figures was completely overcome, and the term was freely applied to those who were regarded as inspired spokesmen of God. *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World*, p.197.

to his listeners about the Spirit 'that they have not yet received'. Later, in John 20:22, he breathes on his disciples instructing them to 'receive the Holy Spirit'. On the Day of Pentecost the assembled company are 'filled with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2:4). Peter links the experience with Joel's prophecy (2:28-32), which promises that '. . . afterwards, I will pour out my Spirit on all people...and your sons and your daughters will prophesy'. Pentecostals link this outpouring with the *charismata* which, according to 1 Cor. 12:10 includes the gift of prophecy.

Prophetic activity is evident within the early church. Paul writes of the importance of prophecy in 1 Cor. 14:1; 'Make love your aim, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.' There follows a comparison of prophecy and *glossolalia*. Paul explains that, although he is an ardent supporter of speaking in tongues, he would much prefer prophetic utterances be used in the corporate church gathering. There are several references to the gift of prophecy at work throughout the Christian community (e.g. 1 Thess.5:19-22; 1 Cor.12:4-7, 27-31,14; Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 4:11-16). Examples of recognised prophets include Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene and Manaen (Acts 13:1); Silas (Acts 15:32), and John (Rev. 1:1). Paul further links the twin ministries of apostle and prophet on several occasions (1 Cor 12:28, Eph 2:20, 3:5, 4:11). Peter refers to them together (2 Pet. 3:2), and in Revelation John refers to prophets throughout. He refers to 'thy servants the prophets' and 'saints'(11:18); 'the blood of the saints and prophets' (16:6); 'saints, apostles, and prophets' (18:20); 'the blood of prophets and of saints' (18:24); 'the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets' (22:6), and 'your brethren the prophets' (22:9). These references indicate that the prophets were an identifiable group. They are distinguishable from saints and the setting of Christian worship, and they appear to have constituted a 'school' or 'order' within the churches of western Asia Minor.

Acts 11:27-30 records that a prophet, Agabus, comes from Jerusalem to Antioch and prophesies that there will be a great famine. This is accepted as having occurred during the rule of the Emperor Claudius.¹⁰⁴ Another of the prophecies given by Agabus is recorded in Acts 21:10-12. On this occasion Agabus makes a symbolic gesture, prophesying the fate of Paul when he arrives in Jerusalem. Although the detail of the prophecy is not exactly fulfilled, it is adequately accurate to give Paul a general insight into the probable results of his actions. On this occasion he is visiting the home of Philip who, it is recorded, has four

¹⁰⁴ Claudius was Emperor between 41- 54 A.D.

daughters who prophesy. This may be the first indication that there exists within the church a difference between the activity of a peripatetic prophet, a local prophet and a ‘school’ of prophets. So is there a difference between the type of prophecy that Philip’s daughters gave and the type of prophecy that Agabus gave? Kay does not enter the debate.¹⁰⁵ Rodman Williams supports the difference between the gift of prophecy and the gift of a prophet when he states: ‘Further, the gift of prophecy is not to be identified with the ministry of a prophet. All prophets, by definition, prophesy, but not all who prophesy are prophets.’¹⁰⁶

When Paul talks about the gift of prophecy in 1 Cor. 12:10 he uses the noun *charismata* but when he talks about the ministry gifts in Eph. 4:11 he uses the noun *domata*. He explains that the former is a gift of the Spirit and the latter is a gift from the Ascended Lord. Is there any significant difference between the two?

The *charism* of prophecy

In the NT epistles a *χαρισμα* (*charism*) in general denotes any good gift that flows from God’s love to humanity. It is more commonly used in its plural form *χαρισματα* (*charismata*). The word can also mean any of the spiritual graces and qualifications granted to every Christian to perform his or her task in the church.¹⁰⁷ In the narrowest sense, it is a theological term for the extraordinary graces given to individual Christians for the good of others. The term is used specifically to identify spiritual gifts; often termed ‘charismatic gifts’. These are traditionally held by Pentecostals to include the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith and the gifts of healings as recorded in 1 Cor. 12: 8-10. However it is essential to state that this list is not exhaustive; which is a criticism that could be levelled at the Pentecostal denominations which often overlook the other NT references to gifts such as Rm.12:6-18. Pentecostals subdivide Paul’s list into two major sections; firstly those gifts to develop spiritual maturity; and secondly the ‘speech gifts’. One of the voice gifts is the gift of prophecy which for Paul in 1 Cor. 14:1-3 has as its main purposes edification, exhortation and comfort. This I submit is sufficient reason for this gift to be desired by all true disciples.

The *doma* of the Prophet

In Eph. 4:11-13 Paul lists a number of ministry gifts that have been given to the church to prepare God’s people for service and to help in the pursuit of spiritual maturity. Further in

¹⁰⁵ William Kay, *Prophecy* (Mattersey: Mattersey Hall, 1991), p.32.

¹⁰⁶ Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: The Church, the Kingdom and the Last Things* p.128.

¹⁰⁷ Elwell (ed), *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*.

v.8 he explains that the ascended Christ has given gifts to the church for this purpose. However a different Greek word for gift is used from that in the 1 Cor. 12 discourse.¹⁰⁸ On this occasion the word *δόμα* (*dōma*), plural- *δόματα* is used. The *χαρίσματα* of 1 Cor. 12 are gifts from the Holy Spirit and the *δόματα* are gifts from the Ascended Christ. The theological argument regarding the use of the two different words as the primary basis for differentiating between the two types of prophecy is not totally persuasive. However as the AC grade prophetic utterances, for them it is beneficial to identify the former as the ‘gift of prophecy’ and the latter as ‘the ministry gift of the prophet’.

Von Rad states however that:

Again, why should we ever expect that the same thing would always be called by the same name at all time and in different places? We can be perfectly sure that, if the sources use a number of different terms for prophet, this indicates in the last analysis that there were different kinds of prophets and different kinds of prophecy. We must not therefore look for any consistency or system in the way in which the terms are used in the Old Testament as it now exists.¹⁰⁹

If Von Rad is correct then the notion of developing a systematic theology of directive prophecy in the contemporary church is futile. This would stand in complete contradiction to the views of the AC.

Prophecy in the contemporary church

There is a clear disparity between the understanding of cessationists and continuationists regarding apostles in the contemporary church. However the situation regarding prophets is different; some cessationists understand that there is a prophetic type ministry within the contemporary church. However they would not go as far as the continuationists in their interpretation or understanding of the prophetic. Calvin, comments on 1 Cor.12:10.

By prophecy, I understand the singular and choice endowment of unfolding the secret will of God, so that a Prophet is a messenger, as it were, between God and man.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Eph. 4:7 uses the word *χαρίσματα* when referring to the grace/gift of grace/grace gift that we have all received.

¹⁰⁹ Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology, Volume Two* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1985), p.7.

¹¹⁰ John Calvin, *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 12* (biblehub.com/commentaries/calvin/ephesians/four.htm). In May 2009, I interviewed Philip Keevil (1953-) who was brought up as an Apostolic in Ebbw Vale, S. Wales. In his late teens he was regularly used in the operation of prophetic ministry. In 1981 he emigrated to the United States where he earned a first degree from the State of New York University and a doctorate from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. He is currently the senior minister at Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. I asked him if he was a cessationist and if so, did he regret prophesying in the AC as a youngster. He was quite frank with his reply, pointing out that whilst Calvin objected to the notion of contemporary apostles he had no problem with contemporary prophets. It would have been trite to have asked Keevil if he still prophesied in the manner that he did when he was a young man in the AC but he was clear that

John Stott challenges the notion of prophets who are akin to Biblical prophets who ‘stood in the council of God’, who heard and even ‘saw’ his word, and who in consequence ‘spoke from the mouth of the Lord’ and spoke his word ‘faithfully’. He suggests that nobody can now use the messenger formula because their words would need to be treated with the same authority as Scripture.¹¹¹ Stott further comments:

we then have to ask if there is a subsidiary gift of some kind. It seems right to answer ‘yes’, but then to confess that we do not know for certain what it is! Some see it as a special gift of biblical exposition, an unusual degree of insight into the Word of God, so that by the ministry of the Holy Spirit modern ‘prophets’ hear and receive the Word of God, not however as a new revelation but as a fresh understanding of the old. Others see it as a sensitive understanding of the contemporary world, a reading of the signs of the times, together with an indignant denunciation of the social sins of the day and a perceptive application of Scripture to them.¹¹²

Rodman Williams expresses the continuationist view when he states:

It is important, however, as in the case of the apostles, to differentiate between original and continuing prophets. Even as there is a foundational and a continuing apostolic ministry, so there is a foundational and continuing prophetic ministry. Such continuing ministry is a gift of Christ and serves for the equipping of the church.¹¹³

Although John Stott is a cessationist, he provides this warning to those who are continuationists that prophecy ‘must always be carefully tested by Scripture and by the known character of the speaker, and that the regular, systematic, thoughtful exposition of the Bible is much more important for the building up of the people of God’.¹¹⁴

Middlemiss is of the opinion that ‘...

[the validity of the utterance] becomes an immediate issue, often demanding an instant response. If a person believes that God is guiding . . . then he or she is forced to come obviously into a quick judgement on whether some putative revelation is in reality from God, and this must be done without much in the way of objective testing.¹¹⁵

On the same subject, Moberly provides the salutary warning that;

One should not . . . speak of the importance of the concept of prophecy without simultaneously recognising that it also offers massive potential for abuse. The appeal

when preaching he had a prophetic edge to his ministry.

¹¹¹ Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, p.161.

¹¹² Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, p.161.

¹¹³ Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: The Church, the Kingdom and the Last Things*, Vol. 3, p.173.

¹¹⁴ Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, p.161.

¹¹⁵ D. Middlemiss, *Interpreting Charismatic Experience* (London: SCM Press, 1996), p.44.

to God may be not only deception of self . . . but also a potent tool for manipulation of others.¹¹⁶

He also warns that;

The task [of assessing or judging contemporary prophecy] is especially difficult because there are particular factors which militate against fair assessment in this context. The strength of opposition which arises in response to an enthusiastic movement leads to polarized positions and vicious criticism. This means that assessment is frequently offensive, or defensive, but almost always biased.¹¹⁷

It is clear that there is much debate as to the role of prophets within the church, but within the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches prophets and prophecy are widely held to continue in the modern era. The AC in particular focused on the roles of prophets, and their use of directive prophecy became foundational in the denomination's establishment. I will return to the specific AC views in the next chapter.

Prophecy in the classical UK Pentecostal denominations

Prophecy has played a significant role in the history of the classical British Pentecostal denominations i.e. Elim, AoG and AC; however I will deal with the AC position more fully in the next chapter. With regard to the Elim churches Barry Killick (b.1950) revealed that although the movement recognizes the ministry of the prophet, there are currently no persons nominated as such. Members of the congregation are welcome to bring prophecies in a service, but in his opinion, that is becoming more infrequent.¹¹⁸ British AoG follow similar principles as Elim, believing that the gift of prophecy as recorded in 1 Cor.12:10, is available to all who have received Spirit baptism.¹¹⁹ Although denominations differ upon whether prophecy has a role to play in the contemporary church, the Apostolic Church places an emphasis on this spiritual ministry.

The Charismatic Movement's understanding of prophecy

The Charismatic Movement in the UK is not a single entity and so it is not possible to comment about their corporate understanding. Many high profile American 'prophets' attract attention either through their regular visits to the UK or through the plethora of 'Christian' channels now available on British television.

¹¹⁶ R.W.L. Moberly, *Prophecy and Discernment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.12.

¹¹⁷ Moberly, *Prophecy and Discernment*, p.49.

¹¹⁸ Telephone conversation 29 April 2016. Barry Killick served on the National Leadership Team of the Elim Movement 2000-2010. Cf. www.elim.org.uk/Articles/417857/Our_Beliefs.aspx.

¹¹⁹ Petts, *Body Builders*, pp.39-56.

In this chapter I have outlined the biblical principles surrounding the roles of apostles and prophets. I have further outlined their importance within the Pentecostal and Charismatic movement. In the next chapter I will chart and evaluate the development of the AC doctrines regarding apostles and prophets and how certain crises caused them to amend their practices.

Chapter 4 Directive prophecy in Apostolic Church teaching

The embryonic Apostolic Church (AC) accepted the position that the NT provides support for continuity of the role of Apostles and Prophets. This followed the teaching established by the Apostolic Faith Church (AFC) in accepting these two integral positions in its governmental structure. In this chapter I will examine how the AC modified its understanding of directive prophecy which is a theological distinctive of the denomination. It is my intention to define its eventual understanding whilst further discussing the conflicts between the AC and the other classical Pentecostal denominations.¹ I will also address why many of the practices of directive prophecy had to be modified in the light of the ‘Latter Rain’ issue at the end of the 1940s and beginning of the 1950s. I will compare the AC’s understanding of directive prophecy with the biblical statements but not the theological arguments that have been outlined in the previous chapter. It is important here to reiterate that the founders of the AC were not theologically trained and would have only had access to rudimentary study aids such as a Bible and a concordance. This I submit could have led to an unbalanced theological interpretation and practice of directive prophecy. I will show that those who currently serve as apostles and prophets within the AC have mostly followed their predecessors within the fellowship rather than being influenced by modern scholarship. I will further investigate the theory that the AC has developed a method of internal evaluation which has led to introspection.

Apostolic Councils

In order to evaluate the AC position on directive prophecy it is necessary to establish the historical structure of the denomination; this will allow for a greater understanding of how the AC operates in light of its relationship to the AFC. The authoritarianism of the AFC was rooted in the recognition of its founder William Hutchinson as the supreme leader; and this was one of the major factors in the breakdown of relations between Hutchinson and D.P. Williams. Consequently the AC ensured that no one individual would be given absolute authority and a structure was developed whereby the primary authority within the movement would rest with the General Council. The national leader of the denomination was always known as the President of the Council and not the President of the Church; and the longest

¹ By classical Pentecostal denominations I refer specifically to the AoG and Elim churches as found in Britain.

period during which any person has ever served in this role was when Tom Saunders (1917-1992) was national leader from 1969 to 1981.

Although the frequency and format of council may have changed as the years progressed, so too has the required qualification for attendance. All apostles have always been expected to be present and to have taken the lead with prophets being on hand to assist. Having learned from Hutchinson's authoritarian attitude, council emphasizes the collegiality of apostles. One of the ways in which this is demonstrated is that as discussions are rarely taken to the vote to decide an outcome. Council has always been the final arbiter of all matters relating to the fellowship, whether financial, doctrinal matters, the location of ministers or developmental policy. Its decisions are held in the highest esteem. I was a regular attender at council from the mid-1980s until 2010. There would be certain items that were discussed in every council and then the rest of the agenda was made up of recommendations from local Pastors' Meetings. In the early years of my experience, the meetings lasted for two weeks with the first week being open to pastors and some leaders from local presbyteries. The second week was exclusively the domain of apostles and prophets. Eventually, council was curtailed to one week with the apostles and prophets meeting on the first two days. Discussions would continue until the national leader felt that there was a consensus. When it was necessary to vote on an issue, he would rule on whether it was only apostles who were allowed to vote (doctrinal issues) or whether the whole company was allowed to vote (practical issues). At the end of the meetings, a letter would be prepared for circulation informing the local churches of decisions. In my experience, any individual involved in the result of any decision would receive a phone call, communicating personal instructions. In previous years, such personal communication would have been made by post.

Initially the council met at six monthly intervals but progressively, as the structure of the AC became more complex, there were soon annual councils, biennial councils and quadrennial councils. A system of hierarchical tiers developed with quadrennial councils being the highest authority. As previously stated, the discussions that took place in the earliest meetings were recorded verbatim.² In those first meetings the subjects were wide-ranging and largely associated with the speedy development of the fellowship. They centred on such questions as: where are resources going to come from?; how could pre-existing churches seeking to join

² The official archive of the AC was in my possession during my period of teaching at the AC Bible College sadly since the denomination has relocated its HQ the archive has been boxed and stored and is consequently in a poor condition, and access to it is virtually impossible.

the AC but which had not called their leaders into office through directive prophecy be incorporated into the Fellowship (1929)?; what if a person refused to obey directive prophecy (1929)? With regard to the former, it was agreed begrudgingly that such leaders should be recognised within the AC. With regard to the latter, it was considered unforeseeable that anybody called of God would refuse to obey and so anybody refusing would have to leave the fellowship.

It becomes clear from the reading of the council minutes that from the outset there were considerable tensions with regard to the operation of the functions of apostle and prophet. Many of the contributors had such a high view of prophecy that they believed the prophet should be given precedence in all decision-making. The argument was based on Acts 13:1-2 which implies that it was the prophets of Antioch who originally recognised the calling on the lives of Paul and Barnabas. The debate regarding who had the primary role of recognizing the new ministries, whether it was apostles or prophets, occupied the council from 1929 until 1945 before it was finally settled. It is clear that the matter was not resolved to everybody's satisfaction as the same issue was addressed in the council of January 1934. The 1929 council had ruled that the primary calling was that of apostle who then had the right to rule on the callings of others. The 1937 constitution carried this ruling but it was further amended by a Minute from the 1945 council that read:

Rather than to include in the Constitution as present - a prophet not to call into office if an apostle is not present, it would be wise to put the positive side – it is expected that calls given through prophetic ministry would be made when an apostle is present (*sic*).

By the late 1920s a repeating pattern began to emerge. Frequently the minutes record that the apostles, having discussed the various issues and realizing the magnitude of the task, used the phrase; 'Matter referred to the Word of the Lord' or in other words, 'let's see what the prophets bring'.³ Invariably Jones Williams would bring a prophecy that would not give any direct response to the need but would provide a faith inspiring scenario urging the apostles to reach within themselves to find a solution. By the early 1930s, D.P. Williams and his brother were often missing from council because of their missionary work.⁴ The other apostles continued to meet but were aware that any decision that was made might be overturned when

³ Cf. Minutes 1921, pp.7,11 &13; Minutes 1925, pp.3,9 &15.

⁴ At this stage the AC was less than fifteen years old but had expansive interests in West Africa, Australia, South America, Canada, USA and Denmark. There were also minority interests in Italy, India, France, New Zealand and China.

the brothers returned. In the 1935 General Council questions were being side-lined waiting for prophetic direction. It seemed that Jones Williams' prophecies carried more weight than anybody else's. This was probably more to do with the respect that the others had for the Williams brothers rather than fear of going against them. One minute reads:

W.A.C. Rowe reported that it was common for people to be saying about any decision 'When Pastor Dan and Jones come back there will be remarkable alterations in this'.⁵

A particularly interesting debate took place in the council of January 1932. It is not clear whether it was D.P. Williams' initial intention to simply wrest ultimate power away from the prophets. I submit that he possibly intended to lead the Apostolics towards a more orthodox understanding of the true status of contemporary prophecy.⁶ At this time prophecies published in the *Riches of Grace* magazine were being referred to as 'the Word of the Lord'. There had been a prophecy stipulating that when prophecies were being published they were to be referred to as 'Prophetical Ministry through...' and then nominating the individual who brought the particular prophecy.⁷ One of the council members, Frank Hodges, was anxious that such terminology downgraded the gravity of such messages. He argued that there was a difference between an ordinary prophecy and prophecy that came through the gift of a prophet. D.P. Williams stated that because this instruction had come 'by the word of the Lord,' it was in the best interests of the church to conform. Another council member, George Perfect, asked whether the change was suggested by the word of the Lord or was it a command? The issue remained unresolved and surfaced again in the 1937 council.

In 1935 there was the first biennial council. Once again the Williams brothers were not there because they were in Australia and India on missions work. Andrew Turnbull was absent due to illness and Hugh Dawson was appointed as acting president. Dawson had been a highly successful Bradford mill owner. In his secular employment he had seen the advantage of a written instruction book that ensured that uniformity of action was linked directly to written instructions from the leaders of the organisation. He was determined that these principles could be applied to the ever-expanding AC and he became one of the prime movers in the preparation of a constitution that would spell out, in great detail, how the denomination

⁵ *Minutes of the General Council Meetings, 1935*, p.25.

⁶ In 1 Thess. 2:13 Paul states that he was the medium of the divine word; Paul is making this statement on the basis of his apostleship (1 Thess. 2:1-12) which is being affirmed by the outworking of his words amongst the people but although Hutchinson and the AFC prophets may have claimed a similar position for their own words, Williams was clearly attempting to wean the developing AC away from this error.

⁷⁷ Council Minute 1932, p.21.

would operate. Both Williams' brothers were skeptical with regard to the concept of such a prescriptive constitution, but Dawson continued undeterred with his desire to produce a constitution.⁸ When it was produced, it was extremely prescriptive and emphasised each section with prophetic instruction. The original draft was peppered with the expression 'the word of the Lord' and again D.P. Williams had to insist that the phrase 'prophetic word' or similar be used.⁹ Although this became the agreed policy, it is still common in local Apostolic churches to hear the phrase 'the word of the Lord' being used to describe prophetic utterances.

The constitution provided for a network of prophets to be established at local, area, national and international levels. It also established the criteria required for any prophet to attend council. Prophets have always sat, and are still required to sit, in a particular set of seats in the council chamber. Other than when they are prophesying, they are only allowed to speak on financial matters so that it is clear that when they speak, they speak prophetically. Each prophecy has always been mechanically or electronically recorded so that a record can be kept in perpetuity. Apostles are asked corporately to judge the veracity of each prophetic utterance. Except for a few cases, it would be impossible to analyze the raft of prophetic utterances that have been given.

In explaining that directive prophecy is largely restricted to national councils and regional pastors meetings; I have to reiterate that in Chapter 2 I explained that traditionally there has been another platform for directive prophecy within the National AC though this has been discouraged since the 'Latter Rain' issues of the 1950s. Until then it was common for such prophecies to be given at large public gatherings such as Glasgow New Year convention or the annual international convention. On these occasions the prophecies were a prominent part of the services and were intended to be heard by the general congregation, creating great excitement amongst the hearers. The last time that anyone attempted to bring directive prophecy, on this platform, was on the Thursday of the Penygroes international convention in 1981 when a very respected prophet brought a directive prophecy. The general executive minutes do not record the prophecy, but show that an emergency council meeting was held the next day at which 31 apostles reached the conclusion that the prophecy was contrary to the conviction of the apostles and that it was unacceptable. The president made a public statement to this effect at the next public convention service. It is a mark of the particular

⁸ *Minutes of the General Council Meetings*, July 1934.

⁹ *Minutes of the General Council of the Apostolic Church held in Bradford 1937*, p.216.

prophet's maturity that he brought another prophetic word on the last day of the convention, which was recorded in the minutes, and therefore accepted. The initial prophecy followed the style of the early Apostolics and had 'called' various people into different ministry roles. Many of those who were referred to in the discarded prophecy eventually found themselves taking up the offices that were alluded to anyway.

Although directive prophecy is practiced in all national councils, there were six examples in particular that would have a profound effect on the development of direct prophecy; four were in some of the early councils (1929, 1932, 1934 and 1945) and the other two were in councils that dealt with the 'Latter Rain' issues (1951 and 1953). I will continue to refer to these councils throughout this chapter.

A hierarchy of gifts

D.P. Williams accepts a hierarchical structure to the ministry gifts and offices as recorded in 1 Cor. 12:28-29 and Eph. 4:11 with the primary status and responsibility being given to apostles.¹⁰ The Constitution of the AC was formalized in 1937 and it established that:

APOSTLE means one of the Gifts of Christ in the Ascension Ministries and is the first Office in Church government. APOSTLESHIP means the whole Council of Apostles in whom there are vested: - The responsibility for the clarification of doctrinal matters. The sole power to call, ordain ministers, the authority to control administrative affairs (at General Council under the control of the Overseas Department in the United Kingdom), Regional, Area, District and Local level, the right to apply discipline as detailed in the relevant sections of this Constitution, the right to attend and chair any business meeting or church service within the sphere of their jurisdiction. The term Apostleship also meant an Apostle or a number of Apostles serving in a Region, Area or District.¹¹

The previous chapter outlined the New Testament understanding of apostleship. It showed that apostleship was based on a blend of authority and functionality with the primary responsibility being one of 'building up the church'.

Morgan uses the epithet 'the hierarchical Apostolic Church' and it is essential for the purposes of this dissertation to discover if this is a valid description or not.¹² In order to

¹⁰ There is evidence in Ephesians 2:20 and in Ephesians 3:5 to show that Paul understood that there was a special foundational role for apostles and prophets in the church but that does not imply hierarchical authority. cf. Francis Foulkes, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, Ephesians* (Leicester: IVP, 1989), pp.94-95, 101-102.

¹¹ *The Constitution of the Apostolic Church 1937*, p.169.

¹² D.D. Morgan, *The Span of the Cross* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), p.217.

attempt to determine whether or not contemporary Apostolic apostles had authoritarian and hierarchical traits they were invited to complete a questionnaire.¹³ There were eight questions in the questionnaire.

Question One required them to put into priority order certain potential characteristics of apostleship. The choices offered to them included: authority; discernment; sending out;¹⁴ wisdom; leadership; insight and impartation. A particular note was taken of the age of respondents to see if there was any variation in trends.

The survey collected insufficient data to produce authoritative results, but based on those replies that were received the most popular response was ‘wisdom’ followed by ‘leadership’ and ‘authority’. Younger apostles tended to be less hierarchical but in every other way there appeared to be no difference between them and the older men. The results are not surprising given that the younger apostles were selected by the older men in the first place.

Table 1: Attitudes of contemporary AC apostles to the primary functions of their calling by age differentiation.

40's (4 responses)	50's (4 responses)	60's (6 responses)	70's (5 responses)	80's (3 responses)
Insight	Impartation	Leadership	Wisdom	Leadership
Leadership	Leadership	Authority	Discernment	Wisdom
Sending out	Wisdom	Wisdom	Leadership	Authority
Impartation	Insight	Insight	Authority	Impartation
Authority	Discernment	Discernment	Insight	Insight
Discernment	Authority	Sending out	Impartation	Discernment
Wisdom	Sending out	Impartation	Sending out	Sending out

Question Two asked the respondent apostles to nominate other words that they would have preferred to have seen in the list. Only one respondent (who was in his mid-40s) included words that might be associated with an understanding of apostleship by others outside of the AC. His terms included: ‘pioneering’; ‘groundbreaking’; ‘revelation’; ‘on the move’ and ‘miraculous’. Most of the other respondent apostles chose words associated with necessary character traits in any form of ministry. They included: ‘tenacity’; ‘integrity’; ‘patience’ and

¹³ The protocol used and the details of the response rate are outlined in Chapter 1.

¹⁴ Some of the respondents objected to this term arguing that apostles were the ones that were sent out but the Councils of the AC have always recognized new ministries, ‘sending them out’ either as missionaries or as new recruits for the church in the UK.

‘humility’. One fifty-year-old apostle wanted the word ‘relationship’ added to the list. Again, and probably for the same reason, there was very little difference between the types of responses from older or younger apostles.

Question Three asked respondent apostles if they had ever had a conviction about anyone else who they could recommend to National Council for recognition as an apostle. The vast majority of the respondent apostles replied in the affirmative. No-one in their fifties had recommended anybody but those in their forties had. Within the AC the act of nominating a candidate for the apostleship is taken very seriously. It can only be undertaken by those who are already serving and is the only means by which potential new apostles within the AC can subsequently be recognized. Discussions regarding the suitability of a potential candidate and the listening to any relevant prophecy regarding the subject takes place behind closed doors and only the existing apostles and prophets witness the process.

Question Four asked respondent apostles to nominate who from within the AC had been a major influence in developing their own apostleship. In all but one case, those named had been one of the high-profile apostles either from the early history or recent history of the AC. In only one case did a respondent nominate a person who had not been recognized as an Apostle. He later clarified that the nominated man was actually his father.

Question Five asked respondent apostles to nominate who from outside the AC had been a major influence in developing their own apostleship. The oldest of the respondents gave no names but by the time it came to those in their sixties they began to nominate influencers such as Charles Swindoll (1934-), president of the Dallas Theological Seminary, John Wimber (1934-1997) and Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981).¹⁵ It is not clear how this influencing came about, but I submit that this would have been by listening to their sermons and reading their books rather than through a personal relationship. The apostles in their forties and fifties nominated those with whom they had personal relationship and in many cases were involved in a mentoring process with them.

Although the response to my questionnaire was disappointing, it does add weight to Morgan’s use of the epithet ‘hierarchical’. The system for recognition of new apostles within the AC is so introspective that it is unlikely to change in the near future; older apostles are

¹⁵ For Wimber and Lloyd-Jones, see Timothy Larsen (ed.), *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals* (Leicester: IVP, 2003).

likely to select men who are like-minded for the next generation; younger men were more aware of leaders outside of the fellowship.

The interface between apostles and prophets within the Apostolic Church

T.N. Turnbull agrees with Williams on the subject of the primacy of apostles over prophets.

He writes:

Here we have these offices in the correct relationship and position in the Church... It is obviously the plan of God that apostles and prophet should work together in Church government. In this way they will come to a deeper understanding of the will of God for His Church. When we have the combination of revelation through these two offices the finest possible results are achieved. There is always something solid and enduring being done when these ministries are in joint operation.¹⁶

He further states:

. . . the apostles should be able to assess the value of each declaration through the prophets and act on it accordingly. The prophets for their part should always be ready to accept the decisions of the apostles in these matters.¹⁷

W.A.C. Rowe, states that ‘apostles play a vital part in the government of prophecy’.¹⁸ Kay concludes: ‘In this respect prophets are seen as functioning alongside apostles but without the authority of an apostle to make judgements or decisions’.¹⁹

Eric Horley (1940-) was at one time vice president of the AC (1997-2001), had been principal of the AC Bible College in Penygroes (1989-2002) and has functioned both as a prophet (ordained in 1975) and as an apostle (ordained in 1994) within the AC. When asked to comment on the difference between expressing conviction as a prophet and expressing conviction as an apostle, he stated that there was greater responsibility on the apostle. Whereas a prophet could express his conviction prophetically and end his responsibility, the apostle expressed his conviction and would be responsible for the implementation of that conviction.²⁰ This understanding that apostles should be the final arbiters of directive prophecy is a central tenet of the Apostolic Church. However I question whether it completely coheres with New Testament teaching. Jesus himself warns that many false prophets would arise and would deceive many people (Matt. 24:11, 24); John echoes this warning (1 John 4:1) as does Peter (2 Peter 2:1; 3:2). In giving these warnings there is no

¹⁶ T.N. Turnbull, *Prophecy in the Church Age* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1971), p.34.

¹⁷ T.N. Turnbull, *Prophecy in the Church Age* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1971), p.35.

¹⁸ W.A.C. Rowe, *One Lord, One Faith* (Penygroes: Apostolic Publications, 1988), p.273.

¹⁹ W.K. Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000), p.226.

²⁰ Personal conversation, 25 March 2006.

guidance on how to test prophecies; however Paul is more specific in instructing other prophets to judge prophecy in Corinth (1 Cor. 14:29), while in 1Thessalonians 5:21 he instructs that it is the responsibility of the whole church to test everything. Paul explains to the Thessalonians at length what their attitude should be to prophecy. He warns against two extremes each of which is wrong. The first extreme is to accept all prophecy unreservedly, without first submitting it to judgement. The other extreme is to reject prophecy altogether thereby quenching the Holy Spirit.

The AC then operates a structure of leadership that recognizes the central roles of apostles and prophets; however upon closer examination it is the apostle that holds the ultimate authority through the operation of the AC Council. This leadership structure has as its focal point directive prophecy to which I now turn my attention.

Developing an understanding of directive prophecy

The National Council meeting in 1945 attempted to define ‘directive prophecy’.²¹ Tom Turnbull, who attended that Council, uses the same definitions and scriptural references in his book as were discussed in the Council document. He concludes that directive prophecy is that verbal instruction which directs the hearers to ordain someone into office, directing the hearers to go in a geographical direction or directing the hearers with regard to action to be taken or avoided. In the questionnaire sent out to all present ministers in the AC in the UK (referred to in the methodology section of this dissertation) respondents were invited to evaluate the statement ‘*Directive prophecy is prophecy that instructs the recipient with regard to actions to be taken, location to serve in or steps to be taken that will lead into a greater sense of the purpose of God*’, 97% agreed or agreed strongly, and the other 3% were not sure. It is therefore easy to draw the conclusion that the impact of directive prophecy is still a major theological tenet of the AC. This theological distinctive continues to shape the lives and ministry of those involved in the AC.

Turnbull’s first example, is Paul's instruction to Timothy recorded in 1 Tim. 4:14:

Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

Turnbull makes the following statements:

²¹ H. Dawson, ‘A statement on prophecy’ issued in January 1946 from the National Council of the AC 1945 (Copy in the National Archives of the AC, Penygroes).

. . . If the Church is to fulfil its high calling it must accept prophets as a directive and inspirational force.²²

. . . the prophet gives positive words of direction, his finger pointing the way that is approved by God.²³

the presidential and governmental authority in the Church belongs to the Spirit of God and one of the several ways in which it is manifested is by prophetic ministry.²⁴

Turnbull argues that directive prophecy can be positive or prohibitive. In the latter case he cites Acts 16:6:

Paul and his companions travelled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

Turnbull argues that because Silas was a recognised prophet the prohibition was probably expressed prophetically.²⁵ This is poor exegesis and may even be eisegesis on Turnbull's part as he reduces this to supposition in order to support his argument.

‘Thus saith the Lord’: the control of prophecy

Williams suggests several times that the prophet loses control of his faculties during the process of prophecy. He states:

Let us touch again on this principle in the prophetic ministry. We marvel oft- times at the miraculous condescension of the Divine Mind in coming down, possessing human²⁶ channels, using their vocal organs making use of human language and tongue, in figurative terms, and teaching us in the things that are Eternal.²⁷

Tom Turnbull supports this idea when he states that ‘the core purpose of a prophet is to speak on behalf of another (Gk. *pro-phemi*)’ and then explains that 2 Peter 1:21 records that ‘Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (KJV)’.²⁸ It must be emphasised

²² Turnbull, *Prophecy in the Church Age*, p.33.

²³ Turnbull, *Prophecy in the Church Age*, p.61.

²⁴ Turnbull, *Prophecy in the Church Age*, p.61.

²⁵ Turnbull, *Prophecy in the Church Age*, p.62.

²⁶ John Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus: The Bible Speaks Today Series* (Leicester: IVP, 2004); Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles: The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Leicester: IVP, 1990); Wayne Grudem, *1 Peter: The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Leicester: IVP, 1988); Michael Green, *2 Peter and Jude: The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Leicester: IVP, 1968); Edmund Clowney, *The Message of 1 Peter: The Bible Speaks Today Series* (Leicester: IVP, 1988).

²⁷ Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*, p.66.

²⁸ Turnbull, *Prophecy in the Church Age*, p.44.

here that the context of Peter's words relate to the essential role of the written scriptures in the understanding of and acceptance of prophecy. This view agrees with Paul's words in 2 Tim.3:16 which attribute the scriptures to divine origin and of its necessity in enabling the individual to know God's purposes.

The practice of some early Apostolic prophets was so intense in the delivery of prophecy that they appeared to be going through a highly excited spiritual state. In 1967 David Rennie president of the AC in the 1950s and the early 1960s published a book entitled *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit*.²⁹ In the chapter relating to prophecy he confirmed that he held the same view as Williams:

The Holy Spirit illuminates the mind of the preacher and will certainly aid him in the delivery of his God-given message but in prophecy the Spirit bypasses the mental capacity of the prophet, using his vocal organs and making him the channel of divine utterance.³⁰

As his thinking on the issue of the mental condition of the prophet developed, Rennie later tempered his comments bringing them more in line with Paul's writings in 1 Cor.14:31-33:

[The] prophet's own personality and mental understanding remain unimpaired; he is completely conscious of all that is transpiring and can continue or withhold speech at will.³¹

Prophecies delivered in such a heightened state would have been difficult to judge objectively and the problem would have been further compounded if the message ended with a phrase such as 'thus saith the Lord'. Turnbull was convinced that this was the correct manner to conclude any prophecy stating: 'Every time the prophet speaks as such he must be able to preface his message with the words, "Thus saith the Lord."' ³² Here he is simply encouraging the use of such phrases as evidence that the prophet has a conviction that the message was from God. However what on the one hand might be a challenge to the prophet to be sure that he is convinced that he is speaking God's words could also be perceived as a challenge to the hearer not to judge what has been said but simply to comply. In the previous chapter it was mentioned that some of the Old Testament prophets prophesied in a heightened emotional state and some were apt to use expressions such as 'Thus saith the Lord' and even in the New Testament Agabus used the expression 'This is what the Holy Spirit says' (Acts 21:10).

²⁹ D.T. Rennie, *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1967).

³⁰ Rennie, *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, p.89.

³¹ Rennie, *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, p.89.

³² Turnbull, *Prophecy in the Church Age*, p.44.

However, Paul does instruct that the Spirit of the prophets is subject to the prophets (1 Cor. 14:32). It has been mooted in recent times, however, that such expressions preclude the message from being judged. Peter Prothero teaches theology in the Apostolic Church Bible College in Kolding, Denmark. He teaches young prophets that they should not use such introductory phrases for the following reasons: the phrase is never used by Jesus; the phrase is deeply rooted in a culture and practice that has passed into history; the continued use of this phrase within Pentecostal and Charismatic circles claims a level of authority to all the words spoken (and by implication to the speaker) that is simply not justified in most cases; and there is a very real danger that if God has not inspired the prophetic utterance then the speaker is guilty of breaking the second commandment (blaspheming, or taking the name of the Lord in vain). To place God's name to something He has not said is careless at best and has the potential to invite censure from the Lord.

Finally, according to Prothero, the continued use of this phrase ignores the fundamental shift that has taken place under the New Covenant. Since then there has been a shift in the nature of prophetic utterances. Their authority lies in the Spirit not in their formulaic introduction.³³ Prothero brings some much needed balance to the AC view on the practice of directive prophecy. He especially highlights the possibility that an individual can use the formulaic introduction to support their own opinion on a particular issue.

The Apostolic prophets developed the habit of closing their prophecies with such expressions and that practice continues to the present time. A similar issue arises over the use of personal pronouns in prophecy e.g. 'I the Lord would say unto you'. Prophecy in the AC in the UK has traditionally used personal pronouns indicating that it is God speaking directly to the hearer. This adds weight to any prophetic utterance but is also another possible cause of abuse of such prophetic ministry as unscrupulous men could use such phrases to cause the hearers to comply with their desires and wishes. Would a less authoritative form of words be more appropriate? Those that want to accept these words as being of divine origin would find a more nuanced expression as devaluing the notion that God himself had spoken. A phrase such as 'I think that God may be saying . . . ' is not as satisfactory as 'I, the Lord would say to you at this time . . . '

Throughout history there have been many prophetic groups who have believed that the ecstasy of the presentation has authenticated the message which they have then concluded to

³³ Personal correspondence via email between this writer and Prothero, 20 June 2010.

be infallible.³⁴ As far as the Apostolics were concerned, when that prophecy was confirmed by an apostle, that conclusion was even more likely. The obvious dangers lead C.G. Williams to the following general observation:

This is why it is ultimately impossible for the outside observer to distinguish between true and false prophets. What is facilitated by the psychophysical condition depends upon the conceptual assumptions of the individual and the depth of the relational quality of his personal life-'relational' here meaning his awareness of being in relationship with a personal god or his spirit and the extent to which he shares in the divine pathos. His utterances in the hyper aroused state, however, would have a different emotional effect upon others than words uttered in a calm rational condition.³⁵

'Teddy' Howells³⁶ further explains that the term should not be confused with other prophetic manifestations such as the prostration of Saul in 1 Sam. 19:24. He explains that the term 'naked', in the context of this passage, refers to the fact that Saul removed all his regal robes and not all his clothes.³⁷ Howells warns students that they must not let 'ecstasy remind [them] of the frenetic scenes of the prophets of Baal' (1 Kings 18: 27-28). He explains that such manifestations are completely foreign to the attitude of the prophets of God. In fact a certain austerity and severity accompanied the prophetic conduct of men like Nathan, Elijah and

³⁴ A survey of groups that have been involved in exuberant prophetic utterances shows a repeated pattern of controversy. Ronald Knox (1888-1957) became the chaplain of Trinity College Oxford in 1912. In 1950 he wrote *Enthusiasm: a Chapter in the History of Religion*. In the foreword he stated 'Almost always the opposition [to charismatic gifts] is twofold; good Christian people who do not relish an eccentric spirituality find themselves in unwelcome alliance with worldlings who do not relish the spirituality at all', A. Knox, *Enthusiasm- A Chapter in the History of Religion*, (Oxford: Oxford Clarendon, 1950), p.1. An exhaustive list might also include such groups as the Montanists who were said to be 'boiling over with the spirit' and their leader Blandina, in her zeal, was praised for acting like a 'Maccabean mother', W.H.C. Friend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), p.255. Our list might also include the Zwickau Prophets. Tucker explains that the very word 'Enthusiasm' was coined as a derogatory term to describe the religious fervour of this group which was led by Nicolas Storch of Silesia. S. Tucker, *Enthusiasm: A study in semantic change* (London: Hodder, 1979), p.15. Another group deserving of being listed were the early eighteenth-century French Prophets, see Michael Heyd, '*Be Sober and Reasonable*': *The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Netherlands: Brill, 1995). Middlemiss explains that:

No religious group would have chosen the word to describe itself because it was a term of outright abuse. It meant that while a person was fanatically committed to a belief, his or her rational faculties had been switched off and the belief itself was an unjustified delusion. D. Middlemiss, *Interpreting Charismatic Experience* (London: SCM, 1996), p.1.

Wesley became the target of the insult of being an enthusiast when Henry Fielding wrote that Methodism was a lot of 'nonsense and enthusiasm' Henry Fielding, Joseph Andrews (1742); T.E. Owen, *Methodism Unmasked* (1802). Middlemiss goes on to explain that George Hicke recorded in 1680 that 'enthusiasm is a demonic spirit which needs to be exorcised' and Wesley reported that 'every enthusiast, then, is properly a madman' (John Wesley, 'The nature of Enthusiasm' in *Sermons, Vol. 1* (Preached in 1750), p.467.

³⁵ C.G. Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit: a study of Pentecostal glossolalia and related phenomena* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1981), p.16.

³⁶ Howells' brief biography is outlined in Chapter 1.

³⁷ Robert Jamieson, Andrew R. Fausset and David Brown, *Critical and Explanatory Commentary of the Whole Bible* (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1961), p.220.

Elisha. In this way they prefigured the austere prophetic ministry of John the Baptist in the desert.³⁸ The comments of C.G. Williams, which are directed primarily towards Old Testament prophets can also be applied to contemporary prophets. He writes:

Even so, the question of the authorizing of the prophet as speaker remains. This is not to argue for a uniformity of pattern nor to ignore the rich variety of prophets and the diversity of prophecy which embraces for instance the valuable contribution of anonymous cultic prophets as well as that of canonical prophets. But where even a little information is provided concerning the life of an individual prophet, and at best it is meagre, the call-experience seems to be of key significance.³⁹

I concur with Howells who, in reiterating the points made by Turnbull, reminds his readers of the seriousness of directive prophecy: ‘there is tremendous responsibility in speaking in God’s name as well as emphasising it by the use of the direct pronoun “you”’.⁴⁰

The levels of prophetic utterance

Williams has suggested that there are three different levels of prophetic utterance. He identifies these as: the Spirit of prophecy resting occasionally on persons, the permanent abiding gift of prophecy and the prophetic office.⁴¹ He maintains that ‘ignorance concerning this has caused many difficulties, rivalries and confusion.’⁴² I will now give attention to Williams’ interpretation of these three areas of prophecy.

The spirit of prophecy

Williams explains in detail what he means by ‘the spirit of prophecy’. He suggests that there are two distinct scenarios that fall within this category. Firstly, he gives examples from the OT of people who would have prophesied only on special and specific occasions. His examples include Eldad and Medad (Num. 11:26)⁴³ who were appointed as elders by Moses. They would not enter into the centre of the Tabernacle but would only keep their activities to the periphery. Williams also includes Saul in his list (1 Samuel 10:11, 12, 19:24). He states that Saul was found within the prophetic circle but became prey to his own envious nature. The next character commented on by Williams is Balaam whom he calls the ‘heathen soothsayer of Peor’.⁴⁴ Williams reminds the reader that Balaam was commissioned by Balak

³⁸ I. Howell, *Lecture notes on Prophecy*, given at the Apostolic Church Bible College Lecture Two, p.6.

³⁹ Williams, *Tongues of the Spirit*, p.2.

⁴⁰ I. Howell, *Lecture notes on Prophecy*, given at the Apostolic Church Bible College Lecture Four, p.8.

⁴¹ Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*, p.23.

⁴² Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*, p.23.

⁴³ Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*, p.24.

⁴⁴ Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*, p.25.

to prophesy against the Israelites but that God's Spirit caused Balaam to bring words of blessing rather than words of discouragement (Num. 24: 6-10).⁴⁵

Williams does not warn congregations about false prophecy but is simply disparaging of those who give prophetic words only occasionally. He is warning church congregations that such people may not be as spiritually mature as they appear and that their prophetic words are sometimes dangerous.

The second group that he categorizes as prophesying through the 'spirit of prophecy' is made up of genuine and less harmful people who only bring occasional prophetic words. Of such people, he says:

The Lord in mystery may lay his Hand on some in the assembly, to prepare them and qualify them to be channels in which he will dispose His gift, and while under probation they may have to go through hard and terrific struggles, deep crucifixions and the disciplinary process of humbling that may seem cruel in the extreme to the channel.⁴⁶

However this practice of occasional prophecy from individuals aligns well with Paul's teaching that the Spirit distributes his gifts as he wills to whom he wills 1 Cor.12:1-11.

The gift of prophecy

Williams suggests that the next level of prophetic activity is higher and greater than the Spirit of prophecy as, what he calls 'the permanent, abiding gift of prophecy'. He provides examples of how he understands the gift of prophecy functioning. These examples include: revelation; words of comfort; strong warnings and rebukes; visions and signs; typical manifestations and exhortations as to the line of duties.

The prophetic office

The final area under consideration by Williams is the issue regarding the difference between the office of a prophet and the gift of prophecy.⁴⁷ While already having emphasized that the former is given for the general government of the body, he reiterates that the purpose of this gift is for edification, exhortation and comfort but he then makes a sweeping statement when he says 'in fact there is no limitation to its [the gift of prophecy] possibilities. Who can say

⁴⁵ Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*, p.26.

⁴⁶ Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*, p.30.

⁴⁷ Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*, pp.84-102.

what is the scope the words . . .'⁴⁸ He speaks in deep mysterious tones about the office of prophet explaining that it goes beyond the gift of prophecy. He states: 'Nevertheless [it] rises higher in Church government in ministry and operation'.

Williams' definitions are somewhat confusing as he brings delineation of use of the gift of prophecy with little or no biblical support. His views indicate that the early AC leadership adopted this position from Hutchinson and his AFC without giving it the theological assessment and evaluation it required.

Contemporary prophets in the AC

It was necessary to further research the background of AC prophets; in order to carry out this investigation I selected four prophets who I had easy geographical access to and requested personal interviews. The four concerned would be expected to bring directive prophecy in pastors meetings, in public meetings, but they would be very cautious about directive prophecy to individuals in a public meeting, and in the National Leadership Team meetings. They can be identified as Prophet D, E, H and J.⁴⁹ They were not interviewed at the same time but the same questions were put to each one. They were not aware of the answers given by their colleagues but they were aware that their answers were being recorded for the purposes of this dissertation.

1. Were you born into a family that were members of the AC and if not then how did you come into the AC?

D: I was brought up in a Methodist family but was introduced to the AC by a young lady who eventually became my wife.

E: I was brought up in an Anglican family but was introduced to the AC by a young lady who eventually became my wife.

H: I was brought up in a family who were members of the AC.

J: I was brought up in a family who were members of the AC.

2. Did you prophesy before being called into the ministry?

They all answered in the affirmative.

⁴⁸ Williams, *Prophetic Ministry in the Church*, p.86.

⁴⁹ It is important to record that these men were cooperating with me because of personal relationship. They would not easily have entered into these discussions freely had I not agreed to keep their identities anonymous.

3. Are you on the full-time staff of the AC?

They all answered in the affirmative.

4. At what age were you invited to join the full-time staff?

D: forty years, E: twenty-eight years, H: forty-three years, J: thirty-three years.

5. When you were called, into the ministry of the AC, what was your main role? They all confirmed that they were district pastors (that is to be responsible for a number of local Apostolic assemblies).

6. At what age were you ordained as a prophet?

D: 49 years (after nine years service), E: 35 years (after seven years service), H: 49 (after 6 years service) and J: 39 (after six years service).

7. Who were your main influences as you were developing your prophetic ministry within the AC?

They all referred to previous generations of prophets within the AC from the past.

8. Who were your main influences from outside of the AC?

All except J responded forcefully that they had not been influenced by anyone from outside the AC. J referred to one man from Elim and one man from British AoG who had been influential in his developing ministry. He also referred to books that he had read by Cindy Jacobs⁵⁰ and Jack Deere.⁵¹

9. What are your greatest concerns about being a prophet in the AC?

They all replied in a similar vein. They found it most frustrating when they felt that they had a word from God but the word was overruled by an apostle. E explained that it was not so much the overruling of prophecy that he objected to, after all it is right that prophecy be judged, but he felt most aggrieved when he brought prophetic direction in Council and that word was neither acted upon nor rejected.

10. What are your greatest joys of being a prophet in the AC?

They all expressed a similar joy from when they brought a prophetic word which was accepted, acted upon and proved to be correct.

⁵⁰ Cindy Jacobs, *The Voice of God* (Ventura California: Regal, 1995).

⁵¹ John Deere, *Surprised by the Voice of God* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1996).

There were four conclusions to this exercise.

i. Those called as prophets have followed a well-trodden path into this ministry. This path was not based on theology or policy but based on expedience. Firstly they were called as district pastors. This happened in the candidate's middle years (ranging from late 20s to mid 40s), then between six and eight years after they had been called as pastors they were called to be prophets.

ii. Their primary responsibility as district pastors would not be affected by this new responsibility.

iii. Existing prophets rely so much on the previous generations of prophets within the AC with little input from outside the fellowship.

iv. This exercise further highlights the rather parochial and introspective nature of the AC. I submit that this could well be due to the fact that some members of the AC have a 'siege mentality' following the criticisms levelled against the denomination's theology and praxis that has brought about this apparent paranoia. This could further be supported by the fact that the denomination is still recovering after the 'Latter Rain' issue of the 1950s.

Prophecy and gender

During the ministry and writing of Tom Turnbull, he always refers to prophets by using the male pronoun. This is not simply writing style but is confirmation that within the AC it is understood that it is only males that can be recognized as functioning in the gifts of ministry that are laid out in Eph. 4:11 or as elders or deacons.⁵² He explains it by stating:

In appointing elders they chose from mature male members, servants of God to instruct, care for and govern the different assemblies. Paul believed it was important to seek men at the head of each church of good character.⁵³

Paul makes it clear that women are not excluded from prophesying. In fact he insists that when they prophesy they should have their heads covered (1 Cor. 11:5) The AC would encourage women in the gift of prophecy though they would not allow them to bring directive prophecy, restricting their utterances to edification, exhortation and comfort (1

⁵² The last time that this issue was debated in National Council was in 2006 when it was again confirmed that so far as the UK AC was concerned, only males could function in this way. Apostolic Churches in other countries now recognize women in ministry gifts. It is also interesting to note that when Hutchinson and Williams had their public differences of opinion in Ammanford, women were there to prophesy.

⁵³ Turnbull, *Prophecy in the Church Age*, p.48.

Cor.14: 3). This area of policy is difficult to adhere to as the AC is thereby stating that God would only inspire women with certain subjects and words; if this is the case it requires careful consideration as to whether women should have any role in prophetic utterance. This again would be difficult to argue from a biblical position as women are encouraged to prophesy. The AC position would be argued by stating that directive prophecy is primarily associated with church government and is therefore exclusively a male issue. The argument derives from what Paul teaches in respect to male headship in 1 Cor. 11:2. I submit, however, that this passage is laying down general principles for life and does not have specific application to church government. It should be noted that in the Pastoral Epistles Paul instructs the young pastors Timothy and Titus that lay leaders should be male (the husband of one wife) but this may simply refer to faithfulness in marriage.⁵⁴

The AFC and the AC during its formative years accepted women giving directive prophecy with regard to callings. In the 1929 council there is a record of a discussion on the various means being used to recognize elders in the local assemblies. One man reported that when he had visited the 'Burning Bush' assembly in Glasgow prior to the merger with the AC, a woman had prophesied that a particular person should be called as an elder. As soon as this was raised in the council, Andrew Turnbull, the leader of the Burning Bush Assembly, is reported as saying: 'Yes, quite right; and the Lord spoke through Tom (his son) that we were not in real apostolic order then!'⁵⁵ Clearly Andrew Turnbull was turning from the free expression of prophecy within the 'Burning Bush' assemblies to take on the restrictions that existed within the AC. Another apostle in the council asked: 'This is a vital fact for me to know... if the Lord spoke through a woman that I was to anoint someone to be a deacon, is that a recognized thing in the Church?'⁵⁶ By this time D.P. Williams was strongly opposed to the notion of women taking such a strong lead. His reason, which was supported by the council, was as follows: he believed that anyone prophesying edification, exhortation or comfort in line with 1 Cor. 14:3 can be male or female. But because directive prophecy was given in order to facilitate the government of the church, it could only apply to males.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Donald Guthrie in *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Pastoral Epistles* (Leicester: IVP, 1957), p.92.

⁵⁵ Convocation of Apostles and Prophets of the AC, 1929, p.173.

⁵⁶ Convocation of Apostles and Prophets of the AC, 1929, p.173.

⁵⁷ Although women in the AC can be recognized as deaconesses, it is considered that the ministry gifts of Ephesians 4:11 are for males only. In very recent years in some countries where the AC is autonomous from the UK, women have been ordained as pastors.

Contemporary Christian egalitarians hold an opposite view. They base their understanding on exegesis of Gen 1:28 which places a commission of authority on both male and female. Another popular Scripture often referred to is Gal. 3:28 ‘There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus’.⁵⁸ However it is more probable that Paul is simply referring to the fact that both genders are equal recipients of God’s grace.⁵⁹

I submit that the complementarian position best describes the biblical teaching. That is, God holds men and women of equal value. However there are distinct, God-given roles that differ between men and women.⁶⁰

The New Testament teaches the headship of the husband in the home and marriage and the headship of men as preachers, teachers, and leaders in the church and, as far as the AC is concerned, those giving directive prophecy.

From this consideration it is to be concluded that the AC believes in the hierarchical leadership model which places men at the head and as the only ones sanctioned by divine calling to practice directive prophecy. This issue was and remains a distinctive feature of the AC, and other Pentecostal groups differed over this central teaching.

Conflict with other British classical Pentecostal groups

From the commencement of British Pentecostalism there was intense controversy over the subject of prophecy and particularly directive prophecy. Turnbull sets the scene:

[Amongst the burgeoning Pentecostal groups] the reactions to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit and the gifts bestowed by Him were very different. Especially was this so in regard to the gift of prophecy, even more so regarding the prophets, a number of whom were revealed in these assemblies . . . Some groups became possessed of a deep conviction . . . that the five gifts of the Ascended Lord were also for these days and should be in evidence in the Church . . . but when the voices of prophets were heard, some believed the prophetic word but others doubted it. For some the gift of prophecy was acknowledged but the prophet with his words of guidance was not accepted as Scriptural. They believed that the prophetic utterance was for edification, exhortation and comfort (1Cor.14:3) but they did not believe that the prophetic office

⁵⁸ Linda Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church*, (Grand Rapids; Baker, 2000); Stanley Grenz, *Women in the Church*, (Leicester: IVP, 1995); Craig S Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 1992).

⁵⁹ R. Alan Cole, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Galatians* (Leicester; IVP, 1989), pp.155-156.

⁶⁰ N.T. Wright (Bishop of Durham) conference paper presented on 4 Sep 2004, *Women's Service in the Church: The Biblical Basis*, Retrieved 12 Jul 2010; John Piper and Wayne Grudem (eds.), *Recovering Biblical Manhood and womanhood* (Wheaton : Crossways, 1991); Wayne Grudem, *Countering the Claims of Evangelical Feminism: Biblical Responses to the Key Questions* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2006).

was for guidance and for teaching the Church. Thus the word of prophecy was restricted in some assemblies, and, sad to say on occasions suspended altogether.⁶¹

The early Pentecostal groups were diametrically opposed, the one group accepting directive prophecy and the other not. Turnbull continues:

Arising out of these statements the first question that had to be answered was – Is prophecy the Word of God so that every utterance with expressions of like ‘thus saith the Lord’ was automatically infallible? Or was it a word from God that had to be assessed and then believed or put aside. Many people took the first view including Pastor J. Hutchinson-Dennis [as he was now called].⁶² He wrote in 1915 ‘Now to deal with the difference, if any, between the Written and the Spoken Word. Going straight to the root of the matter, there is no difference at all, because it is the Word of God, whether it be written or spoken it cannot be anything else but God’s Word, and therefore in that sense it is the same identically. We believe that the Written Word of God is infallible and is given by the Holy Ghost, from beginning to end. We also declare that the Spoken Word of God given through the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, which He has imparted for that purpose is infallible, and of God from Beginning to end. ‘This may be very strong meat, but it is touching, the vital part of this work’.⁶³

As mentioned above, those who eventually formed the AC met in the Easter Convention held in Bradford in 1922. They were the guests of the Apostolic Church of God a group who had left Smith Wigglesworth’s Bowland Street Mission after a dispute over directive prophecy.⁶⁴ The issue was extremely divisive. Hutchinson and the AFC were the prime movers amongst those that supported directive prophecy. The AC supported and propagated this aspect of directive prophecy as the AFC diminished.

One of the fiercest critics of the AFC/AC understanding was Harold Horton of the AoG who uses expressions such as ‘there is not a shred more Scripture [*sic*] authority . . .’ ‘but so-called ‘prophets’ of the ‘Apostolic’ movement, contrary to both Testaments . . .’ and ‘it is here again that the Apostolic movement has erred.’⁶⁵ It has already been mentioned earlier that a few years later, another critic, John Nelson Parr, produced a scathing tract and despite promises to the contrary it was advertised for sale in the official magazine of the Assemblies of God throughout 1936.⁶⁶

⁶¹ T.N. Turnbull, *What God hath Wrought* (Bradford: Puritan Press, 1959), p.15.

⁶² Dennis, on becoming Hutchinson’s son-in-law, changed his surname to Hutchinson-Dennis.

⁶³ Turnbull, *What God hath Wrought*, p.15.

⁶⁴ Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two*, p.50.

⁶⁵ Harold Horton, *The Gifts of the Spirit* (Nottingham: AOG, 1934), p.173.

⁶⁶ John Nelson Parr, *The Apostolic Church Error* (London: AoG, 1936). This pamphlet was written by John Nelson Parr and was advertised in *Redemption Tidings* throughout 1936. Its content was the subject of

Parr readily accepted that the AC had not carried on with some of the eccentricities of the AFC. Nevertheless his criticisms remained trenchant. They included the challenge that the Apostolics were claiming to be the only body of true believers;⁶⁷ that the pivot of the whole Apostolic Church system of government was the so-called set prophet,⁶⁸ that they were wont to proselytize among other believers, winning them over to a system of church government which was founded on erroneous principles; that they elevated prophecy to the status of being ‘God’s word’ to the same extent as Scripture.⁶⁹ Finally, Parr warned that the Apostolics were in danger of following the same path as the Montanists.⁷⁰ Each of these items requires further consideration.

Claims to exclusivity

Parr wrote in 1936. However Tom Rees, who was a prominent member of the AC National Executive at that time, had preached in the Penygroes Convention in August 1934, stating:

We had the audacity to say that we believe in apostles . . . some years ago. Well now, HE [*sic*] is beginning, as the Head, to control the Body, through the ordained government that HE [*sic*] has got in His book...On the other hand I hope that some that are here do not go anywhere to preach and say that we are the only Body of people in the Body of Christ. If the Apostolic Movement is the only Body of Christ on the face of the earth, well, Poor God! There are godly men besides us; and I am quite willing to acknowledge that there are more godly men than we are to be had.⁷¹

Clearly, Rees was aware of the criticisms that were already being raised against the AC. There is no reason to believe that he was being patronizing to those who opposed the fast-growing Apostolics. In 1936 D.P. Williams used the same platform as Rees to tell the congregation:

I hope you do not say that the Apostolic Church as a movement is the only Church that is, that we are the only people that are in the ‘Church’. There is only ONE CHURCH (you understand that-only one), but we do not say (as the Roman Catholic Church does) that we are the only Church; but we say this, that THE CHURCH is a Spirit-filled Church and is led and established by the Word of God, and that the Church believes in the Blood.⁷²

discussion at the Apostolic Church Executive meetings in February and June of that year. A transcript is attached as Appendix II.

⁶⁷ Paragraph 4 of the tract (see Appendix II).

⁶⁸ Paragraph 6 of the tract (see Appendix II).

⁶⁹ Paragraph 12 of the tract (see Appendix II).

⁷⁰ Paragraph 11 of the tract (see Appendix II).

⁷¹ *Riches of Grace*, Sept. 1934, pp.94-6.

⁷² Report of the 1936 Penygroes Convention in the *Riches of Grace* Magazine, Sept. 1936, p.127.

These quotations emphasize the fact that Williams and Rees were not advocating a policy of exclusivity. However this was not the message received or interpreted by other Pentecostal denominations who as mentioned above were cautious of the AC paradigm for leadership which could be easily accepted as exclusive.

Church government and the so called ‘set prophet’ issue

In the same address Williams continued:

Like all Pentecostal Denominations in the world we have publicly recognised Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers and have ordained them into these Offices and Ministries. It is Divine Election that has ‘set’ them in (the Body of Christ). We have also observed many times that the leaders in other Pentecostal Denominations have demonstrated a ministry of Apostleship and that there are brethren with Prophetic ministries but, and this is the point at issue, these have not been publicly acknowledge or ordained in Office. In the New Testament, brethren were named and known as Apostles e.g. Barnabus (Acts 14 v 14) and Prophets e.g. Agabus (Acts 21 v 10) and we believe that in just the same way the unchanging Christ in this, the Church Age, by Election ‘sets’ men in these offices today and expects that His choice will be publicly recognized. Why should brethren shrink from such prominence if God has called them?

Parr and Horton were not criticizing the AC for differentiating between the gift of prophecy and the ministry gift of a prophet. However, when they were being critical of how the AC developed a hierarchy of prophets, their criticisms were more valid. This structured approach was established in the 1937 constitution which called for a nominated prophet to be appointed in each assembly, district and area as well as there being national and international prophets. By August 1959, the then general secretary of the AC wrote to all pastors and overseers on behalf of the executive overturning this policy. A sections of the letter read:

Since the inception of the Constitution in 1937 we have become familiar with what has been termed ‘the grading of Prophets’ . . . Down the years there has been a measure of dissatisfaction with the procedure and strong feelings that by these distinctions we were not reaching the highest and best of Constitutional administration . . . We believe that they can now be safely dispensed with . . .⁷³

No reason was given for this change of policy but the membership of the UK AC had started to decline by this time and it was probably becoming impossible to find suitable candidates to fulfil all of the necessary roles.

⁷³ Letter to all Pastors and Overseers from Owen Roberts, General Secretary 18 August 1959.

Proselytizing among other believers

Kay suggests that one of the primary reasons that British AoG and Elim became corporate bodies was because of the proselytization of the AC.⁷⁴ It is also important to remember that the rapid growth of the AC at that time was not simply down to proselytization. Jacob Purnell, for instance, reported that in a thirteen year period between 1920 and 1933 Apostolic membership in North Gwent rose from eight members to 100 with local convention attendance rising from 20 to 900.⁷⁵ The vast majority of this was due to fresh growth involving new converts.⁷⁶

The danger of Montanism

Parr had further concerns with the AC especially relating its practices to that of Montanism. He writes:

There have arisen several spiritual and inspirational Movements during the history of the Church, from Montanism onwards, but the majority of them have ended in disaster through the very principles upon which the Apostolic Church is founded.⁷⁷

The Orthodox Church was beginning to settle down into a strict liturgy when at the end of the second century the Montanists burst onto the scene. ‘Ecstasy’ was one of their hallmark features. Montanus had fallen into a trance and had begun to prophesy under the ‘influence of the Spirit’. Friend describes how in AD 177 the Governor of Lyons arrested many of their number. Regardless of their social status, they were described as ‘boiling over with the spirit’.⁷⁸ Richardson states that the Montanist prophets and prophetesses broke out in the most frenzied utterances. They claimed to have recovered the gift of speaking in tongues that had characterised the primitive church.⁷⁹

Lane states that Orthodox Christianity promptly defined this as unacceptable. He further states that there were semantic disagreements for many years between the mainstream church and Montanism over the definition of ecstasy. Montanus equated it with inspiration; according to Montanus, John had been ecstatic when he was ‘in the Spirit’ as recorded in

⁷⁴ Kay, *Pentecostals in Britain*, p.29.

⁷⁵ Purnell relayed the story in his old age to Mr. Colin Evans of Ebbw Vale. Evans transcribed the story and a copy of the transcript is attached to this dissertation as Appendix III.

⁷⁶ See Appendix III.

⁷⁷ Paragraph 11 of Parr's tract.

⁷⁸ W.H.C. Friend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), p.255.

⁷⁹ Cyril Richardson, *The Church through the Centuries* (New York: Scripture Press, 1938), p.126.

Rev.1:10. His critics argued that ecstasy was the state that God put Adam into when creating Eve (Gen. 2:21 ‘a deep sleep’). The argument had been aired by Philo (25 BCE- c.50 CE) and other Jews in Alexandria. Orthodox Christians added arguments from Platonist debates, and Montanus’ trances were declared to be demonic. The Montanists prophesied in the first person singular. ‘Man is like a lyre and I strike him like a plectrum’ is a well-known prophecy of theirs. They were convinced that their prophecies were as divinely inspired as Scripture and their final undoing was that their predictions regarding the soon return of Christ were not fulfilled.⁸⁰

The comparisons between the Montanists and the AFC are evident: the exuberance, the prophecies in the first person singular, the elevation of the prophetic word so that it had an equal, if not higher status than Scripture and the eschatological emphasis. If Parr had made his comment about the AC in its earliest days, his observation may have been valid. However by 1936 many of those observations were unfair even if rooted in a genuine concern for the Pentecostal Movement.

The effect of the Latter Rain Movement on the Apostolic Church⁸¹

R.M. Riss refers to the Latter Rain Movement as:

A Pentecostal movement of the mid twentieth century that, along with the parallel healing movement of that era, became an important component of the post-World War II evangelical awakening.⁸²

He describes it as being highly controversial and suggests that its impact and effects were felt worldwide. Nowhere were these words truer than in their application to the Latter Rain Movement (LR) and the AC. The other British Pentecostal groups in particular AoG were less accepting of the LR. To emphasise this point McNair Scott quotes Buttner: ‘The following features of the “revival” were denounced by the Assemblies of God: “(1) it relied too heavily upon present-day apostles and prophets (i.e. a self-appointed Charismatic leadership); (2) it practiced the confessing and pronouncing of forgiveness by one member upon another; (3) it advocated the practice of bestowing spiritual gifts by the laying-on-of-

⁸⁰ A fundamental tenet of Montanism was the notion that Christ would return to Phrygia, the home region of many in the movement including Montanus himself.

⁸¹ M. Meloon, *Ivan Spencer-Willow in the Wind* (Plainfield N.J.: Logos, 1974); R.M. Riss, *Latter Rain* (Ontario: Honeycomb, 1987); P. Hocken, *Streams of Renewal* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997); E.K. Parbi, *Pentecostalism-The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra Ghana: Blessed Publications, 2001); J. Rutland, *Obedying his Call* (Australia: Copyhouse, 1995).

⁸² R.M. Riss, in Burgess and McGee (eds.), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), p.532.

hands; and (4) it distorted Scripture so as to arrive at conclusions not generally accepted by members of the Assemblies.”⁸³ Despite the opposition from within Pentecostalism the AC became totally committed to its teaching and practice. Therefore, when the National Council of 1953 stipulated that all of its ministers were to withdraw from any LR activity, the effects were profound. Those that would not or could not accede to this requirement were asked to leave the fellowship. Cecil Cousen was one such dissident and became very influential in the developing Charismatic movement, working closely with others such as Tom Smail⁸⁴ and Michael Harper⁸⁵ in establishing Fountain Trust. Others like James McKeown took their whole missionary endeavor out of the fellowship.

In the meantime, the Apostolic Church seems to have built walls to protect itself from further moves or movements. Mainstream Apostolics did not involve themselves in the Charismatic renewal, and later Pentecostal and Charismatic activities such as the ‘Toronto Blessing’⁸⁶ or the ‘Brownsville Revival’⁸⁷ were largely ignored.

Why did the Apostolics get so involved with LR when Elim and the British AoG did not? The Apostolics and LR shared common theology and praxis regarding directive prophecy: both recognized the contemporary ministries of apostles and prophets that other groups did not.

⁸³ Benjamin G. McNair Scott, *Apostles Today* (Eugene: Pickwick Pub., 2014); C. Buttner, “The Latter Rain Movement.” *In Encyclopaedia of American Religions*, G. J. Melton (ed), (Detroit: Gale Research, 1996), p.84.

⁸⁴ Thomas Allan Smail (1928-2012) was a leading Scottish theologian in the charismatic movement in the United Kingdom (In 1972, he became secretary of the Fountain Trust. *Yearbook of the United Reformed Church*, 1977). Peter D. Hocken, in Burgess and McGee (eds.) *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), p.791.

⁸⁵ Michael Claude Harper (1931-2010) was a priest of the Church of England. He was baptised in the Holy Spirit speaking in tongues which put him at odds with the church’s rector John Stott in 1964, he left his church to establish Fountain Trust. Peter D. Hocken, in Burgess and McGee (eds.) *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movement*, pp.346-347. The Fountain Trust was noted for their training courses however these courses avoided dealing with theological issues that might cause disunity, causing Eryl Davies to criticize the Trust for ‘facilitating interdenominational fellowship and bonding more on the basis of a the charismata and a distinctive ‘spirituality’ rather than on the unique truths of the biblical gospel and because a theological looseness as well as ambiguity developed with regard to the gospel itself’. Eryl Davies, ‘The great distraction: looking back at the Charismatic Movement,’ *The Evangelical Magazine*. 43/5, (2004), p.14.

⁸⁶ The Toronto Blessing is a term coined by British newspapers to describe the revival and resulting phenomena that began in January 1994 at the Toronto Airport Vineyard church, now the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship (TACF), a neo-charismatic evangelical Christian church located in Canada. Participants in the conferences and meetings reported healings, incidents of personal transformation and a greater awareness of God’s love. Its critics highlighted many excesses including people falling into semi- comatose states and making animal noises.

⁸⁷The Brownsville Revival (also known as the Pensacola outpouring) was a widely-reported religious phenomenon that began within the Pentecostal movement on 18 June 1995 at Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida. Characteristics of the Brownsville Revival movement included acts of repentance by many of those that attended the services and a call to holiness, said to be inspired by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. More than four million people are reported to have attended the meetings from its beginnings in 1995 to around 2000.

One example that links the praxis of the AFC and the AC with LR was the practice of immediate ordination following a prophetic call normally involving anointing with oil. This was confirmed at the 1914 conference in Bournemouth. The Apostolic Faith Church's official magazine recorded:

At the word of the Lord two more apostles were ordained . . . With great solemnity they were anointed by the chief apostle, William Hutchinson and charged to be faithful to their high calling in Jesus Christ.⁸⁸

In his footnote to this entry, Worsfold notes:

Ordination was carried out by anointing the head of the individual with oil, with the offerings of prayers and the laying on of hand in s . . . which in the Apostolic Faith Church were usually acted upon in the same service because of their understanding of spiritual immediacy.⁸⁹

This pattern of 'calling out' by 'the Word of the Lord' or directive prophecy followed by immediate ordination, preferably in the same service, became the norm in the days of the LR. One high-profile ordination which is discussed in more detail below would cause significant embarrassment and would challenge the whole practice.

The term 'Latter Rain' has its origins in the weather patterns of Israel. The 'early rain' signifies the rain of the autumn (Deut. 11:14) and 'latter rain' the rain of spring (Prov. 16:15). With no rain for a period of six months the whole land becomes dry, the spring or 'latter rain' prepares the crops for harvest. In Joel 2:23 the prophet uses the analogy of latter rain to encourage the Israelites to believe that their faithful God who has ensured that they have received basic provision, even in adverse circumstances, will give them the extra blessing of 'latter rain'. Peter uses this passage from Joel as the basis for his sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-21) although he does not draw directly on the analogy. James 5:7 does however, use it to illustrate an eschatological encouragement:

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.

Early Pentecostal believers began to equate their new experience to the falling of the latter rain. They began to understand that the former rain was the day of Pentecost which,

⁸⁸ Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church in Great Britain*, p.87.

⁸⁹ Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church in Great Britain*, p.87.

following the analogy, watered the seed at the time of planting. The present Pentecostal outpouring being the 'latter rain' preparing the crop for harvest.⁹⁰ It followed that some Pentecostal teachers were beginning to say that this 'Pentecostal outpouring'⁹¹ was the preparation of the harvest before the return of Christ.⁹²

Pentecostalism was born with excitement, zeal and hope but by the 1940s had settled into a formalised shadow of its former self. Not only was this the case with Pentecostalism generally but with the AC particularly. It was no longer true to its radical origins and was simply becoming another alternative denomination. With regard to the AC this is particularly evident by the development of its prescriptive constitution but Pentecostalism per se was proceeding in the same direction, much to the chagrin of many of its early proponents. Church history shows that time and again the vacuum created by reality not satisfying aspiration is often filled by the unusual. On this occasion the vacuum was apparently filled by the LR experience which commenced in a Bible school in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada, on 12 and 13 February 1948.⁹³ It followed William Branham's healing campaign in Vancouver the previous year, in which gifts of the Spirit, such as healing and the word of knowledge, were manifest.⁹⁴

Directive prophecy was a predominant feature of LR. Riss gives the following example:

God moved into their midst in a strange new manner. Some students were under the power of God on the floor, others were kneeling in adoration and worship before the Lord. The anointing deepened until the awe of God was upon everyone. The Lord spoke to one of the brethren. 'Go and lay hands on a certain student and pray for him.' While he was in doubt and contemplation, one of the sisters who had been under the power of God, went to the brother saying the same words, and naming the identical student he was to pray for. He went in obedience and a revelation was given concerning the student's life and future ministry. After this a long prophecy was given with minute details concerning the great things that God was to do. The pattern for the revival and many things concerning it were given.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ D.W. Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant and Pentecostal Power* (Chicago: Evangel Publishing House, 1910).

⁹¹ This phrase was coined by early Pentecostals and is still used as a reference to the commencement of Pentecostalism in Topeka, Azusa Street or Sunderland.

⁹² 'The Victorious Cross of Calvary has been made very real to many of us through the outpouring of the Latter Rain in these last three years . . .' Alexander Boddy in the introduction to Myland, *The Latter Rain Covenant and Pentecostal Power*, p.3.

⁹³ Riss, *Latter Rain*, p.11.

⁹⁴ William Branham (1909-1965). According to Dwight Wilson he was the initiator of the post-World War 2 healing revival. Walter J. Hollenweger (1977) who interpreted for him in Zurich stated "he is not aware of any case in which he was mistaken in the often detailed statements he made". By the 1960s his doctrine became more controversial and support for his ministry declined. Burgess and McGee (eds.), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. p.95.

⁹⁵ Riss in Burgess and McGee (eds.), *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, p.532.

The first links between the LR and the AC were made by Cecil Cousen.⁹⁶ Peter Hocken records that Cousen was born in Bradford in 1913 into a family that had joined one of the precursor groups of the AC. He was baptised in the Spirit at the age of ten and he retained much of the fervour of the first generation Apostolics.⁹⁷ Unusually for early Apostolics, Cousen was well educated having gone up to Cambridge and obtained an MA degree. From 1934 until 1948 he worked in his father's textile business and gave himself to pastoral ministry in West Yorkshire. In 1948 he offered himself for the ministry of the AC in Hamilton, Ontario, for a year. This offer was approved although the period of time was fixed at two years as a result of prophecy given in the council meeting. He remained in Hamilton from 1949 to 1951 and during this time came into contact with LR, initially being inspired by a sermon delivered by one of the LR protagonists, Dr. Thomas Wyatt. For Cousen, says Hocken 'This is like it used to be.'⁹⁸ He soon realised that in LR there was an opportunity for the AC to recover Holy Spirit life and power.

The Canadian edition of *Riches of Grace* the AC official publication was made up partly of articles from the British Isles and partly from local material. In the September 1950 edition of the Canadian version there is a special advertisement for the Annual National Convention featuring Pastors F. Poole and A.T. McKeown who had recently returned from ministering in LR conventions and churches from coast to coast in the USA. The advertisement also promised that 'Dr Thomas Wyatt, a man of God mightily used of God in the LR' had promised to visit the convention.⁹⁹ Progressively more and more AC Canada events would involve LR personnel and more and more LR events would involve Apostolics.¹⁰⁰

The LR phenomenon took up a major part of the 1951 council. The primary documentation was a file of correspondence between the national leaders of the AC in the UK, and those that had been sent to pioneer the work in Canada and the USA. The covering letter was addressed to all members of the general council explaining why the papers had been sent. T.N. Turnbull, the general secretary, signed the letter and his introductory comments are worthy of note:

⁹⁶ Warren Jones, one-time National Leader of the AC told this writer that he had spoken to Cousen prior to his demise. Cousen had testified that having witnessed early Pentecostalism, LR and the Charismatic Movement of the 1970s, he was more convinced of the authenticity of LR than any other of the phenomena.

⁹⁷ Hocken, *Streams of Renewal*, p.5.

⁹⁸ Hocken, *Streams of Renewal*, P.6.

⁹⁹ *Riches of Grace* (Canadian edition), September 1950, pp.14-15.

¹⁰⁰ Meloon, *Ivan Spencer-Willow in the Wind*, p.171.

From correspondence received during the last year or two it seems that Pastor F. Poole and some of our Pastors have been preaching in the 'LR' assemblies. Amongst these groups it appears that many have received gifts of prophecy whilst healings are manifest and spiritual gifts are being imparted in a large way by the laying on of hands. Apostles are also being called through prophecy. These 'LR' assemblies are not linked as a body as we are in the Apostolic Church, but are individual groups or assemblies in various parts of the United States of America, some of which appear to be large Churches.¹⁰¹

The file that Turnbull had sent to members of the council included personal letters from men who had attended the meeting in Canada. Kenneth Mitchell wrote about the mighty things that were happening. In particular he made reference to the national convention that had been such a success. One particular phrase of his letter would have challenged the men back in the UK and would have given a clear indication of the mood of the men in Canada. He wrote:

The wrappings of our organization will have to go. It is time that we came to a place of recognising the gift of Christ in men and not just making officers and erecting titles to fill positions in organizations.¹⁰²

Pastor B. Evans wrote of the recently held LR conference:

I advertised it as a 'LR' Conference . . . Dr. Thomas A. Wyatt was invited. Four (ministers) came from Bethesda Tabernacle Detroit . . . others from Hornell N.Y. The church was packed...no-one felt like eating much. Some never left the church all day, remaining in fasting and prayer. We met for business but no business done, just one praying for the other, broken hearts crying unto God for deliverance. I tell you, Tom, it was real.¹⁰³

Cecil Cousen's letter again gives glowing reports of the conference, referring to Thomas Wyatt as 'D.P. Williams and Andrew Turnbull rolled into one'.¹⁰⁴ Only Pastor Ben Noot, another of the men sent from the UK to Canada, wrote in opposition to LR.¹⁰⁵ He spoke of 'the biggest crisis that we have ever experienced in Canada'.¹⁰⁶

The scene was set in 1951 for a difficult council. It was likely there would be stalemate between those favoring the LR and the leaders of the general executive who were opposed to

¹⁰¹ File of correspondence which was circulated to all apostles prior to the 1951 General Council. The correspondence is kept in the National archives of the AC.

¹⁰² Kenneth Mitchell correspondence to General Secretary of the Apostolic Church based in the UK.

¹⁰³ B. Evans correspondence to General Secretary of the Apostolic Church based in the UK. Appendix VI, p.4.

¹⁰⁴ File of correspondence which was circulated to all apostles prior to the 1951 General Council. The correspondence is kept in the National archives of the AC.

¹⁰⁵ Ben Noot had been appointed as the President of the Canadian Apostolic Church but was still accountable to the General Council in the UK.

¹⁰⁶ File of correspondence which was circulated to all apostles prior to the 1951 General Council. The correspondence is kept in the National archives of the AC.

it.¹⁰⁷ But in a surprising decision, following directive prophecy, Cousen and a close friend, Philip Rhodes, were given permission to work together wherever they chose. They were to report back to the executive, and so began a tour of the AC assemblies in the UK. Ben Noot asked to be re-called to the UK believing that the church, for which he was responsible, was the only one in Canada that was continuing to ‘stand for the Apostolic way’.¹⁰⁸ It had become custom that when missionaries returned home and attended the next international convention in Penygroes, they would be welcomed as returning heroes but for the Noot family there was no such welcome. Both he and his family felt that this symbolized a snub for him and the stand that he had taken.¹⁰⁹

Philip Rhodes brought a significant prophecy regarding LR to the 1952 international convention. The prophecy commenced:

It is possible for men to misunderstand my words; you shall never evade my Spirit, for the time is coming when that which you have been carrying within your bowels shall burst forth as an almighty flood. For I have chosen some of you to bear the birth pangs of revival and every time these pains have come to you they have come with an increasing intensity and often when they have died away again you have wondered whether you have failed. I say unto you I am preparing a body within the body whereby I may fulfil that which is in my purpose. You have groaned and I have understood, you have breathed and I have recorded it.¹¹⁰

This prophecy could be construed as a rallying cry to a whole generation who had been excited by what the tour had achieved. This was the generation that had heard their forebears speak of the great Welsh Revival and of the Sunderland outpouring as well as the times when the AC had grown exponentially but had not seen it for themselves.

Other significant sections of the prophecy included:

Think not that the experience that I am giving unto you (an experience of that administration) is a new experience of system: but I am coming in mighty power that I may give you not only a new day but also a new anointing. There is no need for you to call this experience by the name of another man’s experience. Speak not of it as ‘Latter Rain’ but I will give unto you a new term, whereby you shall enter into what I

¹⁰⁷ B.J. Thomas, ‘The Influence of the Latter Rain Movement of the 1950s on the history and development of the Apostolic Church’ (M.Th. Dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor, 2004).

¹⁰⁸ Ben Noot’s correspondence to General Secretary of the Apostolic Church based in UK. Appendix VII, p.18.

¹⁰⁹ This information was provided by Noot’s daughter Mrs. Anne Davis who also reported that his first posting back in the UK was to Lurgan in Northern Ireland where, ironically there was a mighty move of God over an extended period with many hundreds being baptized in the Spirit through his prayers.

¹¹⁰ *Riches of Grace* (British Edition), November-December 1952, pp.5-14.

call by the Spirit ‘a new anointing at this hour; and that men shall fall before a living God seeking not only the new anointing, but a new up-springing from within.’¹¹¹

This prophecy was intended to offer hope to those who may have been sceptical about Latter Rain but nevertheless wanted to see, hear and experience again the raw elements of revival. In addition it would have attempted to bring together the two camps under one banner; those who were sceptical about LR and those who were totally committed.

Another section of the prophecy stated:

I say unto you that . . . I am coming into churches to cut open, that I am coming into organisations to rend. For when you thought you had the whole in your hand, I will dash it into pieces and out of the pieces rear up a spiritual temple that shall be anointed of the Lord.¹¹²

This part of the prophecy dealt, unequivocally, with one of the most fundamental issues concerning Latter Rain. There would have been few hearing the prophecy that would have supported the unwieldy organizational structure that had developed within the AC. However, in the previous year following the death of D.P. Williams, Hugh Dawson, the architect of the constitution had been appointed as the new president of the fellowship. It was inevitable that there would be conflict between Dawson and the supporters of LR with their desire to be relieved of all restraints.

The prophecy concluded:

This is a time when I have brought you to a halt: and in a new way (and in a new way only) will you continue in my plan. There is no progress, however much you walk, however much you wonder, however much you say. You will not move one step farther, until you find the place of this new anointing; and then I will cause you to bring the ark of God triumphantly into its rightful place . . . examine your hearts before your answer; he that partaketh this day of my Spirit, partaketh unto death or unto everlasting life.¹¹³

This prophesied a difficult future if the fellowship did not accept change. It is generally accepted within AC circles that the condition of the denomination at that stage was dreary and in fact the prophecy suggested that God had brought progress to a halt. The essence of the prophecy was that the fellowship would only progress if it accepted new things. Those new things were not necessarily the trappings of LR but certainly the spirit of LR.

¹¹¹ *Riches of Grace* (British Edition), November-December 1952, pp.5-14.

¹¹² *Riches of Grace* (British Edition), November-December 1952, pp.5-14.

¹¹³ *Riches of Grace* (British Edition), November-December 1952, pp.5-14.

The battleground between Dawson and the supporters of LR would inevitably be the general council. The foreword to the minutes states that, at the commencement of the council, the President, Hugh Dawson, gave a resumé of the situation regarding LR. He reported that initially there was great joy and expectancy when hearing from North America that the Apostolic men were involved in this new move. But disquiet began to set in as the AC began to lose its unique identity in the excitement that was LR.

It was reported to the council that Dr. Tom Wyatt (d. 1964), one of the main exponents of LR, had divorced his first wife and had remarried. This was considered to be a major problem that had precluded a person from membership within the AC at the time let alone the ministry. It was also explained that LR wanted the name 'Apostolic' to be removed from buildings, for ministers to be paid according to local church ability to pay (at that time all AC were paid the same stipend) and the dismantling of organisational and administrative structures. There were positive reports of the close bonds between the AC and LR, but there were also negative reports, complaining of excessive emotionalism and financial pressures being placed upon congregations.¹¹⁴

An interesting case was presented regarding a man called Ray Jackson. Jackson was a New Zealander who belonged to an entirely different denomination which was also called The Apostolic Church. Unlike the AC which is strictly Trinitarian, this group held to a modalist understanding known as the 'Jesus Only' doctrine. He spent time in Canada where he became involved with LR. In a letter to the general executive Alex Gardener, the president of the work in New Zealand, explains that in a LR meeting Jackson was called as an apostle with instructions that he was to return to New Zealand and make himself known to the apostleship of the AC in that country. Alex Gardener makes the point 'This naturally caused difficulties in this country.'¹¹⁵ The leaders of the Canadian AC, under the influence of the LR, had ordained somebody from a different country, who believed an entirely different doctrine to the AC and told him to take up a senior role in the AC in his own country.

The minutes of the 1953 Council confirm that, at the conclusion of the discussions, the forty-one apostles and the thirteen prophets that were present were required to reaffirm their belief

¹¹⁴ Each of the different opinions were outlined in a pack of correspondence which was circulated to those that would be attending the 1953 General Council. Copies of the correspondence are kept in the national archives of the AC.

¹¹⁵ A. Gardiner's correspondence to the General Executive of the Apostolic Church based in the UK. Circulated as Appendix 6, p.46 to all those who were attending the 1953 Council. Date of the original correspondence was January 1953.

in the tenets of the church which involved church government and the principles and practices as embodied in the constitution. The record shows that several of the men in attendance could not conscientiously accept this, and Cecil Cousen made the following statement:

I believe with all my heart the tenets of the Apostolic Church, but do not accept the constitutional interpretation of their governmental aspect in operation as at present in the Apostolic Church in Great Britain.

The fact that Hugh Dawson was chairman of the council may have had a major influence on the result but, whereas the 1951 council authorized Cousen and Rhodes to take LR ministry around the UK,¹¹⁶ the 1953 council changed emphasis. A formal global instruction was published stating that all AC ministers were to formally make this statement expected of those attending council. Further it stated that nobody who supported LR was to have any involvement in any Apostolic service.¹¹⁷ It is most probable that the council could not have imagined the overall effect of their decisions. Key staff resigned and some local churches in the UK withdrew from the AC. Further afield several missionaries resigned and in the Gold Coast the whole fellowship of 100,000 members seceded to establish a new denomination: the Church of Pentecost.¹¹⁸

Gordon Weeks, who had been deputy national leader of the Apostolic Church in the UK and former missionary in Nigeria, dismisses the Latter Rain Movement with the words of M. Talleyrand, the eighteenth century French diplomat: ‘Without individuals nothing happens, without institutions nothing survives.’¹¹⁹ What Gordon Weeks is trying to say, is that the church needs people with strong characters but those characters would have to operate within a structure if there were to be long-term benefits. LR had the characters but wanted to deliberately deconstruct all church organisation.

Worsfold takes the less dismissive position when he says:

With hindsight it is not difficult to see that the Apostolic Church in Britain did not handle the ‘Latter Rain’ issue with the best wisdom. It is to be regretted that some members of the Executive were unable to discern that their movement was ready for reformation, for in this writer’s opinion the signs of routinisation, institutionalisation, and over formality had been obvious for a long, long time to the discomfort and

¹¹⁶ National Council minutes, 1951, p.115.

¹¹⁷ Emanuel Larbi, *Pentecostalism - The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Blessed Publications, 2001).

¹¹⁸ Larbi, *Pentecostalism - The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity*.

¹¹⁹ G. Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two*, p.220.

distress of many in the church. The movement was in the need of renewal, new order and a greater sense of spiritual freedom. Satisfaction with the status quo, and alas, with mediocrity too, had settled on many congregations. The conservative attitude towards the results of past ministry prevailed over the more open-minded attitudes of those who continue to pray for and actively promote renewal and reform.¹²⁰

Many of the peripheral issues that were used to evoke fear in the 1953 Council have actually been adopted as denominational policy: most church buildings are known by locally chosen names; minister's stipends are based on the local church's ability to pay; administration and organisation arrangements are based locally; the UK council has no control over the AC around the world and divorced and remarried people are accepted into membership and into ministry. LR completely changed the AC perspective on immediate ordination following directive prophecy. From that point forward, the notion of ordination immediately following directive prophecy ceased.¹²¹

It would be interesting to consider the possible consequences of the LR if D.P. Williams was still president at that time. He may have found a less draconian solution to the division between leaders who supported LR and those that did not. His personality may have been more conciliatory than his successor. He was resident in Canada for several months after the Second World War but died in 1947 having been instructed prophetically to return to Penygroes and 'to see out his days there'.¹²² Alternatively, if he had remained in Canada, would he have become influential in the emerging Latter Rain Movement, therefore giving it credibility as far as Apostolics were concerned?

When Cousen withdrew from the AC (though some, such as Tillin, report that he was excommunicated,)¹²³ he eventually went on to work with Michael Harper and the other leaders of Fountain Trust, an ecumenical agency formed in 1964 to promote the charismatic renewal. The trust operated on the principle that it was the purpose of the Holy Spirit to renew the historic churches.

¹²⁰ Worsfold, *The Origins of the Apostolic Church in Great Britain*, p.305.

¹²¹ My own experience would be typical. I was 'called' into the pastorate by the council of May 1993. I was formally interviewed in June and ordained on the second Saturday of July.

¹²² Interview with his great-niece, Mrs. Olive Holden, 15 Bryn Road, Penygroes, June 2009. She added that he loved Canada and wished to settle there in retirement but was obedient to the prophecy.

¹²³ T. Tillin, www.banner.org.uk (1997).

By the 1960s a plethora of neo-Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal groups began to spring up both in the USA and in the UK.¹²⁴ To a large extent, this significant development went over the heads of the leaders of the AC, presumably because of their introspection and sense of isolation. It is somewhat ironic that the one person from an Apostolic background that would have more of an impact on these emerging groups than the original denomination was Cecil Cousen.¹²⁵

In this chapter I have shown how the AC developed its own understanding of apostles and prophets which was based on the foundations of the AFC. There has also been recognition of the fact that the AC was/is at variance with other classical Pentecostal denominations. Further I have also demonstrated how one particular crisis, the Latter Rain Movement, involving directive prophecy caused the AC to modify many of its practices and to lose not only a number of senior figures but also a complete mission field.

¹²⁴ Pew Research Center, *Global Christianity - A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population*, 2011.

¹²⁵ It is worth noting that whereas Turnbull's book was only distributed within the AC, Cousen's book on a similar topic, *The Gifts of the Spirit* (Eastbourne: Kingsway, 1986), became a popular work throughout the Charismatic Movement.

Chapter 5 From the Latter Rain controversy to the present

Introduction

In Chapter Two I showed that the early Apostolic Church (AC) was greatly influenced by a man who went on to be heterodox and authoritarian. In Chapter Four I showed that the denomination has a hierarchical leadership, and that the senior leaders are responsible for selecting like-minded people who will maintain the traditions. The secession from the Apostolic Faith Church (AFC) occurred in 1916, and since that date society has changed dramatically. In this chapter I will examine any potential for the AC's survival and growth and particularly the role of directive prophecy at this point in time. I will also show how the period following the Latter Rain crisis has produced changes in adherents' understanding of the AC's fundamental doctrine and practice of directive prophecy. This change has not yet affected the tenets of faith but is emerging from the 'grassroots' and younger generation. I produced a number of questionnaires which were sent to both AC leaders and members in order to gauge the current thinking about directive prophecy and to compare it with the historic praxis of the AC.¹

The statistics that are presented to the National Council each year, show that any development of the AC in the UK ceased at the beginning of the 1950s², but the church has experienced rapid growth worldwide. There are fewer AC churches in Britain than previously, but membership has remained static primarily because several of the current churches have much larger congregations than in the past. The AC originally had more members in the coalfields of South Wales, Scotland, the North East of England and Kent, but it is now strongest in and around London where it is mainly supported by African immigrants.

Before a more detailed analysis of the effect of directive prophecy within the AC can be undertaken, it should be recognised that there have been general changes within British society and churches. These social and religious changes require brief consideration.

¹ The protocol and the inevitable weaknesses in these studies are outlined in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

² These statistics are reviewed in every National Council and the last comparison of the past 50 years was undertaken in 1998. The Minutes are kept in the National Archive of the AC.

The secularization of Britain and the decline in church attendance

The 2001 National Census showed that 70% of respondents stated that their religion was Christian.³ Although the statistics may show a positive attitude towards the Christian faith, the reality is less hopeful. Over the past one hundred years there have been two world wars and major changes in attitudes in Britain to both society and religion.⁴ The changes have caused a greater mobility of labour, improved housing, widening access to further and higher education, mass communication, feminism, the move from deference towards egalitarianism as well as the sexual revolution. I submit that as a result it is no longer a primary consideration for many people to conform to traditional standards of Christian ethics. Today's consumer led society can best be described as being secular. Sociologist Steve Bruce argues that:

. . . in so far as we can measure any aspect of religious interest, belief or action and can compare 1995 with 1895, the only description for the change between the two points is decline . . . [and] that we now have a society that is very largely secular, not just in the formal operations of major social institutions but also in popular culture.⁵

David Voas has analyzed the decline in the number of Anglican baptisms per head of population to below 50% in 2001. Adding this to the loss of one million baptized believers every five years through mortality; he concludes that 'for the first time since the Church was founded, then, nominal adherents of the established faith are in a minority (and) England is no longer an Anglican country'.⁶ A similar perspective is offered by Peter Brierley who, by extrapolating from the current statistics, forecasts severe losses of 23% of members from the mainstream churches by 2020, with some denominations like the Presbyterians (42%) and Methodists (37%) experiencing precipitous collapse.⁷ Further it is envisaged that the Church of Scotland will disappear before 2035.⁸ Brierley concludes that the percentage of church attendance will drop from the current figure of 8% to 2% by 2040 of which 65% will be 65

³ This is compared with 15.1% who answered 'none'. See <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=954&Pos=3&ColRank=2&Rank=1000>, accessed on 27 October 2006.

⁴ Cf. Andrew Marr, *A History of Modern Britain* (London: Macmillan, 2007).

⁵ Steve Bruce, 'Religion in Britain at the close of the twentieth century: a challenge to the silver lining perspective', *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 11(3), (1996), p.273.

⁶ David Voas, 'Is Britain a Christian Country?' in Paul Avis (ed.), *Public Faith? The State of Religious Belief and Practice in Britain* (London: SPCK, 2003), p.97.

⁷ Peter Brierley, *UKCH Religious Trends No 52: The Future of the Church 2005/2006* (London: Christian Research, 2005), p.4.

⁸ See Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation 1800-2000* (London: Routledge, 2002); Steve Bruce, 'The demise of Christianity in Britain' in Grace Davie, Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead (eds), *Predicting Religion: Christian, Secular and Alternative Futures* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp.53-63.

years of age and older.⁹ Attendance at Catholic churches also dropped by 30% since 1961, to 995,000 people in 2001.¹⁰ Such decline causes Garnett to conclude that:

For secularisation theorists, journalists and demoralised clergy alike, the pattern of decline is evident and incontrovertible: in 1851 between 40 and 60% of the British population attended church, with the figure around 30% in 1900, falling to 12% in 1979, 10% a decade later, and a figure of 7.5% in 1999.¹¹

On the same topic Jane Garnett comments:

On these measures, Britons are leaving the principal Christian denominations in droves, with the corollary that the influence of the churches has diminished and their prospects are dismal.¹²

Whilst these figures for church attendance show a general depletion across the board, the AC membership has not fallen to the same extent. However, it is starting from a much lower base than some of the other denominations and its unique reliance on the authoritative role of apostles and prophets in the contemporary setting make it more vulnerable to further reduction in the future. Throughout this dissertation, though, I have kept repeating that the denomination is being buoyed up by the large number of West African immigrants who value their Apostolic roots.

Recent changes in AC ecclesiology that have directly affected the development of prophecy within the Fellowship

Both at a theoretical and practical level, the AC has traditionally operated in a highly structured manner. Whereas other Pentecostal groups were much more loosely bound together into fellowships of churches, the AC considered itself to be a single entity. Membership of one assembly was automatically transferable when a person moved home and very often even if a person changed assemblies for personal reasons. If a person had been recognised as a deacon or as an elder in one assembly, even if the move had not been sanctioned by the pastor's meeting, he might soon expect to take up that office in his new location.

There was a network of assembly districts, replicating Methodist circuits, areas and regions. For an assembly to be recognised it had to have two attending elders. A pastor would be

⁹ Peter Brierley, *UKCH Religious Trends No 52: The Future of the Church 2005/2006* (London: Christian Research, 2005), pp.3-4.

¹⁰ Tom Honeywood, *The Future of the Catholic Church in England* (London: Laicos Press, 2006), p.13.

¹¹ Steve Bruce, 'Praying alone? churchgoing in Britain and the Putnam Thesis', *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 17(3), (2002), p.326.

¹² Jane Garnett, et al., *Redefining Christian Britain: Post-1945 Perspectives* (London: SCM Press, 2006), p.3.

responsible for a district of assemblies, and an apostle would be responsible for an area or a region.

Although there was no place for business meetings for ordinary members, there was a multi-tiered arrangement for business meetings for the various levels of leadership. These were: local elders' meetings (to which deacons could attend but not vote), district elders meetings, area or regional elders meetings, pastors and elders national council, area or district pastor's meetings, annual, biennial and quadrennial councils (to which only apostles and prophets were invited). The whole structure was formalised in the Constitution, and as new fields were opened in other countries they were expected to accept every detail of the Constitution. Following the Latter Rain episode and as the church developed in these new countries, the local leaders progressively freed themselves from these structural obligations and became autonomous bodies. However they remained fully committed to the theological distinctives of the AC.

The organization of the AC was established in a very structured manner, and its objectives were unique. They were to 'belt the globe with the glorious gospel and with the Apostolic vision'.¹³ The Apostolic vision was of Christ as the Head of the Body, ministering to the body through the various ministries: apostles being the highest calling followed by prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers and then elders and deacons. The church should minister until the whole earth was filled with the glory of God. Apostolic teachers would take very seriously the teaching of the Letter to the Ephesians 4:11-12.

The AC holds the work of W.A.C. Rowe in high esteem; Rowe writes:

names of Churches and Movements most frequently indicate the reason for their inception . . . the Apostolic Church is a Messenger Church. It was especially called into being to bear a message. [The message is the Eternal |Purpose of |God. Some people think erroneously that our main objective is to declare that there are Apostles and |Prophets for today. That is not the Apostolic Vision: that is incidental, though important. Salvation is the door; Holiness is the way, Pentecost is the power; the Eternal Purpose is the goal.¹⁴

¹³ This was the maxim of the Apostolic Church Missionary Movement, N.H. Thomas, *The Expanding Vision: a Souvenir Booklet Produced to Celebrate Fifty Years of Missionary Work* (Penygroes: Apostolic Church, 1972).

¹⁴ W.A.C. Rowe, *One Lord, One Faith* (Bradford: Puritan Press, undated), p.81.

In the 1960s, the UK AC was still supporting a massive missionary endeavour even though this work placed significant pressure both on the provision of manpower and of finance. The growth of the AC in the UK stagnated, but the message heard from the pulpit on many occasions was; 'we may not have the quantity but we have the quality'. The various mission fields eventually became autonomous, and greater introspection emerged in the UK church. With the numerical decline in the UK assemblies and the loss of overseas fields the AC was facing a financial crisis. The denomination had run with a financial deficit for a number of years. Council decisions had been made with little or no concern for their economic impact. There had been no proper provision for pensions for its ministers; it was believed that the imminent return of Christ made pension provisions unnecessary. By the late 1980s plans were put in place for much tighter financial control with each assembly being responsible for its own financial situation. Early in the twenty first century (approx. 2004) it was agreed that assemblies could negotiate individual remuneration packages with their minister; this change in policy was revolutionary. Larger churches have benefitted from this decision either because they have been able to pay their senior ministers more or because they have been able to develop a stipended ministry team. Smaller churches have not benefitted, and have had to rely on partly paid staff or unsalaried ministers. It is now far rarer for assemblies to work together on joint projects; district and area structures have fragmented, and each assembly is to a large extent autonomous. In the formative years of the movement, if there was directive prophecy instructing a person to take a particular action such as moving abroad as a missionary, or if there was an instruction to a particular assembly, for example, to step out in faith to open another assembly, obedience to the prophecy would be of paramount importance. In today's environment the first consideration would be 'where is the money coming from?' or 'where are the resources coming from?'

The history of the AC is very much based upon the operation of directive prophecy even to the point of disregarding possible practical pitfalls such as lack of finance and manpower. This I submit has led to a slow but significant change in the attitudes, understanding and practice of directive prophecy. It must be emphasised that the official position of the AC is to accept directive prophecy, but my research displays underlying changes in the general practice and acceptance of this form of ministry.

Changes in current AC praxis

Historically the AC had no concept of training for ministry, and appointments to ministry were made by the Council, normally through directive prophecy. In more recent times individuals have been simply encouraged to apply for ministerial positions. The church has thus moved away from its emphasis on the role of the prophet. Similarly, it would have been the Council who determined the geographical location in which a minister would operate. There is now a procedure whereby vacant positions are formally advertised, and suitable candidates are encouraged to apply.

Traditionally within the AC, anybody who was learning to prophesy would have the opportunity, particularly in Sunday morning services. If they became more experienced, there might be further openings to prophesy in district meetings and then area meetings. With the deconstruction of those larger gatherings the opportunities for such development have ceased.

The emergence of worship bands and worship leaders, and the policy of appointing ministers, whether paid or unpaid, in every local church has resulted in an evolution of ecclesiology. This evolution particularly towards 'led worship' has partially discouraged the operation of spontaneous *charismata* including prophecy. To a large extent this has curtailed the development of the gift at the grassroots level. A person who believes that they have a prophetic message is now usually required to agree its content with the local minister before being allowed to express it publicly. In such cases the minister would apply a basic edification-exhortation-comfort test (1 Cor. 14:3) but would not allow anything countercultural.

Churchgoers use a number of different criteria to determine which type of church they should attend, particularly if they have moved to a new town, for example because of a change of employment. In the past they may have prioritized denominational loyalty but I would venture to suggest that in the current climate, 'brand loyalty' is not of paramount importance. Important considerations might include music style, preaching style, whether or not charismatic gifts are practiced, or the warmth of welcome. I would suggest that in many cases one of the least important factors will be the teaching of absolute truth.

How do changing attitudes impact on the hierarchical nature of the AC?

Whilst the impact of changing attitudes within society is not unique to the AC, some of the church's core values are particularly alien to modern attitudes. These values are not all

published but exist within the church's nature. They include the hierarchical understanding of ministry gifts, the strong reliance on central government and the expectation of obedience to directive prophecy.

Two empirical studies were undertaken¹⁵ with the purpose of identifying the impact on the denomination of the changes discussed above (including societal attitudes, the deconstruction of districts and areas within the AC and the extensive use of non-salaried ministers). These issues are examined from the perspectives of ministers and their congregations in order to identify any variations between their respective attitudes and expectations

The ages of typical Apostolic ministers

From a survey conducted and outlined in Chapter One it should be noted that the current average age of AC ministers is approximately fifty years.¹⁶ This is probably due to the fact that until recently the AC 'called' people into ministry rather than encourage individuals to make a personal decision to train for the ministry. There was a tendency to make very cautious decisions about the suitability of those who were invited to take this step.

Most Apostolic ministers grew up in what Mikhail Epstein calls 'the modern project'.¹⁷ Those ministers that were in secondary education up to the late 1980s might have experienced discipline through corporal punishment.¹⁸ The expectation of obedience to teachers would prepare them for obedience to directive prophecy. This is not to suggest that the Apostolics of this generation were mindlessly obeying their leaders. However they would have found security in following leaders who would have submitted to similar authority. By the 1960s the multi-tiered education system was being replaced by a comprehensive school system and this may have added to the generational tendency to reject the concept of social deference. Gillard describes the influence of comprehensive education as producing 'a heightened consciousness among young people of their role in society - full employment, relative affluence and so increased independence and autonomy'.¹⁹

¹⁵ The protocol is outlined in the Methodology section of Chapter 1.

¹⁶ See Table 1, Appendix V.

¹⁷ Mikhail Epstein, *The Origin and Meaning of Russian Postmodernity* (Washington D.C.: National Council for Soviet and East European Research, 1993), p.91.

¹⁸ Corporal punishment in British state schools, and also in private schools receiving any element of public funding, was banned by parliament in 1987.

¹⁹ Derek Gillard *Education in England: a Brief History* (2011), www.educationengland.org.uk/history.

Prior to ordination, all Apostolic ministers are required to sign a document stating that they are prepared to move location at the behest of National Council. Non-salaried ministers have proliferated over the past twenty years, and these have mostly been exempted from the requirement.

Contemporary Apostolic ministers who are recognized as apostles

In the previous chapter I considered the role of apostles in the AC. I will now turn to their attitudes to directive prophecy. In Chapter One I outlined the protocol for two main empirical studies, one focusing on the attitudes of ministers and the other on that of congregations. The results of the ministers' survey point towards a rather parochial attitude amongst respondent apostles, with the majority recognizing that they had been called into office by prophecy and had moved location in response to it. They were divided over whether or not they would need to hear directive prophecy before acting on a particular issue. There was clear agreement that directive prophecy should still be a central feature in the life of the church but should only be used in leader's meetings. The majority of this group of respondents held the view that personal prophecies for members of the congregation who come forward to be prayed for in a convention meeting should only be spoken by recognized prophets but only if a third person is available to help with evaluating the prophecy.²⁰

Contemporary Apostolic ministers who are recognized as prophets

The survey of ministers suggests that 30% of AC ministers are recognised as apostles, but only 10% are appointed as prophets with an average age of sixty. The survey further shows that there were several younger men who prophesied but as yet had not been accepted as having the ministry gift of prophecy. As a result their prophetic message might be heard in some public meetings and even in pastors' meetings but would not be heard in council or in National Leadership Team meetings. Again the process for appointing prophets with this level of authority rests with the apostleship and is only discussed in camera.

Again, the results point towards a rather parochial attitude amongst respondent prophets though on this occasion there were fewer in the cohort. Most stated that they had moved location as directed by prophecy, and were willing to accept the notion of moving without personal conviction. They were all opposed to anybody else bringing directive prophecy in public meetings but were divided over whether or not there should be public directive

²⁰ Table 2, Appendix V.

prophecy. They were in agreement with the apostles that personal prophecies for members of the congregation who come forward for prayer in a convention meeting should only be spoken by recognized prophets but only if a third person is available to help with evaluating the prophecy. They were unanimous in agreeing that other people should not give such personal prophecies.²¹

Contemporary Apostolic ministers who are recognized as pastors

The responses from ministers who are neither apostles nor prophets to the original questionnaire highlight the major influence of the apostles in AC policy-making. Approximately equal numbers of this group could trace their original calling to prophecy as could those that only know that they were called by General Council and might just as easily have been nominated by an apostle as a prophet. Surprisingly they were strident about seeing directive prophecy mainly as a confirmation of their own convictions. They were in agreement with the apostles and prophets regarding the continuing validity of directive prophecy, with the necessity of only recognised prophets giving words in a prayer line, but were more sanguine about directive prophecy being heard in public meetings.²²

A summary of the results of the minister's survey

The survey of AC ministers has given an indication that they are mostly of an age at which respect for authority and absolute truth prepared them for service in the AC.

The apostles of the AC tend to express their leadership in terms of authority, reflecting a culture which has its origins in William Hutchinson. The younger generation has begun to show a resistance to unquestioning loyalty to directive prophecy. However it may take a significant period of time for them to amend future church policy to that required for the current generation of church attendees. The status quo is likely to be maintained by a selection process for new ministers which does not require formal training and which is undertaken by existing apostles and prophets who tend to favour like-minded men.²³

There are a number of younger ministers who report that they regularly prophesy but they are not recognized as prophets and so they are not invited to work with apostles in any recognized role.

²¹ See Table 3, Appendix V.

²² See Table 4, Appendix V.

²³ In my opinion.

The AC has undertaken major restructuring in order to place a minister in as many local churches as possible. It has encouraged the recognition of pastors who are not stipended and it has largely dismantled the notion of the district pastor. This has resulted in some churches experiencing more growth than the AC in the UK has ever known. However, the changing size and structures in the church have reduced or removed the opportunities for local elders to be exposed to public ministry and for people developing a prophetic ministry to prophesy in larger district meetings.

Current Apostolic Church trends

Much of the dissertation so far has involved investigation into the teaching and practice of the historical leaders of the AC. This has been complemented by interviews and questionnaires that have engaged with the current leaders.

Another empirical study was undertaken to identify the views of members of current Apostolic congregations. Do they hold the same views as their leaders? Do they hold the same views as the founding fathers of the AC? A hundred years after the formation of the AC, is there any hint of cynicism about the denomination's theology and praxis and in particular that of directive prophecy? Are those that attend Apostolic churches being influenced by other social or religious developments, and is the AC flexible enough to cope with these influences? Trends that might be observed could include the attitudes among different age groups and any variation between the views of those that have only attended Apostolic churches and those that have, for whatever reason, attended different denomination on a regular basis. The protocol and the weaknesses of the research process are again outlined in the methodology in Chapter One.

Experience of different denominations

In the past, there may have been a greater tendency for people who joined the AC to remain loyal to the church for life. There are several reasons why people move from denomination to denomination. Increased mobility of labour in particular requires people to move location. Individuals who do not find a church of their chosen denomination will endeavor to find an alternative. Some people choose to move denomination owing to a desire for different theology, attraction to a particular preacher or because the programme is more appealing. In the past Apostolics tended to marry Apostolics and to remain loyal to the AC. It is more

common for today's generation to choose their life partner from other places and for the newlywed couple to decide which denomination, if any, to support. This wider experience of regular attendance at different denominations may give rise to more diverse expectations. How would that diversity manifest itself with regard to those issues that are central to AC beliefs? Respondents were asked to give an indication of the number of different denominations that they may have attended on a regular basis in the past. Bearing in mind that the large, mostly African, congregations had chosen not to take part in the survey, the results seem to indicate that younger respondents had generally attended more different denominations in the past than the older ones.²⁴ It might have been anticipated that younger respondents would not have had as much opportunity to attend so many denominations in the past twenty years as those who were older. However, this is not borne out by the indications from those completing the survey. The first age range (20-30) had almost the lowest results in category A (one denomination), the highest percentage for B (two to three denominations) and one of the highest percentages for C (four to five denominations). The reasons for this change in denominational experience would be an interesting topic for further research. Whatever the reasons, the results seem to confirm the notion that 'brand loyalty' is not of primary importance to the younger generations.

How important is the 'Apostolic brand' to its congregants?

Until fairly recently all Apostolic assemblies would have had similar programmes, structures and liturgy.²⁵ Any person visiting one assembly from another would immediately be accepted as a member and might even know a number of people who attended on a regular basis. If a person was recognized as an elder in one assembly but moved to another on a permanent basis they would probably be invited to take up their eldership in the new assembly. In the past twenty to twenty five years every effort has been made to allow local assemblies to develop their own structures and policies, ostensibly, to meet the needs of their local communities. To attempt to assess the influence of this policy, respondents were asked to indicate how important it was to them that the church that they attended was part of the AC. The results were collated twice: the first time to compare the attitudes of different age groups.²⁶

²⁴ See Table 5, Appendix V.

²⁵ Although there has never been a strict liturgy within the AC, there has developed an informal liturgy so that any regular attendee would know the structure of any particular service and could probably estimate timescales. 'We will pray at . . . , the preacher will commence his sermon at . . . , the service will conclude that . . .'

²⁶ See Table 6, Appendix V.

When the data is displayed in this manner it suggests that there is a general trend showing that denominational loyalty is more important to the older contributors than it is to the younger ones. Again this reflects contemporary thinking. An interesting area of further research would be to ascertain if those younger AC members, who currently do not see denominational loyalty as of primary concern, change their attitudes later in life, and whether denominational loyalty is associated with previous generations or is a feature of old age? To further pursue this question, the responses were reconfigured to reflect the number of denominations that the respondents had attended in the past twenty years. When the responses are collated in this manner they suggest that those who have only attended the AC are particularly loyal to the denomination, whereas those that have experience of other denominations are far more interested in the quality of the local church than they are in the denominational branding.²⁷

An earlier section of this dissertation dealt with the issue of the ostracising of the AC by the leaders of other burgeoning classical Pentecostal denominations during the formative years of British Pentecostalism. The outcome was that the AC not only became self-absorbed but to a large extent it also became self-reliant and self-interested. I submit that such an ‘unreal environment’ may be the primary reason why Apostolics who have had no experience anywhere else are so loyal to the brand.

Contemporary preferences in preaching styles

Preaching has always been central to the majority of Apostolic services.²⁸ Local assemblies would have their ‘preaching plan’ and the majority of male members would be expected to take their part in fulfilling it. Ordained ministers would be expected to be proficient preachers and one's ability to preach had a large part to play in determining one's ministry in the fellowship. In the past preaching tended to be authoritative and emphasized absolute truth. The only time when preaching would not be heard in a service would be if a prophet brought an extensive prophecy. On such occasions the planned preacher would always give way to the prophetic utterance.

²⁷ It should be remembered that the traditional teaching of the AC would encourage its members that different assemblies were all part of the same AC. It would be very common up to twenty years ago for directive prophecy to instruct leaders including lay leaders to move from one assembly to the other for the greater good of the wider AC.

²⁸ Other than the Sunday morning Breaking of Bread Service where traditionally there would not have been any preaching, but there could be two or three prophecies.

In the past ten years or so it has become quite common to move away from traditional homiletics and to see multimedia presentations including video presentations and PowerPoint being used to supplement the presenter's skills.

The research questionnaire investigated whether or not this was a trend that suited young people exclusively rather than the general congregation.

The results suggest that the majority, of all age groups, like strong teaching provided that the teaching is communicated effectively using modern tools. Even the oldest correspondents, who would remember the days of the great orators of the AC, have expressed this preference.²⁹ A suitable ancillary area of research, that may have helped to analyse these preferences more thoroughly with regard to these older respondents, might include questions that probed whether it is just modern preaching that is enhanced by contemporary teaching tools or whether the older contributors think that those great orators of the past like D.P. Williams or Ian Macpherson might also have benefited.

Are Apostolics currently being more influenced by their own conventions or by interdenominational conventions?

Traditionally one of the main cohesive forces within the AC, has been its network of conventions. In those conventions Apostolic doctrine and practice would be demonstrated and (non-directive) extensive prophecies followed by equally extensive expositions would be heard. In recent years there has been an increasing number of interdenominational conventions such as Spring Harvest and New Wine. The resources at these conventions are of a very high standard and the events are very popular. The primary objective of these interdenominational events is not to show any single form of doctrine or practice but to motivate people normally to social action and to help people in their spiritual walk.

Would Apostolics prefer to attend their own denominational events or would they be more drawn to interdenominational events?

Prophecy has always had a major role in Apostolic conventions. In the national and international conventions there was normally an extensive prophecy in each of the meetings followed by an exposition of the prophecy by the chairman of the meeting. This could occupy fifty percent of the service. In the less high profile conventions other prophets were able to develop their gift by replicating what happen in the major convention.

²⁹ See Table 8, Appendix V.

Until the mid-1970s there was within the AC a strict pattern of conventions. There were two national/international conventions. Penygroes International Convention was by far the biggest. It was held in the beginning of August at the same time as Keswick in Wales. The two groups did not share a common theology but both conventions had the same epithet 'For the deepening of Spiritual Life.' Penygroes was known as the 'Mount' amongst Apostolics. Everyone who could do so would make their annual journey. In 1933 the Apostolic Temple was opened as the main meeting place for this convention. Attendees were encouraged to think of themselves as pilgrims replicating the Jews travelling to the Temple for their feasts and festivals.

Second to the Penygroes convention was the Glasgow New Year Convention. On this occasion approximately 1000 Apostolics would travel to Scotland. They would come from Wales and they would come from the North of England but predominantly from Scotland. Those that attended the convention on a regular basis would say that this convention was more intimate than the one at Penygroes, that the spontaneous worship was of a higher standard and that there was a lot more directive prophecy. Many of the highly respected prophets would have attended both conventions but it seems that there was more opportunity for such prophecy in Glasgow. The Glasgow Convention ceased in the early years of this century.

At those conventions all ministers would sit at the front, and the impression would be given to the congregation that this was the real Apostolic Church functioning at its best.

Larger geographical areas were known as Apostolic Areas or Apostolic Regions and they would have their conventions normally at Easter or Whitsun. At these conventions the area or regional chairman who was invariably an Apostle would preside, and the National Executive would nominate a visiting speaker who would normally be a high-profile personality from within the fellowship. It would be expected that any prophetic utterance would come from a pastor-prophet who was based in the local area or region or from lay-men recognized as prophets.

A third tier of conventions was organized at a district level. The district pastor would preside over this convention but the guest speaker would be nominated by the National Executive. The whole ethos of these conventions was that they were a boost to the morale of the local members. They gave the local membership the sense that the hierarchy knew all about them

and that they were a part of the wider Apostolic Church. The membership could see the Apostolic body at its best in proportion to their ability to attend the different conventions.

The survey provided some unexpected results.³⁰ Given the high profile attached to these events it is surprising that even amongst the older contributors there was a proportion that never attended conventions. This could have been for many reasons, including financial or geographical. Some people may even have had philosophical reasons not to attend, believing that God could meet as effectively in the local assembly as much as in the large conventions.

The second point to make is that for every age group it is clearly more important to attend Apostolic conventions than interdenominational conventions. Since 2003 the main international convention has metamorphosed. It moved from Penygroes initially to the campus of Swansea University and then in 2012 to the conference facilities at Cheltenham Racecourse where it is experiencing success under the title 'Ablaze UK'. There has been a positive policy of rebranding the event with some of the contributors actually being brought in from outside of the AC. It is unlikely that the AC has the resources internally to provide the level of teaching and worship that current needs demand. In providing a convention in this manner the primary objective is no longer a demonstration of the Apostolic body at its best.

The third point to note is that although contributors generally preferred to attend Apostolic conventions, there is an increasing interest in attending interdenominational gatherings. There is a sense of being involved in immediate action at the events and there is a sense of being involved in cutting edge worship. Leaders from many denominations and theological persuasions are involved and so what emerges is a conglomerate theology with a sense that absolute understanding of doctrine is less important than the other messages that are being expounded. Social and political action is high on the agenda.

The results were re-collated to emphasize the attitudes of respondents with reference to the number of denominations that they have attending regularly. When the data is presented in this format it indicates that whereas those who have only known the AC seem to prefer AC conventions rather than interdenominational gatherings, that loyalty seems to diminish in proportion to the number of denominations the contributors have previously attended.³¹

³⁰ See Table 9, Appendix V.

³¹ See Table 10, Appendix V.

The issue of directive prophecy

In an earlier chapter, it was reported that a large majority of the ministers of the AC were comfortable with the following definition of directive prophecy:

Directive prophecy is prophecy that instructs the recipient with regard to actions to be taken, location to serve in or steps to be taken that will lead into a greater sense of the purpose of God.

Although AC ministers may have been content with this definition, the other classical Pentecostal leaders would have taken issue over the reference to prophecy instructing an action rather than confirming what was already gestating. The vast majority of the respondents to this questionnaire took the view that directive prophecy confirmed what was already being developed into a conviction or they took the more traditional Apostolic view that the prophecy in some manner imposed instructions onto the recipient, placing an onus of obedience on them.

On the other hand the results of this survey show that a residual number of participants held the very casual view that directive prophecy simply contains another point of view that might be worth considering. The majority of those who expressed this opinion were people who had only attended Apostolic assemblies in the past twenty years.³²

These two opposing positions replicate exactly the responses to a similar question which was directed to the ministers of the AC as an earlier part of this dissertation. On that occasion it was clear that older ministers largely held to the traditional view of the AC, but younger ministers were breaking away from that view. They preferred to believe that they were personally responsible for determining their future path, and that directive prophecy confirmed what they had already received from the Holy Spirit by other means.³³

Is the quality of prophecy heard in the AC improving or deteriorating?³⁴

Conversations with a retired senior apostle and with a younger AC minister revealed that views in the AC about whether the quality of prophecy in the church is improving or deteriorating are as different as the views on the purpose of directive prophecy.

³² The majority of these respondents came from the same assembly. This suggests that either they were being taught this view locally or that there had been some bad experience in the local environment that led to this view.

³³ See Table 11, Appendix V.

³⁴ This question is intentionally subjective so that respondents can express their own views.

The retired apostle said that he regretted that whilst prophecy should challenge faith, he was no longer hearing such faith-challenging prophecy. The young AC minister said that he was grateful that he no longer heard prophecy that, whilst challenging, included many promises that were never fulfilled.

If those differing views are being expressed by the ministers, what about the congregations? The responses to this question are spread fairly evenly across the three options.³⁵ There are several reasons why this question might have caused such a variety of results. Firstly, the move away from spontaneous worship towards led worship has reduced the opportunity for prophecy to be developed in the local church.³⁶ Secondly, the denominational instruction to discourage public directive prophecy for appointments to ministry has limited the topics considered suitable for prophecy. Thirdly, some rather grandiose prophecies at National Convention that have not been fulfilled have caused some cynicism even among the stalwarts.

The survey tends to indicate that almost a third of respondents, mainly in the older age groups felt that the quality of prophecy was deteriorating. A little over a third of all respondents, mainly younger contributors, held the opposite view. They felt that the quality of prophecy was improving. When the results were restructured to highlight the differing views of respondents according to their experience of regular attendance in different denominations, they did not produce any new significant insights.

Just under a third of respondents felt that the quality of prophecy was deteriorating. The survey tends to indicate that older respondents felt this way while younger contributors tended to respond in a contradictory fashion. Just over a third of all respondents reported this way. They felt that the quality of prophecy was improving. When the results were restructured to highlight the differing views of respondents according to their experience of regular attendance at different denominations, it did not produce any new significant insight.

How important is it to be the recipient of directive prophecy? What happens to the prophetic word that has been received?

The concept of receiving personal directive prophecy has always been revered within the AC. In the past there would have been an expectation of obedience after a personal prophetic

³⁵ See Table 12, Appendix V.

³⁶ Valid questions to ask in any follow-up research would include 'Do you regularly hear people prophesying in your local church?' and 'How do you actively develop prophetic ministry in your local church?'

message had been confirmed by an apostle.³⁷ The means by which these words might be received may have changed³⁸ but what about the expectation of unstinting obedience?

Of the three possible responses that were offered to the question ‘Have you ever received directive prophecy?’ the least favoured indicated that respondents had not received directive prophecy but that they would respond to it if they had. The remaining respondents selected the two alternative options in approximately equal numbers. It was clear that older respondents were more likely to have received directive prophecy and to have responded to it, whilst younger respondents were less likely to have done so. The younger contributors preferred to assert that prophecy only confirmed what had already been revealed to them by some other means so that they, as the recipients, would be the arbiters of whether they should act or not.³⁹

Reordering the results to reflect the number of denominations that respondents have attended in the past 20 years provides no other significant data.

Who should evaluate prophecy?

This dissertation has shown that Apostolics have believed that the ministries of apostles and prophets are closely linked. Evaluation of prophecy has therefore been considered to be the responsibility of an apostle. Postmodernity gives rise to reaction against all forms of authority and a preference for individuals to determine their own direction.

When the respondents were asked who they thought should judge (ie evaluate) a prophecy there was an almost unanimous rejection of the concept of other prophets judging it. However, Paul's teaching in 1 Cor. 14:29 is that two or three prophets should prophesy and the other prophets should judge what has been prophesied. The older respondents provided a strong minority in favour of senior leadership being the main arbiter of the validity of any particular prophecy. As the cohort got younger the balance tended to lean towards the whole church being responsible for judging the prophecy. Certainly this is in accordance with the Pauline teaching.⁴⁰ David Prior makes a salutary point when he states that when prophecy is

³⁷ There is anecdotal evidence that in the formative years of the Fellowship it became common for people to even approach prophets in Penygroes to ‘enquire of the Lord’ regarding the naming of newborn babies.

³⁸ To a large extent the public presentation of prophecy has been replaced by prophecy given to individuals who respond to an invitation to come forward for personal prayer during a service.

³⁹ See Table 13, Appendix V.

⁴⁰ In 1 Thessalonians and in 1 John this weighing is seen to be the responsibility of the whole church.

rare we tend to omit this control, and we often pay the penalty in lives being manipulated.⁴¹ It seems vital therefore that church leaders take responsibility for evaluating prophecy but also that other prophets and the wider church take a share in that responsibility.⁴²

When the statistics are restructured to indicate the results according to the number of churches that the contributors have attended regularly in the past, it becomes evident that those with wider experience of different churches are less likely to believe that senior leaders should be the final arbiters of prophecy.⁴³

Conclusion from the congregational survey

Firstly it is important to reiterate that the findings from the congregational survey can only be considered indicative of trends because of the paucity of respondents.

This exercise has shown that there are many influences on congregations, and the perception of these changes as positive or negative depends on the perspective of the enquirer. It could be argued that some of these changes that have affected Apostolic congregations are outside the control of the leadership.

Postmodern trends militate against ‘brand loyalty’ and the results of the first question bear this out. In an environment that has been influenced by postmodernity it would be expected that older participants might have a strong loyalty to the AC whereas the younger participants might have more experience of attending different denominations. This survey confirms that pattern.

It was noted that there were certain topics, such as the attitudes to dress, where all age groups took a relaxed approach. The option supporting the wearing of casual clothes was easily the most popular answer followed by the option supporting no dress code whatsoever. The answer that suggested a requirement for some sort of dress code was the least popular option. Similarly all age groups seemed to prefer a more relaxed and contemporary style of preaching.

The primary purpose for asking this question was to determine whether or not younger Apostolics were more influenced by the teaching of ‘conglomerate theology’. The means by

⁴¹ David Prior, *The Message of 1 Corinthians: Life in the local church* (Leicester: IVP, 1985), p.251.

⁴² See Table 14 you the 142, Appendix V.

⁴³ See Table 15, Appendix V.

which this could happen might include attendance at popular interdenominational events like Spring Harvest rather than by attendance at larger specifically Apostolic conventions. It would also be interesting for the purposes of this dissertation to establish whether or not the trend away from brand loyalty, resulting in people attending different denominations at different periods in their life, would influence their understanding of directive prophecy.

As a result of these and other influences there is little common understanding with regard to the quality of prophecy within the AC. Approximately one third believe that the quality is 'about the same'. This is a safe option, and those choosing this option will include those who do not want to offend or challenge the status quo. It will also include those who feel that they do not have the right to comment on the quality of prophecy.

Some of the younger contributors that held this view said in informal conversations that they were pleased that they no longer heard the grandiose prophecies of the past for which they felt there was no accountability when reality did not match the expectations raised by the prophecies. Older respondents, when speaking informally, referred to these same prophecies as 'faith inspiring', and they regretted that they no longer heard them.

The research carried out through the questionnaires provided has revealed that there are significant changes within the thought processes of those within the AC in respect of directive prophecy. The effects of these changes are slowly being realized in certain AC assemblies. However I submit that with a new generation of leaders who have been influenced by more than confidence in the combined ministry of Apostle and Prophet these changes could become more widespread. In the next chapter I will address what I see as the major conclusions this dissertation has produced and also suggest areas of further research that may be helpful to produce a more complete story of the developing AC in the UK.

Chapter 6 Concluding thoughts

This dissertation set out to address the following research questions relating to the Apostolic Church and its distinctive tenet of directive prophecy:

- How did the Apostolic Church (AC) refine and implement its theology regarding Apostles and Prophets which was adopted from the Apostolic Faith Church (AFC)?
- How did the AC actually implement any directions given in prophecy within its local and national congregations? The formative leaders of the AC adopted the position that once a directive prophecy had been confirmed by an apostle or by the National Council, the recipient was expected to conform to its requirements. Assessing this issue allowed me to understand whether this practice conforms to Biblical teaching and to ascertain whether this practice continues today.
- The AC referred to prophecy and particularly directive prophecy as ‘Word of the Lord’. Prophecies were delivered in the first person singular. Did/does this mean that they are considered to have the same status as the Bible?
- A further question related to the views of the doctrine and practice that had been established by the denomination’s founders that are now held by contemporary leaders and congregations.

Initially my personal situation and my history of involvement in the AC led me to anticipate that this research would be straightforward. All of the archives of the denomination were at my disposal; I was well known to many of the national and local staff and had attended many of the relevant National Councils.¹ However this research has proved more difficult than I had imagined especially as I have endeavoured to focus on the main topic. This is due to the fact that within the AC there is an inextricable link between governance, authority, apostle and prophet ministry and the tradition of ‘tiers’ of prophetic utterance. It has proved to be almost impossible to isolate any one of these ‘Apostolic distinctives’ without reference to the others.

¹ I was never recognised as an apostle but I had been asked on more than one occasion to advise Apostles’ Councils on particular subjects

Personal reflections on directive prophecy within the AC

My personal experience of the AC has helped me to approach this subject from a position of first-hand knowledge and teaching. I attended a local AC assembly where there would have been messages of prophecy as well as tongues and interpretation on most Sunday mornings. At local conventions which took place at specific times of the year we would hear prophecy from respected men from the district. On ‘special’ occasions, everybody would be brought together for apostle and prophet ministry when the whole service would be handed over to an apostle and a nationally recognised prophet. During one of these services, when I was 26 years old, a directive prophecy was given publicly, naming me personally, and instructing me to prepare for what God had for me in the future. Two years later, the same man who had prophesied about me asked if he could visit my wife and me; he spent the evening with us. Some months later we were informed that we had been ‘called’ to move to another assembly, some 30 miles away where I was to function as an elder. When I was ordained as an elder, I soon found myself in the situation where the Pastor was moved on to another assembly. The congregation did not yet know me well, but there were no other functioning elders, so I took the leading role in that assembly. Despite the difficult situation I was determined to be faithful and committed as I believed I was ‘called’ by God to this role.

There were two people who regularly ‘prophesied’ in the church, and I grew increasingly dissatisfied with the ‘quality’ of their prophecies in that I found them to be very personal, oppressive and full of the well-known views of those who were prophesying. They were certainly not following the biblical injunction for prophecy to be edifying, encouraging exhorting or comforting.² I spoke to the local apostle who laid hands on me and prayed that I, too, would have the gift of prophecy. I disciplined myself with fasting and prayer and continually asked God if there was any prophecy that I should give on the following Sunday. One of the previous ‘prophesiers’ eventually ceased using the ‘gift’.³ I continued to prophesy regularly until a new full-time minister who was recognised as a Ministry Gift of Prophet was

² 1 Cor 14:3

³ Which I had considered to be spurious and therefore believed this was a helpful step within the spiritual life of the congregation.

appointed as the District Pastor.⁴ In 1989 I received a telephone call from a representative of the National Council inviting me to join the Ministry Staff. In 1992, I received another telephone call from the National Council representative informing me that I had been called to move home and take up responsibility for four churches in the Newcastle-upon-Tyne District in the North East of England. I was not in the National Council on either of these occasions and so I was not aware if these ‘callings’ were instigated by directive prophecy or by apostolic revelation or were simply the result of conversations among the leadership team. However on the evidence of these conversations I readily responded to the ‘calls’, believing that they were divinely inspired.

The ecstasy of the Old Testament prophets and the messenger formula.

This dissertation has discussed the various elements that gave rise to the messages of both the primitive and the classical prophets of the Old Testament. The AC prophets adopted a similar style to that of the Old Testament prophets in using a message formula such as ‘thus saith the Lord’ or ‘this is the Word of the Lord’; I submit that this was in order to add gravitas to their message. In chapter 2 I showed that William Hutchinson had taught that contemporary directive prophecy was more authoritative than Scripture. However D.P. Williams later made efforts to discourage written prophecies being published as ‘The Word of the Lord’. This approach still pertains within the fellowship, although the notion that contemporary prophecy is more authoritative than Scripture has never had a place in AC doctrine. Nevertheless, the phrase ‘thus saith the Lord’ is still in popular use within the denomination both at local and national level. Its protagonists argue that it proves the conviction of the prophet, whilst its antagonists argue that the phrase prevents reasoned discussion about the validity of the message. Debate continues within the AC about the use of a message formula to introduce or conclude prophecies. On the whole it is still a widely accepted practice but there are signs of change especially within the younger generations.

A comparison between New Testament prophets and AC prophets.

D.P. Williams identified three ‘tiers’ of prophetic utterance: the spirit of prophecy, the gift of prophecy and the ministry gift of a prophet. This dissertation has shown that there may be sufficient evidence in the New Testament to identify the latter two, but Williams relied on

⁴ With hindsight I wonder if what I was delivering was actually a form of preaching which was intended to build up the hearers.

some obscure Old Testament examples to identify the former. I have shown that there is evidence within the New Testament to justify a differentiation between those that prophesied at a local level (eg Philip's daughters in Acts 21:9) and those that had a peripatetic ministry (eg Agabus in Acts 11:27). I submit that when Paul was discussing prophecy and prophets, in 1 Cor. 12-14 and in Eph. 4 he was listing various ministries in both cases to exemplify his main points concerning unity in diversity. I would therefore suggest, without disparaging D.P. Williams, that the theology that he was developing fell short of the message that Paul was trying to convey.

William Hutchinson's role was addressed in chapter two; he taught his followers that the contemporary prophecy that they heard in the AFC was more divinely inspired than scripture. As a result, AFC prophets were expected to bring prophecies which supported the previously formulated views of the leadership rather than anything counter-cultural such as the slide into heterodoxy. Again this highlights Hutchinson's dictatorial nature which allowed the manipulation of congregations or individuals through directive prophecy. When the crisis meeting took place in which the proto-AC moved away from the AFC, all prophets were forbidden from making their own specific contribution. Presumably this was in order to prevent any dissension.

When the AC emerged, there was initially a certain amount of confrontation over the question of the preeminence of the apostles or the prophets respectively. This was exacerbated by the fact that D.P. Williams' brother was such a prominent prophet. Eventually it was established that apostles took priority over prophets. The formalizing of the organization through the Constitution provided for a strong network of prophets, but this rigid structure was soon seen to be unworkable and was dismantled. In the formative years of the AC there were occasions when prophets brought messages that contradicted or challenged the direction of the apostles. However, the ministry gift of the prophet has always been seen mainly as a tool of government within the church.⁵

The empirical studies that I carried out indicated that the current generation and those that have regularly attended other denominations are not as confident with the notion of the need

⁵ I interviewed a recently retired prophet (who wished to remain anonymous). He would regularly attend National Leadership Team meetings and Council as a prophet. The question was put to him about his progression, had he ever given a counter-cultural prophecy. He agreed that there were occasions when he would have liked to, but knew that it would have affected his career opportunities.

to comply unwaveringly with instruction through directive prophecy. This, I submit, could be a vital aspect in the reconfiguring of the AC in the UK.

Do AC apostles have authority or are they authoritarian?

William Hutchinson was at first loath to accept the position of apostle but, as he became increasingly heterodox, he embraced it, eventually adopting the title 'Chief Apostle'. This attitude and reaction of Hutchinson reveals an authoritarian character who was intent upon establishing himself as the final authority on all things relating to the AFC. D.P. Williams' split from Hutchinson due to concerns over this authoritarian attitude implies that such an attitude would not be prevalent in a denomination led by Williams. However it could also be suggested that with this background in theological thinking it is unsurprising that the AC has been accused of being similarly authoritarian.

The question of 'authority or authoritarian' was one of the primary objections that the proto-apostolics had to Hutchinson and the AFC, and this led to secession. When those who split from Hutchinson organised themselves into their own fellowship, they were determined that they would not have a single leader. Their emphasis was that the responsibility for discipline, doctrine and all primary decisions would rest with the National Council. A President (or National Leader) would also be appointed. The collegial apostleship took responsibility for the fellowship and, as individuals, they made themselves responsible to the group, thus showing humility along with their corporate authority. However, careful scrutiny of the minutes of the AC reveals that D.P. Williams and his brother William were often the final authority on matters relating to AC doctrine and praxis. Further research is necessary on the manner in which they exercised this authority in their leadership within the AC.

It is beyond the remit of this dissertation to research the increasing interest in the subject of apostleship which is being espoused by people such as C. Peter Wagner.⁶ I submit that further research into the area of comparison between this emerging apostleship and the New Testament model would be beneficial.

⁶ C. Peter Wagner *New Apostolic Churches* (Ventura: Regal, 1982).

The Latter Rain Movement

The relationship between the AC and the Latter Rain Movement had a fundamental impact on both organisations. The Latter Rain supporters became more heterodox and it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to fully discuss their doctrines.⁷ However the AC in the UK has been unable to recover from the divisive experience. The reasons for this, I submit, were largely due to the apparently heavy-handed manner in which the Council addressed the matter. On the other hand it could be suggested that this firm approach was necessary as signs were emerging of the heterodox doctrine and practice within the Latter Rain/AC combination. Further consideration should also be given to the fact that following 50 years of exuberant growth, the fellowship was beginning to normalise. D.P. Williams had recently died, and the practice of ordination to ministry immediately after directive prophecy had led to some major embarrassments. The example quoted in chapter 5 involved a man from New Zealand who belonged to an entirely different denomination and who, when visiting the AC in Canada, was immediately ordained as an apostle on the instructions of directive prophecy. I submit that many of the progressive leaders of the fellowship left, and those who remained were required to conform to a strict standard instigated by the Council. Again a more detailed investigation of the rift caused during the Latter Rain era and its effect upon the AC requires further research. This would allow for a more balanced assessment of the period which caused much disruption within the denomination and could further assist in ascertaining its current praxis relating to directive prophecy.

Cecil Cousen

The role and ministry of Cecil Cousen and the impact of his departure from the AC require further investigation. It is beyond the remit of this dissertation to explore the New British Churches Movement.⁸ However when Cecil Cousen left the AC he and his colleagues from other denominational backgrounds had a massive impact on this movement as it evolved.⁹ I submit that, had he been allowed to continue within the AC, there would have been a much closer link between the emerging neo-Pentecostals and the AC. Cousen's influence through his personal contacts and his literature reached many individuals and groups. He had learned

⁷ www.letusreason.org/latrain1.htm.

⁸ According to Allan Anderson, the New British Churches Movement numbered approximately 400,000 people in the year 2000. Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), p. 157.

⁹ www.davidmatthew.org.uk/restorationhist.html.

much from his Apostolic background and had experienced much from his involvement with Latter Rain that he was able to pass on to those who were hungry for what they saw as a move of God.

Internal moderation

I use the term ‘internal moderation’ as a composite expression to show that, for whatever reason, the AC began to measure itself by its own internal standards and regulations. It had no input from external sources and relied on internal resources to assess such things as doctrinal accuracy and growth potential. By the late 1960s, a moratorium was placed on ministers undertaking external studies. The Apostolic Bible College had been in existence since the 1930s, but there was never an expectation that potential ministers should attend nor was there an understanding that non-attendance would preclude potential ministers from appointment as pastors. The Bible College in the UK was permanently closed in 2008, although occasionally students from the UK attend the very successful sister college in Denmark.¹⁰

The process of internal moderation became more controlling as decisions to invite individuals to fulfil any form of ministry, whether as a deacon, elder, lay or stipended minister, are made *in camera*.¹¹ Men who are currently serving as apostles and prophets are the product of such decisions. Most of them could only identify men from a previous generation of the AC as the primary source of help in the development of their own ministry. These men in turn are then responsible for the selection of the next generation of ministers, with the natural inclination to select new recruits who demonstrate the same theology and attitudes as themselves. The AC’s self-imposed isolation has caused it to miss the opportunity to interact with the burgeoning neo-pentecostal movements and to build an infrastructure that monitors profound social changes. It has done little to modify its ministry to accommodate these changes.

In 2008 I had the privilege of addressing the AC international convention in Swansea. At the commencement of my presentation, I asked the congregation how many of them considered Agabus to be a good prophet, and there were very few responses. I then asked how many

¹⁰ <https://iabc.dk>

¹¹ It is only in the very recent past that potential ministers have been able to volunteer for ministry which currently, is normally in a lay capacity and it has also, recently, become more possible for ministers to apply for posts in other AC assemblies.

considered him to be a poor prophet, and again there were very few responses. I then asked the congregation if they had never heard of Agabus. The vast majority of the congregation of some one thousand people raised their hands. In a denomination that considers itself to value directive prophecy, I submit that this is a clear indication of the denomination's unwillingness to critically assess its traditional doctrines and values and to appreciate its biblical heritage especially in relation to the central tenet of prophecy. The lack of understanding of the biblical nature of prophecy could prove to be a fundamental issue in the future development of the AC. If the denomination is struggling to bring its modern congregants into line with this doctrine the question must be raised as to how it will be able to continue as a charismatic movement focused on directive prophecy. This foundational feature in the church's life is slowly being undermined, and the AC is consequently being transformed into a movement that has little to distinguish it from other biblical, evangelical denominations. If the AC desires to regain its heritage serious discussion and teaching on the core issue of prophecy and in particular directive prophecy is required at both national and local levels.

Directive prophecy; judges and judgement.

An important question about the use of prophecy in the Church is how and by whom it should be evaluated. It may be impossible to develop an objective test to determine the veracity of charismatic gifts that would suit all parties. Nevertheless it is important for people who hold these gifts in high esteem to have a method of testing, particularly if they are going to make life changing decisions on the basis of directive prophecy.

Jesus himself warned that many false prophets would arise and would deceive many people (Matt. 24:11, 24). John echoes this warning (1 John 4:1) as does Peter (2 Peter 2:1; 3:2). In giving these warnings they give no guidance on how to test prophecies, but Paul is more specific in instructing other prophets about judging prophecy. For example in 1 Cor. 14:29 other prophets are entrusted with the task; whilst in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 Paul instructs that it is the responsibility of the whole church to test everything.¹² He explains to the Thessalonians at length what their attitude should be to prophecy warning against two extremes, each of

¹² Leon Morris, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries 1 Corinthians* (Leicester: IVP,1993); Leon Morris, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries 1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Leicester: IVP,1993); David Prior, *The Message of 1 Corinthians: Life in the Local Church, The Bible Speaks Today* (Leicester: IVP, 1993:); John Stott, *The Gospel & the End of Time: The Message of 1 & 2 Thessalonians/Includes Study Guide for Groups or Individuals, Bible Speaks Today* (Leicester: IVP,1994).

which is incorrect. The first error is to accept all prophecy unreservedly, without first submitting it to judgement. The other is to reject prophecy altogether thereby quenching the Holy Spirit. Paul then recommends a middle course; his readers are urged to be open to the exercise of the gift of prophecy. However they are implored to give respectful attention to any utterance or revelation that claims to be prophetic but always to submit each utterance or revelation to careful, scriptural testing, and to accept only that which passes such testing.

Clifford Hill counters the view that it is not worth risking prophecy in the church in case it is misguided, wrong or even evil, with the following sound advice: ‘the opposite of false prophecy is not no prophecy, but carefully weighed and tested prophecy’.¹³ Graham Cook further suggests that:

the answer always to misuse is not nonuse but proper use. Every leader in ministry must take it upon himself to establish lines of credibility and integrity so that the whole body is safeguarded.¹⁴

The AC continues to practice directive prophecy within its national council structure and other forms of prophecy in local gatherings. The whole issue of evaluating such prophecy remains a matter of conjecture. In national council or in any other services or meetings where an apostle or group of apostles is present, it is left to them to judge the validity of the prophecy but in all other cases it is left to the local minister.¹⁵

What effect does a Pentecostal hermeneutic have in validating prophecy?

A Pentecostal hermeneutic is that term which identifies the hermeneutical filter through which the Pentecostal story and identity is understood; it focusses specific attention on the central narrative convictions of the Pentecostal community.¹⁶ It would be incorrect to refer to Pentecostalism as a discrete movement or a unique denomination though, because there are so many splinter groups, theologies and doctrines that trace their origins back to Parham’s Bible School. It would prove difficult to develop a set of fundamental tenets to which all Pentecostal groups could agree. I concur with Dayton who writes that:

¹³ Clifford, Hill, *Prophecy Past and Present* (Crowborough, East Sussex: Highland, 1989), p.5.

¹⁴ Graham Cooke, *Developing your Prophetic Gifting* (Tonbridge: Sovereign World, 1989), p.145.

¹⁵ Previously I explained that many younger ministers are unsure of how to handle such prophecies, particularly when they are given in the first person singular and conclude with the words ‘thus saith the Lord’.

¹⁶ Kenneth Archer, *A Pentecostal Hermeneutic: Spirit, Scripture and Community* (Cleveland: CPT, 2009).

At first blush, any effort to reduce the bewildering variety of Pentecostal traditions to a common theological pattern seems doomed to failure. Fortunately, however, much of the variety within Pentecostalism is derived from cultural factors such as divisions along racial lines or by allegiance to a founder whose charismatic leadership has produced a given faction perpetuating his or her own idiosyncratic practices and convictions.¹⁷

Despite the wide range of Pentecostals there is one distinguishing feature that unites the disparate denominations and groups and that is pneumatology. This is predicated on a post-conversion filling with the Spirit; whilst what holds together all forms of Pentecostalism is their emphasis on experience rather than on notional doctrine.¹⁸ I submit that it is correct to understand that the Pentecostal doctrine of the Holy Spirit is essentially the experience of the Spirit.¹⁹ L. Worsfold observes: ‘One is not generally referred to as a Pentecostal because of a belief *in*, but rather an experience *of*, the Spirit’.²⁰ Rodman Williams extends this assertion when he states:

It follows that true biblical interpretation calls for pneumatic understanding. The proper exegesis of Scripture is far more than linguistic analysis: it is most profoundly a matter of spiritual apprehension. Since Paul and the other biblical writers wrote words ‘taught by the spirit’ true understanding can occur only when one is existentially in accord with the same Spirit. When a person stands in the same pneumatic experience as the biblical writers did, he then has the spiritual capacity to receive what the Scripture teaches.²¹

The concept is a confirmation of the teaching of Jesus, in John chapter 14 where the Holy Spirit is called the spirit of truth (v17) ‘who . . . teaches all things’ (v25).

It could be argued that the early AC’s emphasis on the right and responsibility of the apostles to rule on the validity of prophecy was at odds with some of the scriptures quoted above (specifically 1 Corinthians 14:29, 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 and 1 John 4:1); that early understanding has been perpetuated throughout the history of the denomination. I have further highlighted how in more recent years Apostolics have struggled with this concept.

¹⁷ Donald Dayton, *The Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), p.17.

¹⁸ Even this core belief is being challenged by neo-pentecostalism and some branches of the charismatic movement.

¹⁹ Frederick Bruner, *A Theology of the Holy Spirit: The Pentecostal Experience and The New Testament Witness* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1970), p.57.

²⁰ Luke Worsfold, ‘Subsequence, Prophecy and Church Order in the Apostolic Church, New Zealand’, unpublished PhD dissertation, Victoria University of Wellington, NZ, 2004, p?

²¹ J. Rodman Williams, *Renewal Theology: Salvation, The Holy Spirit and Christian Living* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), p.241.

There have also been further difficulties with current leaders who are not recognised as apostles being uncertain about how to handle prophecy in their local churches. I submit that it would be more realistic to speak of an AC hermeneutic which is specific to its interpretation of Pentecostal theology. This particular hermeneutic does validate prophecy, but only within that particular denomination, and even within the denomination it is increasingly unsatisfactory for current generations.

This dissertation has attempted to outline the influences that impact the current generation which the founders of the AC could never have foreseen. It has included comments on contemporary philosophy in general but also specifically on influences on those who have been brought up in an Apostolic environment. The empirical studies cited in previous chapters have also shown how older generations of Apostolics have maintained their loyalty to traditional denominational values, but younger generations, and those that have not been brought up in the fellowship, find these values to be alien. In a survey taken during the mid-1990s, a Barna Research Group study found that about three-quarters of the U.S. population did not believe in absolute truth.²² The same was true of almost two-thirds of those who called themselves Evangelical Christians. The 1998 Research Group study also found that thirty-two percent of all regular church attendees had never experienced God's presence in worship, and forty-four percent had not experienced God's presence in the past year. They found that younger people were increasingly less likely to have a religious experience in worship.²³ Additional research would need to be undertaken to determine the link between absolute truth and absolute awareness of God even in the worship situation.

Apostolics have been accustomed to the delivery of prophecy in highly charged environments which are fueled by appropriate worship songs, which are often sung repeatedly. Prophets would often deliver the prophecy with strained voices, they would be seated and would have their heads bowed. It could be suggested that it may have been easier to believe that the message had divine origin when delivered in such a dramatic style. However in the more recent times, it has been more common for convention prophets to stand at the main lectern, speaking in a normal voice and with their eyes open, thus obviating any sense of drama whatsoever. The Barna report's evidence that today's generation does not generally accept

²² <https://www.barna.org/>

²³ Leonard Sweet, *Post-Modern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21st Century* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), p.45.

absolute truth, and the pressure on current prophets to produce dramatic prophecies like their predecessors and also to conform to the requirements of national leadership do not augur well for prophecy in the AC. The results of the empirical survey tended to highlight the different expectations of the different age groups with the older congregants being stimulated by the dramatic, and the younger by the more realistic.

Hutchinson and the AFC and then the early AC found evidence in Paul's teaching for an authoritarian and hierarchical structure of ministry gifts. Fee disputes this interpretation for several reasons (see chapter 5); neither does this authoritarian model sit well with a generation which is not accustomed to having man-made rules imposed upon it.²⁴ Peter's teaching on spiritual gifts (1 Pet. 4: 10) is significantly less detailed than Paul's and is therefore open to a variety of interpretations by the current generations. It allows the free-thinking mind to concentrate on what is considered to be the essence of spiritual gifts instead of being tied to a prescribed formula. As a result, attention can easily be given to exegete the fundamental nature of the spiritual gifts in the context of contemporary culture. There are three important points that Peter makes that resonate with the thinking of much of the current generation. Galloway explains that:

Peter opens his spiritual gift exposition in 1 Peter 4:10 by stating that 'each one' should use their gift. Using the word *eskastos* for 'each' signifies that Peter moves the responsibility from all of the Asia Minor believers to individuals. While love and hospitality are everyone's responsibility, *diakonein* 'ministry' is dependent on the *charisma* 'gift' or *charis* 'grace' of God. Peter uses the word *kathōos*, translated 'whatever' by the NIV, to express the fact that all have received a gift of grace.²⁵

Galloway goes on to state that we should use our gift to serve others, suggesting that Peter's use of the term *diakonountes* is sufficient reason for his hypothesis. He further explains that:

One possible translation would be 'serve it (the *charisma*) for the good of one another'. . . Peter naturally links gifts here to the communal image of the household since *diakoneō* is used frequently to describe domestic tasks or serving persons at a table . . . In other words, the gifts focus is on serving members of the community. God's gracious gifts are exercised through serving others.²⁶

²⁴ Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), p.620.

²⁵ Monty Galloway, 'Postmodern Charismata, Spiritual Gifts and Postmodern Culture Converge', a research paper submitted by to the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, MO, May 16, 2005, p.2.

²⁶ Galloway, 'Postmodern Charismata', p.2.

Galloway then concludes that contemporary Pentecostal believers should use their gifts faithfully and he then continues:

Peter tells us to 'serve others, faithfully administering God's grace'. We need to be 'stewards' or 'faithful administrators' of the gifts that God has given us. All believers must participate in the local church to help others grow.²⁷

Galloway is therefore suggesting that to satisfy postmodern charismatics or Pentecostals, one simply has to encourage everybody to use spiritual gifts, and that those gifts should be used faithfully. I would disagree with Galloway here on the basis that his arguments are fairly naive and could be interpreted as licence for the unbridled use of the charismata as at the time of the Latter Rain controversy which eventually led to the crisis within the AC.

Is apostolic heritage built on short term enthusiasm?

William Hutchinson's early church experience was with the Primitive Methodists who were noted for their exuberance and passion. He was greatly influenced by the 1904-05 Welsh Revival, which was noted for its emotion and he was even more influenced by the Sunderland Pentecostal Conventions (1908-1914) which emphasised the essential person and work of the Holy Spirit and in particular Spirit baptism and glossolalia.²⁸

When Hutchinson formed the AFC, he introduced these features of experience, exuberance and emotionalism and they were subsequently adopted by the AC following the schism. D.P. Williams was an energetic character who, even before his conversion, was known for his liveliness and verve. He was, for instance, a successful competitor in eisteddfodau; he carried this zeal into his ministry, and the whole of the AC reflected this energy. Williams' enthusiasm fired a passion within the AC to 'belt the globe' with the Apostolic vision.²⁹ The

²⁷ Galloway, *Postmodern Charismata*, p.2.

²⁸ Eifion Evans, *The Welsh Revival of 1904* (Port Talbot: Evangelical Movement of Wales, 1969); R. Tudur Jones, *Congregationalism in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004); Gavin Wakefield, *The First Pentecostal Anglican: The Life and Legacy of Alexander Boddy* (Cambridge: Grove, 2001); Gavin Wakefield, *Alexander Boddy Pentecostal Anglican Pioneer* (London: Paternoster, 2007).

²⁹ This phrase became popular throughout the UKAC. There had been a prophecy that before Christ returned, forty nations would be represented at the Penygroes International Convention. On the road leading to the convention hall, flags were flown representing each country that was present in that particular year. As children we would be encouraged to count the flags, trying to identify the different countries that were represented looking to see which new nations had appeared since the previous year.

other leading early figure within the AC was Andrew Turnbull. He did not possess Williams' gift of eloquence, but his enthusiasm revealed itself through his energetic work. The 'Burning Bush', as the precursors of the AC in Scotland were known, grew rapidly through Turnbull's personal contacts made through his many open-air services and his subsequent pastoral care.

Throughout history there have often been manifestations of 'enthusiasm' within the Christian community which have invariably proved to be controversial.³⁰ As D. Middlemiss suggests:

No religious group would have chosen the word to describe itself because it was a term of outright abuse. It meant that while a person was fanatically committed to a belief, his or her rational faculties had been switched off and the belief itself was an unjustified delusion.³¹

However their supporters would regard these manifestations as a fresh awakening of the Spirit to enliven an otherwise moribund church, whilst others would consider such excesses simply as an embarrassment to the religious establishment. The question remains as to whether the AC was simply following the path of previous 'enthusiastic' groups, or whether they were harbingers of genuine spiritual renewal. Like so many historical groups who were described as being enthusiasts in their day, the AC in the UK is now in decline.

Future Prospects

In March 1993, the then National Leader of the AC (Teddy Howells) told me that he feared that the denomination would become a 'fellowship of Apostolic Churches' with each assembly becoming increasingly independent. I submit that this 'prophecy' is certainly

³⁰ A survey of groups that have been involved in exuberant prophetic utterances shows a repeated pattern of controversy. Ronald Knox (1888-1957) became the chaplain of Trinity College Oxford in 1912. In 1950 he published his classic study *Enthusiasm*. In the foreword he stated 'Almost always the opposition [to charismatic gifts] is twofold; good Christian people who do not relish an eccentric spirituality find themselves in unwelcome alliance with worldlings who do not relish the spirituality at all', *Enthusiasm: A Chapter in the History of Religion*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), p.1. An exhaustive list might also include such groups as the Montanists who were said to be 'boiling over with the spirit' and their leader Blandina, in her zeal, was praised for acting like a 'Maccabean mother', W.H.C. Friend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), p.255. Our list might also include the Zwickau Prophets. Tucker explains that the very word 'Enthusiasm' was coined as a derogatory term to describe the religious fervour of this group which was led by Nicolas Storch of Silesia. S. Tucker, *Enthusiasm. A study in Semantic Change* (London: Hodder, 1979), p.15. Another group deserving of being listed were the early eighteenth-century French Prophets, see Michael Heyd, *'Be Sober and Reasonable': The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1995). Wesley became the target of the insult when Henry Fielding wrote that Methodism was a lot of 'nonsense and enthusiasm' Henry Fielding, Joseph Andrews (1742); T.E. Owen, *Methodism Unmasked* (1802)). Middlemiss goes on to explain that George Hickes recorded in 1680 that 'enthusiasm is a demonic spirit which needs to be exorcised' and Wesley reported that 'every enthusiast, then, is properly a madman' (John Wesley, 'The nature of Enthusiasm (1750)' in *Sermons, Vol.1*, p.467.

³¹ D. Middlemiss, *Interpreting Charismatic Experience* (London: SCM, 1996), p.1.

coming to pass. The district and regional system have all but ceased though pastors' meetings continue. As a result the sense of oneness and fellowship is being lost as are the opportunities for people to develop their prophetic ministry. I further submit that this is a consequence of the deconstruction of the regular programme of conventions that were enjoyed by previous generations. It is approximately 100 years since the AC seceded from the Apostolic Faith Church. Throughout that time, prophecy in general, and directive prophecy in particular, have played an intrinsic role in the ecclesiology and administration of the denomination. Whilst the AC would maintain that it was simply following the New Testament principles of church government, in truth, the doctrine and practice of the AC had been massively influenced by the prevailing popular culture. Below I summarise four major areas of concern that I have become aware of during the research of this dissertation.

Firstly, it should be recognised that the worldwide AC now has a membership of several millions, whilst amongst the indigenous British population the AC in the UK is shrinking. This negative trend is only being counteracted by the influx of primarily African immigrants who hold to the AC doctrine and praxis.

Secondly, it should be recognised that the success of the worldwide AC is largely due to the pioneers from the UK who either visited to follow-up enquiries into the practice of directive prophecy or who were sent as missionaries as instructed by directive prophecy. The concern here is whether or not the UK leadership is having the wide ranging impact upon the global AC that its founders did, or whether it is necessary for the UK to learn from other national AC groups.

Thirdly, it should be recognised for many reasons that have been discussed that the leadership process within the AC is self-moderated and the denomination is becoming increasingly insular.

Fourthly, it is clear that there is an ever-widening credibility gap between the ministers of the AC who attempt to be loyal to the traditional values of the denomination and a younger generation who are looking for a more postmodern approach.

This dissertation has shown that there are dangers in trying to maintain the exuberance of the past through an attempt at codification. It has also highlighted an increasing undermining of exuberance by modern thinking. It has further illustrated that the AC, already the smallest of

the classical Pentecostal groups in the UK, is struggling to continue to have an impact in local church ministry, and that growth is rare. The fellowship has been re-organised, resulting in some local churches being much bigger than anything experienced in the past, but it has also resulted in many local churches closing. Staffing structure at the local level has been significantly modified with several men who might have been senior elders in the past being recognised as non-salaried ministers. The AC is not alone regarding its unsure footing in the UK with many well-known denominations facing a grim future.

As the Christian church in Britain is coping with a reduction in congregants, it is also having to learn to remain relevant in a society which challenges traditionally held views of absolute truth and a hierarchical form of church government. As television has become the primary vehicle for informing society, multimedia presentations have become a popular method of communication within the church. Hymns and worship songs that once were a primary means by which congregations learnt theology have often been superseded by songs that express emotion. New songs come in and out of popularity, and their contemporary tunes are best played in a contemporary style, giving rise to the evolution of worship bands and worship leaders. In these 'led' services there is little opportunity for spontaneous prophecy, and it has become common for people who believe that they have a 'prophetic word' to have to have it approved by the service leader before the service can be interrupted.

Whilst the NT model of apostleship is based on the principles of biblical authority and relationship, the UK AC model tends to be based on hierarchical principles, tending towards authoritarianism. There is little evidence of any external input so far as the senior leadership is concerned. However it is now common for the external speakers at the major convention and at the three-day annual staff training event to be invited from outside the AC global family.

I submit that not only do apostles see their roles as being the most senior, but they also see themselves as custodians of traditional AC doctrine and practice. They are keen that directive prophecy should only be heard outside of public hearing, presumably so that it can be judged before it goes public. This practice can thus avoid the embarrassment created by previously outlined cases as experienced during the Latter Rain era.

The role of pastor has been significantly extended in the recent past, to include senior elders of the smaller churches. The vast majority of local churches now have their own minister

although, in the majority of instances, these are lay men. This has largely deconstructed the district and area networks within the AC, reducing the opportunities for the development of prophecy within the fellowship. It has also virtually eliminated the apostle and prophet ministry services which were so highly revered by previous generations of Apostolics.

Having undertaken a comprehensive study of the prophetic movement, Ernest Gentile drew the following conclusions based on his research into the AC. He states:

Our concern . . . is the use of prophecy and prophets in the AC. Because these sincere, Spirit-filled Christians utilized prophecy in a remarkable way, they provide an interesting case study.³²

He concludes that the function and fulfilment of prophecy is a great blessing to a church but warns that the phenomenon is not infallible. He advises that it is essential to maintain the testing of prophecy and prophets but he does not give any guidance on how that should be undertaken. He confirms that, although prophecy is spontaneous and inspirational in nature, it nevertheless functions best in a congregational setting that has governmental order. He warns that enquiring of the Lord through a prophet can produce many unwarranted problems in the church. Gentile suggests that the appointment of specialized prophets to local, national or international spheres sets up an unnecessary tension between prophets at different levels. He bases this comment on the original AC constitution which established a structure of tiers of prophets which became too unwieldy as the fellowship began to grow. Gentile comments that under ecclesiastical authority a prophetic movement tends to gravitate from a renewal of spontaneity to a routine. Finally he warns that religious movements should learn lessons from the movements that precede them historically and be willing to relate to the new order with fresh insights and vitality.³³ Here he is probably echoing the warning that Nelson Parr made in 1936, comparing the Apostolics to the Montanists.³⁴

This dissertation has been able to utilize and analyze documents that are not generally available and has had access to people who have spoken frankly about their own experiences within the AC. Gentile did not have these privileges and his bibliography is very general. His

³² Ernest Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters Shall Prophesy* (Grand Rapids: Chosen, 1999), pp.276-285.

³³ Gentile, *Your Sons and Daughters*, pp. 276-285.

³⁴ See Chapter 3.

conclusions are therefore surprisingly insightful and may be more far-reaching than even he realised.

In chapter 5 I commented on the decline in church attendance across all denominations within the UK. It has been suggested that Britain is now post-Christian. If this is accepted it does not augur well for evangelical denominations in general and the smaller AC will probably struggle to counter the general decline in church attendance.³⁵

A summary of my responses to the four original questions

The Apostolics did refine their theology regarding apostles and prophets. They stood against the notion of contemporary prophecy being more valid than Scripture. However, the AC maintained the concept of apostles and prophets having the primary role in a hierarchical church structure.

The primary responsibility for authenticating directive prophecy still remains with the apostleship, although younger leaders are no longer expected to comply with Council decisions without question. A major concern is that within the AC many younger ministers are unsure how to handle prophecy that is given in the local church.

D.P. Williams endeavoured to discourage the belief that contemporary prophecy was more relevant than Scripture. Nevertheless, terms such as ‘the Word of the Lord’ and prophecies given in the first person singular are still commonly heard.

Although there may be some slight changes in the attitudes of younger ministers, the process of internal moderation, whether intentional or not, causes the majority of ministers to conform to the understanding and practices that have been handed down from one generation of ministers to the next. Societal changes have had a major influence on contemporary congregations, and it seems that there is an ever widening credibility gap between the traditional values espoused by the ministers and the requirements of their congregations.

³⁵ Tim Ross, Cole Moreton and James Kirkup wrote an article in the *Daily Telegraph* in which they quoted Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, who stated that ‘Britain is no longer a nation of believers and [that] a further decline in the sway of the Church is likely in the years ahead’. The former archbishop went on to say, ‘While the country is not populated exclusively by atheists . . . the era of regular and widespread worship is over’. *Daily Telegraph* (26 April 2014).

Conversely, the large West African contingent of Apostolics in the UK may well be perfectly content to adhere to those traditional values.

A personal note

This research, has challenged my thinking and theology and has especially confronted issues that have been foundational to my upbringing and belief system. The process has occasionally been painful but I also believe beneficial. I submit this dissertation in the hope that it may stimulate more debate on the use of directive prophecy within the AC in the UK and that it may give rise to a better understanding of the current situation faced by the Apostolic Church.

Appendices

Appendix I¹

Extract from D.P. William's diary entitled:

“The Separation of the Churches in Wales and England in Ammanford.”

‘Misunderstanding has arisen between me, Daniel P. Williams and Pastor Hutchinson of Bournemouth. As the main leader to the whole Apostolic Faith Movement our connection with one another has been close and affectionate for such a long time. But things came our way which forced me to make a stand against him. Many things are unknown to the Body in the discussions that have been between us for a long time. I was directed by the Lord through the prophets to stand for enlightenment on things that pertain to me as the Lord's elect, namely the matter of the widow who went there from Wales to serve in the Mission.² There were many matters connected with her demanding my responsibility. This was refused along with many other things The Lord spoke through many channels commending me in this. The camp was perturbed throughout England, Wales and Scotland. Pastor Hutchinson came to Ammanford to meet us all in January 1916. This was the great day of separation. Three of the churches remained with him and the others followed me - a strong army.

There was no voice to decide matters but his voice. There was nobody from among the prophets to be used in any matter. Only his voice as Chief Apostle above all - so he said he was infallible. He challenged every consultation, casting doubt upon the claim that he and God spoke with one voice that day. It was obvious to me that he was not infallible. He would say exceedingly authoritative things and claimed that we owed him £600:00. The money had been donated to him. He assumed that he alone was the owner of all the money that had been donated towards the Organisation and of all the buildings, and as we had several ourselves from him we were in his debt. I told him that he would be repaid in Carmarthen Prison!

I opposed that day his misappropriating claim. He assumed authority that did not belong to him to take away my election as an Apostle; all the promises and prophecies were taken away. Penygroes was an ordained place to further the work in Wales and over the years the words of the Prophets from everywhere had pointed in this direction. But he wanted the Headquarters to be removed from Penygroes to the Ammanford valley and there, henceforth, the glory would rest. He recklessly and in high-handed manner commanded that I should be like Saul, deprived of any higher guidance unless I fell down at his feet as an Apostle, but I took heart and looked to God and knew my heart better than anyone else and I stood on my feet testifying that I was going through everything without being hindered by man, nor any authority, without fear. My soul grasped inner faith in

¹ G. Weeks, *Chapter Thirty Two* (Barnsley: The Author, 2003), p.82ff. Translated from the Welsh.

² This apparently minor problem was obviously a burden to Williams. We do not have any other details on this matter.

the invisible God believing that He was God to those who trusted in Him. I felt my soul burning for God within me.

Having been there from 11:00am to 9:00pm, I stood up and asked whoever agreed with me and did not agree to accept the authority of Pastor Hutchinson to stand. They all followed me out and thus we were separated. The most important things have been hidden.'

Appendix II

The “Apostolic Church” Error.

This leaflet, written by Nelson Parr was advertised for sale in Redemption Tidings throughout 1936.³

During the early days of the present “Latter Rain” Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Great Britain there was a natural re-action of some of the brethren against the conservative tendency of certain Episcopal leaders to “despise prophesying”; and one result was the forming of what became known as the “Apostolic Faith Church, “with headquarters at Bournemouth, in the South of England. This church was founded almost entirely on what was called “the spoken word” coming through presumably prophetic utterances by “prophets”. After a time the errors became so extreme that a section of these brethren withdrew. One result was the formation of a reformed body, still holding, however, to the main tenet of Church guidance through “prophets,” known as the “Apostolic Church,” with headquarters at Penygroes, in Wales.

The claims of these brethren to possess a “fuller vision” of God’s Divine Plan for His Church than most of their brethren in what is known as the “Pentecostal Movement, constitutes a challenge which needs thoughtfully examining. No believer who is sincerely anxious to go all the way with God will lightly turn away from what MAY be a fuller revelation of the Divine Mind.

These “Apostolic” brethren are continually trying to win over Pentecostal, and other, believers to their particular tenets by claiming that they are the only true apostolic body of believers today, inasmuch as they are the only body recognising and possessing the offices of apostle and prophet. The Scripture which is continually quoted by these brethren is Eph. 4:11, in conjunction with 1 Cor. 12:28.

Now with the “vision” of a Church modelled entirely on the principles of the New Testament in all its lines of ministry, government, worship, experience, etc., we cannot but be in the heartiest agreement. This we also personally believe to be one of the chief ends of the Divine Purpose in this present Outpouring of the Holy Spirit. But are the claims of the “Apostolic Church” justified? And is its “vision” strictly Scriptural according to the New Testament?

When it comes to the five offices or ministers of Eph. 4:11, we want to say most emphatically and strongly that we believe and claim that all these five offices can be found in the ranks of Pentecostal and other believers to-day. It is downright assumption to assert that because a certain body of believers happen to give some of their leaders the TITLES of “apostle” or “prophet”, that they are the only church who possess these offices. Every one of the ministries of Eph. 4:11, or of 1 Cor. 12:28, consist NOT IN A TITLE, BUT IN POWER. (1 Cor. 9, and 2 Cor. 11). We personally know precious servants of God who in a very Scriptural sense are fulfilling the offices of both apostle and prophet, but who do not receive those official titles, and who would probably shrink from any suggestion that such should be given to them. It is a most amazing effrontery that claims a monopoly of certain offices just because the **title** is used. Yet this claim is used to try and persuade unwary believers into accepting this so-called “apostolic church vision.”

The pivot of the whole “Apostolic Church” system of church government is the so-called “set-prophet”. It is through the “set-prophet” that brethren are “called” into their various offices, and most of the vital business of the church directed. Yet there is no Scriptural basis for this DISTINCTIVE OFFICE of a “set-prophet”. The title is based on 1 Cor. 12:28: “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after than miracles,

³ A copy is held in the archives of the AC

then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” A moment’s consideration of this verse will show that there are other ministries equally “set” by God in the Church, yet we never think or hear of giving such a title as “set-apostle,” “set-teachers,” “set-help” or “set-speakers in tongues.” The absurdity of such a procedure is apparent. They are set in the body of Christ by the bestowal of the spiritual gifts mentioned earlier in the chapter (verses 8 to 11). The prophet is neither more nor less “set” in the church than any other ministry. It was the continual ministry along a certain line of spiritual gifts given from God that caused men in the Early Church to be recognised as “apostles” (Acts 14:14; 1 Cor 9:1; 2 Cor 11:5); “prophets” (Acts 13:1; 15:32; 1 Cor. 14:29); “evangelists” (Acts 1:8); or “teachers” (Acts 13:1). While it is perfectly true that the “spirit of prophecy” could rest upon a whole congregation (as suggested in 1 Cor 14, verses 24, 31), yet there is no hint anywhere in the Scripture that those generally recognised as “prophets” had any other claim to the office than that they regularly and generally exercised the gift of prophecy (1 Cor. 12:10). The New Testament never makes any distinctions between prophets, so that some are clothed with a greater degree of official authority or infallibility than others.

Neither does the New Testament teach that the Divine Method for putting men in office in the Church is through a prophet or the gift of prophecy. Acts 13:2, cannot possibly prove this, because it does not even say that this word from the Holy Spirit came through the prophets at all; moreover it was not a call to office, but simply to a specific piece of work which was completed in Acts 14:26. The strongest scriptural support for this practice is found in 1 Tim 4:14, where it is not an office, but a spiritual gift which is in question; the neglect of which would seriously endanger Timothy’s eligibility for the office which it might otherwise fit him for. Even presuming that there are indications here that sometimes the Lord may in Divine Sovereignty indicate the office the Holy Ghost wishes a man to fill by the word of prophecy, yet there is absolutely no basis for making this into a SYSTEM of Church government and appointment to office. The same epistle (1 Tim) contains in chapter 3, full and explicit instructions to Timothy as to QUALIFICATIONS to be looked for in choosing men for official position (see also Titus 1), and indicates that it is not prophetic utterances, but plain fitness for the office that is the Divine basis of selection.

practice of “enquiring of the Lord” through prophets presumably to find out His will is utterly out of accord with the New Testament, were such a practice is NOT ONCE MENTIONED. This is a method of finding out the mind of the Lord strictly confined to the OLD Testament, before the general outpouring of the Holy Spirit which began on the Day of Pentecost, when the Promise was to “as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Guidance of the Holy Spirit is individual to the believer to-day: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God” (Rom 8:14), and requires no intermediate prophet. The fact that God occasionally gave revelations through prophets which were quite unsought and unasked for (Acts 11:28; 21:11), can never justify making this into a SYSTEM of regularly finding out what is supposed to be the mind of the Lord. Such a practice is a step BACKWARD into the Old Dispensation, and contains no elements whatsoever of a “fuller vision,” but the reverse. ALL utterances coming through “prophets” are to be judged (1 Cor. 14:29), and this plain Scripture gives no exemption to any class of prophets or prophesying in the church. (See also 1 Thess. 5:19 to 21). It is so very easy for the prophets to prophesy the visions of their own minds (as in Ezekiel 13:1 and 2).

While many of these brethren in the “Apostolic Church” are earnest Christians, truly loving the Lord, and in some cases are full of a very precious evangelical zeal, yet every unscriptural practice is dangerous, because error has a habit of ripening into deeper error as a system develops. The peril is not always apparent at the first. The acceptance of a principle of a system of “prophetic” guidance, and the failure to “judge” sufficiently whatever comes through “prophets” will ALWAYS mean that sooner or later (however apparently successful isolated

experiences may be) there will come a bitter disillusionment when the supposed infallibility and presumed Divine source of the inspiration is sometimes plainly at fault. Two of three paths will then open, as we have sometimes seen by experience:- (a) To coerce one's conscience into accepting a system which the heart knows to be wrong; or (b) the temptation to throw the whole thing up altogether and relapse into utter worldliness; or (c) by the grace of God to be delivered from this error.

One very sinister feature of all such systems is the fact that frequently when members show signs of restlessness and dissatisfaction creeping in, an endeavour is made to coerce them to remain in the church by "prophecies" of a more or less threatening nature. They are thus held by a spirit of fear. Indeed one of the usual results of an abuse of the "prophetic" gift and office is that believers are held under a system of spiritual bondage which has all the elements in it of the despotic rule of the Church of Rome.

There have arisen several spiritual and inspirational Movements during the history of the Church, from Montanism onwards, but the majority of them have ended in disaster through the very principles upon which the "Apostolic Church" is founded: i.e. an undue importance being given to "prophets" and the "spoken word." The Irvingites (now called the "Catholic Apostolic Church") also had their "apostles," and have made practically the identical claims to be the only true apostolic church as these Welsh Apostolic Church brethren make to-day. In view of the testimony of history to such continual shipwreck in the past on these very shoals there is surely need for caution.

In closing, we refer to one of the most regrettable features, Proselytizing among other believers, especially those of "like precious faith" is far-removed from the Scriptural and true "apostolic vision" of Rom. 15:20, and 2 Cor 10:15-16. Were the Lord's people being led into a genuinely deeper life in God, and a richer personal experience of the fullness of the Spirit, we could have no complaint – but rather a reason for rejoicing. Yet this is not so; it is only a case of winning converts over to a system of Church Government which is founded on erroneous principles when tested by the Scriptures, and dangerous practices when tested by history and experience.

We deplore the errors which so gravely endanger the testimony of the "Apostolic Church," and also the spirit in which it is, unhappily, so often advanced. But with all that is true, and that breathes the Spirit of Christ, we are in the heartiest sympathy. We realise that many of these brethren have a sincere and praiseworthy desire to see Scriptural Assemblies founded all over the land with a ministry founded upon Scriptural Gifts. Such is also our own aim and object. We welcome all that is genuinely constructive on this line from every quarter, and only offer criticism to that end, and in a spirit of loving concern lest fellow-believers be misled into wrong paths. Finally we pray for these brethren, as for ourselves, that we may receive such a sanctification of the Spirit of Truth, that our testimony without, and our practice within, may be freed as far as possible, while we still have this "treasure in earthen vessels," from an admixture of error that will tarnish the name of Him whom we all love and serve".

Appendix III

THE LATE PASTOR JACOB PURNELL'S TESTIMONY.

THE MONMOUTHSHIRE VALLEYS.

2 Chronicles 20 v 20.

I shall not be able to state all the wonderful things, seen and heard, of the work in Monmouthshire. But it is with joy I can truly declare that the secret of the prosperity of such a work is due to the fact that the nature and principle of the truth in the text quoted has been our possession, namely:

Faith in the Unchangeable God
Faith in the prophets and their message.

(1) My early life and conversion.

It is necessary for me to record this, because of the link between Jacob and Bethel, the place of God's choice. Born of humble parentage, my parents being yet unsaved, yet the God of all Grace visited our home during the 1904 revival and saved some of my family. I was then 13 years of age. My conversion at this time was remarkable in this sense. I was saved in the vestry of Zion Baptist Church, Brynmawr. I was sitting between the seats, rejoicing in the assurance of my salvation. Some wonderful Power swept over my soul. **The Bible** became my meat and drink. This was at the age of 13, and I rejoiced in that blessing for many years. Sorry to state, a luke-warmness came over God' people, and also over my soul, so that I became a religious and luke-warm young man, and lost the sense of victory. Then I did what most young men do – I married, which caused me to move to a place called Beaufort.

Yes, a beautiful castle it is in more senses than one, due to sacred associations, namely the unveiling of God Himself, and the raising of good, upright, holy characters from time to time. It was at this place that the **mysterious call of God** came to my soul. While attending Zoar Baptist Church, seated in the gallery between 8 o'clock and 9 o'clock in the evening, the Voice of God came to my soul, calling for complete consecration. I yielded when the invitation was given, raised my hand as a sign, and then something wonderful happened in my life. **My soul expanded, holy desires were born within me.** I became a sincere, active worker in the church. In the midst of my activities, the Call developed, and the voice within spoke louder and louder **"LEAVE THIS PLACE!"** I was in a struggle because of friendships forged and fellowship enjoyed. Eventually, I obeyed the voice, left the church I loved to do His will, certain of the fact that the Good Shepherd was guiding me. *John 13 v 4* was the scripture given by the Spirit. As I followed the light, the darkness increased and eventually I found *Matthew 10 vv 34 –39* to be perfectly true in my own experience. It was at this point of testing that the Good Hand of God imparted to me the definite experience of Sanctification and also the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Three months later, I spoke in an unknown tongue.

(2) The crisis.

Jacob alone, no assembly to attend. Oh! How I longed for others to find what I had found. Now, like Elisha, who left the plough to follow his master, so I had the witness, that having obeyed the call, and being favoured with the blessing of the Spirit, it was a sign He desired others to enter into its enjoyment and power. While praying in secret, I was overwhelmed within the Spirit, speaking in other tongues, followed by interpretation – the Audible Voice of

God. The burden of the message was, 'Stand thou alone, I will not fail thee, I will work.' I assuredly gathered that the Lord desired me to stand in the open-air alone, and that He would work. The Scene, The Time, The Witness given at that first time I stood I can never forget. I knew that as I stood alone from time to time, a glorious work was before me. In a while, I met two angels, yes, such they were to me, in the persons of brothers Thomas and James Seabourne. True as steel, they joined me in open-air work, and shortly after, another came along, Ephraim Morris, making four in all, the ranks were swelling. We decided to rent a meeting place, the name of which was "Sardis", (having a name that it liveth and is dead). But four living creatures entered; here we had great times in prevailing prayer. The Lord gave us encouragement in saving a notable religious sinner. Two other sisters were also saved, making the number to seven, two of the company walking five miles to the meeting place. Wonderful to relate, Sardis was the birthplace of the Apostolic Vision in the Monmouthshire valleys. Here God revealed Himself to us in the Prophetic Ministry in a wonderful way, and implanting faith in our hearts to believe it was His voice, we saw the vision of the plan of His Church.

Hearing of a place called Penygroes, where God was speaking, we arranged to go to the Convention in August 1920. It is interesting to know how we got there but space will not permit me to relate. Here we entered into an enquiry regarding the Apostolic Vision with the President of the Apostolic Church, the Apostle D.P. Williams. Having gathered that they were going to a place called Abergavenny, an evening was promised for Beaufort. But while returning home, I thought over the visit to Abergavenny, and only an evening promised to us. Jacob was at work, planning great things, and only seven in number! So we made our plans with big bills.

This we can never forget, the bills and the posters headed thus:

RED LETTER DAY AUGUST 1920

APOSTOLIC CHURCH CONVENTION AT SARDIS CHURCH (kindly lent) AUGUST 27th over AUGUST 29th.

When I recall what a convention is, I smile! Yet I say, although at the time we were not Apostolic, the Lord was in it. On Saturday evening, I met the 6.10 train at Beaufort station. The two apostles and prophets were on their way to Abergavenny, and did not intend to be at a convention in Beaufort. I can see them as I showed them the poster! They all came out onto the platform. Wonderful! Pastor D.P. prayed on the platform saying, "Lord, what shall we do?" The Lord spoke through the prophet Jones Williams saying, "The apostle who prayed and the channel should stay over the Sunday. The other apostle and the prophet are to come on Monday." We had a blessed time, I may state. The ministering of the servants was owned of God, and it was on the Sunday afternoon that we decided to submit to God's order and sweet will.

APOSTOLIC ASSEMBLY FORMED.

Seven of us were received into fellowship. Afterwards, the Lord spoke through the prophet and I was called and anointed to be pastor and overseer of a flock of six on August 29th. The other apostle and prophet, J.O. Jones, came along according to the word of the Lord. In this meeting we had a blessed time and a few were sealed with the Holy Spirit.

PROPHETICAL ERA IN MY EXPERIENCE.

The Lord spoke through the prophet J.O. Jones saying:- "I will use thee; I will bless thee; I will cause my word to flow from here and every valley shall hear of my doings."

In August 1921, we were told by the Lord to apply for the use of the local primary school in which to hold our services on Sundays. This we did, and we obtained the use of the smallest room for three services. The room seated about 30. It was more like a sideshow than anything else. Sandballats followers came, they ridiculed, rushing in and out, but we were unaffected. We prayed on and praised God! The room became over-crowded, so we looked for the best and largest room seating 200 to 300, which was packed each evening. Surely, the church here was born in Apostolic fashion! Every night we held cottage meetings, our homes were the Lord's; every room was occupied by the crowds who came. We took the spoiling of our goods joyfully. God was working, saving. Tippet players, boxers, skittlers, cardsharps were swept into the Kingdom. Drunkards and swearers were saved, among them a trophy of grace, Phillip Williams, known to many. We saw incurables cured. We still have on record, miraculous cases of healing from dumbness, consumption, cripples and other incurable diseases. God baptised many in His Spirit, enabling them to speak in other tongues and prophesy, without the touch of human hands. Prophetic channels were born in revival power. Much persecution followed. Our membership reached 80 in a short time. We recognised the fulfilment of the Prophetic Word. I should state here, that Pastor W.James, known to all in Monmouthshire at that time, was a means in God's hands of holding and strengthening us in the Apostolic Faith, having had greater experience. He spent months with us, labouring and toiling as a shepherd. This is fresh in our memory with God.

DOES GOD SPEAK THROUGH HIS PROPHETS TODAY?

During a visit of Pastor W.J. Williams in September 1921, the Lord spoke, saying that He would grant us a stone building, which would be a Bethel indeed. Now this was wonderful, as the cost of materials was very high at that time, and obtaining a stone building was seemingly impossible. BUT HE WHO PROMISED WAS WELL ABLE.

OPENING OF NEW CHURCH 1923.

The opening meetings at "Bethel", Beaufort, were held from April 5th over April 22nd. This was a witness to all that this work was to be a lasting one. Fifty were baptised in water at the opening of the new hall. Progress was remarkable. In August 1920, we were seven in number. April 1923 found us with 80 in membership, and a lovely church in which to worship. In April 1923, a remarkable prophecy came through Pastor J.O.Jones. "Jacob and Bethel are mine, saith the Lord. This is the place of my choice. Rivers will flow from here; every village and town will I touch, even to Newport. I will even send some of you to cities."

This was a great demand on our faith. We believed, we cried to God, we set to work. The work spread like wild fire through the valleys. Doors were opening. Each step we took was on the prophetic word. Oh! How we proved its value, choosing; preserving; establishing; no tongue can tell. I make my confession: - I am, and have been, blessed of God, used of God and won favour due to the power of the Spoken Word towards me. Its value is untold. "HE SPAKE AND IT WAS DONE, HE COMMANDED AND IT STOOD FAST" The prophet, Omri Jones has spent much time in Monmouthshire these eleven years. Prophecies uttered in relation to persons, places, details etc. have truly been fulfilled.

EXPERIENCE IS INDUBITABLE

We have proved beyond all doubt, through set prophetic channels, that our God is a God to be enquired of. There are opposing forces of unbelief against the spoken word. But we have irrefutable proof of its reality in the lives of members in the assemblies in Monmouthshire.

THE NEWPORT CHURCHES

The Newport churches are a fulfilment of prophecy uttered in Bethel in April 1923. It is very wonderful that the farewell meeting was held at Beaufort on the anniversary of the opening of Bethel, and also the induction service was held in Newport in April 1932, the prophecy finding its fulfilment in a person, place and month, 9 years later. In 1923, Newport was promised in prophecy. In September 1931, a prophecy came forth in Bethel, Beaufort, saying "It is time for you to possess the land and I have promised that many of my servants shall minister in Newport in the near future." I found myself in Newport in April 1932. We have made great progress in twelve months. We have 3 assemblies established and are still advancing. "THIS IS THE LORD'S DOING AND IT IS MARVELLOUS IN OUR EYES."

SUMMARY OF MOVEMENTS

In 1918 I was alone in the blessing in Beaufort.

In 1920 the Apostolic Church was formed in Beaufort. 6 members and 1 overseer.

In 1933 there were 20 churches established, over 100 members, 1 apostle and 1 pastor in full time ministerial work.

In 1921, the first convention in Beaufort had 20 in number. At the present convention, the largest church in Beaufort is filled, continually seating 900.

At the first watch-night service, 30 attended. Now about 1,000 present themselves.

BROTHER T.T. SEABORNE'S TESTIMONY.

About Easter 1918 Pastor Stephen Jeffreys held a Pentecostal mission at Zion Baptist Church, Brynmawr. Among those present were Jacob Purnell, Ephraim Morris, Jim Seaborne, Charles and David Noble. During these meetings, Jim Seaborne received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. His brother Tom, who was living at Tarfanaubach, near Tredegar, was staying with his father at Clydach, Breconshire. Jim went and told Tom what had happened, and later, meeting with the other brethren, Tom asked them if they would visit his home and hold a meeting there. This invitation was accepted, and at this meeting, although not baptised with the Spirit, Tom received an anointing, but his wife was baptised, and a young man who was also present was saved. He was Mrs Seaborne's brother, Jim Meale, who later became a minister in a Pentecostal church.

Later, the brethren, together with a Mr Charles Bennett, started to hold meetings at the home of Charles Noble, in Noble Square, Brynmawr. Pastor Hodges of Hereford visited them there, and although at that time not attached to the Apostolic Church, he set them in order in an assembly. Charles was appointed as overseer, Jacob as an evangelist and David as a deacon. Later they held meetings in the home of David, and during this time – in which they were paying tithes and God was speaking to them through the prophetic word – some problems arose, chiefly because some of the brethren wanted to obey the prophetic word. They decided to meet and talk things over, but because they could not agree, Jacob, Ephraim, Tom and Jim decided to leave the other brethren, and took their tithes with them.

It became necessary for these brethren to do something for themselves about meetings, so they decided to hold them in Tom's home in Tarfanaubach, which caused quite a stir and much persecution. They also held services in Sardis chapel in Beaufort (more familiarly known as

“Jim John’s” chapel), and at Jacob’s home in Beaufort on Sunday evenings. Open-air meetings were also held, and at one of these early meetings in South Street, Beaufort, a man who had been drinking called them into his home, and before they left, in the early hours of the morning, he was gloriously saved. This was the first convert in Beaufort, Mr W.Porter, fishmonger. His next-door neighbour, a Mr Windsor Davies, had been saved previously and was attending the Wesleyan church, which he left to join with the brethren. He subsequently opened his home to allow meetings to be held there. During this period, Pastor and Mrs Hodges visited Beaufort, and on one Sunday evening, at Jacob’s house, Mrs Hodges lectured on the Tabernacle.

Up to this time, no contact had been made with the Apostolic Church, although the brethren were aware that an Apostolic convention was to be held at Dowlais at Easter time. They went to this convention at which Pastors J.J.Williams and J.Forward were ministering, and had a conversation with brother Isaac Roberts, who was in charge of the convention. He advised them to contact Penygroes, which they subsequently did. At a later date, the brethren attended their first convention at Penygroes. Money was short, so they travelled on bicycles. As they were going down the steep hill between Merthyr and Hirwaun, the brakes of Jacob’s bicycle failed. He called on the brethren to try to stop him, but they mistook his cries for shouts of “Hallelujah!” and replied in like terms. Miraculously, the Lord’s hand was revealed and he came safely to a stop. No doubt, this was an attempt, on the part of the enemy, to foil the Divine Will in Jacob’s life.

Jacob had heard that some of the brethren from Penygroes were going to hold meetings over a weekend at Abergavenny. Without their knowledge, he had bills printed that an Apostolic convention was to be held that same weekend at Beaufort. The brethren from Penygroes, Pastors D.P. Williams, Jones Williams and Omri Jones came by train to Beaufort on their way to Abergavenny. They got off the train and were informed of the convention that had been announced. They were perplexed, but the Lord gave the answer. They went to the old waiting room where Pastor Dan enquired of the Lord to direct them through the prophetic word. The direction, which God gave them, was for Pastors D.P. and Jones Williams to come to Beaufort on the Sunday, and Pastor Omri Jones to stay in Abergavenny. So the first Apostolic meeting in Beaufort was actually held in an old railway waiting room!

During this time, Jacob was given an old coachman’s coat on condition that he would wear it. This coat began to be much talked about, so that many people came to see it, and God was using this coat to clothe many with the “Garment of Righteousness.” They were much helped during this period by Pastor W. James who came to Beaufort and stayed for about three months. Brother Isaac Roberts from Dowlais also gave much help. Brother Roberts and others from Dowlais also assisted while meetings were held in Tarfanaubach, but these did not continue for long.

As time went on, the work settled to a more definite pattern. On Sundays, meetings were held at Beaufort Hill Primary School, on Mondays and Saturdays at Sardis chapel, and on Thursdays at the home of Mrs Lloyd. This was an ex-army hut that had been erected after the first world war to help solve the housing problem. To all these places, people were coming and being saved, so much so that there was need for further establishing the assembly. This was done on 22nd July 1922; two years after Jacob had been set in charge of the work. Pastors Tom Rees and Omri Jones visited the district, during which time the Lord set apart brothers T. Seaborne and Phillip Williams to be elders. This was done in Sardis because as yet there was no Apostolic building in Beaufort.

For a long time, the brethren responsible had been anxious to acquire a place of their own in which to worship. They had been seeking since the time they left the Pentecostal Church and enquiring whenever there seemed to be possibilities. It seemed that they were over-anxious, for at one time a prophetic word was given to them, and the Lord said, “You are too anxious to

get a place of your own, but I have a place for you, and when you have a congregation, I will have a place ready for you to go into.”

A little later, the brethren from Penygroes who were responsible for buildings visited Beaufort, and an old building which at an earlier period had been used as a stable, and later as a rag-stores, was purchased and renovated. On April 22nd 1923, Bethel was opened, with as much inward rejoicing and outward thanks as Solomon’s Temple. On 27th April, 32 people were baptised in water, and a week later, a further number were also baptised. The first woman to be baptised was Mrs T.Seaborne, and during this service, brothers Jim and Tom Seaborne were also baptised. This was the second time for them to be baptised, having previously gone through the waters of baptism without realising its significance.

The opening of Bethel in April 1923 was a fulfilment of the prophecy before mentioned.

BROTHER EPHRAIM MORRIS’S TESTIMONY.

(WRITTEN IN 1973)

To write of fifty years ago is a test of memory, and, without doubt, many events and persons involved will suffer from lack of appreciation and mention for the part they played in the birth of Bethel, and to all those quiet saints to whom credit is due, and on whom the glare of publicity never shone, I pay my respects and tribute.

Bethel was a visible sign that Beaufort had been blessed by a visitation from above, and many souls have seen the ladder of communication with Heaven, and known ministrations of heavenly origin. Bethel, as a building could never claim merit for its beauty or artistry, nor will it ever take its place among the great buildings of our land, yet, created from an almost derelict barn of a warehouse – disused and vacant – here, in this converted slum shambles, God, by His Holy Spirit dwelt, and it became the gateway to Heaven for many precious souls. In this place, nobodies became notables – men and women of half a century ago, who were oppressed by poverty, living in conditions undreamed of today, having no hope in this life, and hitherto knowing nothing of the salvation that Grace had provided. Fifty years ago we shared our bread. We shared our clothes. No man had two suits or pairs of shoes, and more often than not no overcoat, and fortunate to have a second shirt! Money was scarce; many were in debt because of low wages, strikes and lockouts. This may sound exaggerated in this day and age, but the writer is one who lived through this era and experienced these difficulties. I am not writing these words to disparage these dear ones I knew, worked and lived with, knelt and prayed with, shared and sacrificed with. Oh no! My purpose is to magnify His Grace. The Riches of His Grace, Who came to preach to the poor and set the captives free!

In this atmosphere, men were raised as firebrands, full of zeal, with practical experience of God and their Saviour. With no social standing, no umbrella of financial security, no pretensions to superiority, nothing in this world to claim and own, yet these men had the treasures of revelation and things divine, and who’s preaching and power with God has not been surpassed.

The voice of God was heard in Bethel. There was a real reverence, and no one would dare to eat at the Lord’s Table whose hands and heart were not clean. The evidence of the presence of the Lord was shown by the number of souls saved, in the expansion of the Fellowship through the Monmouthshire valleys, in the growth of the church, but above all in the many, many trophies of Grace who lived anew among their neighbours and companions as glowing testimonies. In the pits where we worked we sang and testified; day and night on street corners we preached the Lord Jesus Christ. We had no mechanical means of transport, but we walked mile after mile over hill and dale, carrying the vision that had become our purpose for living.

So to those in the district and area, who were not born in the yesterday of the church at Beaufort, let me say to you that only eternity will spell out the effect, world-wide, that the

events of fifty years ago engendered, and the grand folk who came out of the night of despair and degradation, to become self-sacrificing and noble in soul and spirit, thereby enriching family life and handing to their posterity a new way of living, a higher standard of attainment through the knowledge of Jesus Christ and His amazing love.

The names and labours of those at the helm of this movement have been spoken of often. I knew these men intimately, shared in their travail of soul, laboured throughout the valleys and was privileged to be counted in their number. I give thanks to God that I was counted worthy to suffer for His name's sake with them, but more so that it was mine to share in the joy of Heaven when even one repentant sinner – and there were many, many such occasions – accepted Christ as their Saviour. I know assuredly that God is not in debt to any man, for He is lavish in giving in time and in eternity, and His rewards outweigh His demands. His strength and love span our feeble efforts, His purposes outlive our day and generation, and although almost all the heroes of fifty years ago have passed beyond the veil of time **“HE REMAINETH.”**

May I be permitted to speak of the ministry of the preached word at Bethel. It was profound, rich in conception and presentation, born of sincerity, clothed with inspiration and preached with tongues of fire. We knew how to suffer, knew trial and temptation, knew poverty and had nothing to glory in but Christ. Men who tumbled out of bed into the bowels of the earth to earn their daily bread, found the “Bread of Life” broken for them by the Spirit of God, and their eyes were opened to the secrets of their salvation.

What of prophetic ministry? Anyone who remembers those early days cannot forget the wonderful utterances, the heart-searching and personal words from the Lord. Jesus was in the midst, and we believed the prophets and accepted them as any other calling in the church. We progressed in Spiritual gifts in variety, and the congregation was engulfed in worship and praise. Paul knew the value of Spiritual gifts for he advised the early church to covet them, a very strong word meaning to “desire with intensity”, and this was our aim at Bethel. We found it rewarding. They gave us something different from the normal way of worship, for a church without them has little or no appeal. What an asset and a testimony to have a spiritually gifted congregation, moved by the Holy Ghost! Those who despise Spiritual gifts must be, unlike Paul, arrogant in self-sufficiency, labouring in vain, fishing in the night and catching nothing. What reward is there in an empty net or church?

A word must be spoken about the help and ministry afforded by the brethren from the assemblies in the Rhondda district, also from Hereford, and even more so from the leaders of the church in Penygroes. If the pulpit at Bethel could speak, it would utter names of saints and ministers now in Glory, men of vision, of power and purpose, great men, men of oratory and a heavenly message. It would remind you of the zeal, the single-mindedness and the richness of revelation manifested by those who stood to minister. It would also speak of the congregation facing it, whose hunger for truth was so manifest; whose response was so spontaneous; whose “Amen” and “Alleluias” rang out and whose singing and praising rose in volume as the sound of many waters. It would witness, too, to the many tears of repentance shed to the cries of “Lord have mercy on me!” and then to the joy displayed as chains fell off and prisoners were set free. Yes! The pulpit could speak of the sick in mind and body who came asking “Where is your great physician?” and, finding Him were restored to a new life and vitality. There was also heard, the groanings of the spirit in unselfish supplications for the welfare of the redeemed, for the needy and for the weak and tempest tossed. But, above all, it heard the voice of God! It vibrated to the sound of a rushing mighty wind, and was sanctified by the presence of the Holy Ghost, whose purpose was to magnify the unique Jesus the Lord.

None of us can claim originality of authorship of our salvation, we are all in debt to the Lord Jesus, and we all build on His foundation. We also follow others who have laid their bodies on the altar as living sacrifices, and who built worthy of their calling. May it please the Christ,

whose church will be His bride, to find men who care and fulfil the trust that God has put upon them in preparing the church for that great day, for we shall all have our building tested. May it be worthy of the foundation, worthy of commendation.

To all at Bethel, may I say that to you has been given a wonderful heritage, a history that has the hallmark of the divine, and like Simeon of old, Beaufort can say, “MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THY SALVATION.”

My prayer is that you will prosper in all things spiritual for there are riches that can be stored in Heaven “Where neither moth nor rust can corrupt.” We all must leave this world and its treasures behind, so may you all be found with treasures in Heaven.

MY LIFE STORY – PASTOR PHILLIP WILLIAMS.

It was in Cornwall in the year 1943 that I heard a young woman reciting the poem “The Touch of the Master’s Hand.” This induced me to write my life-story. I felt it was very real in my case. I was as the old violin – dusty, useless and on the scrap-heap, but the touch of the Master’s hand has done for me something that may help others to call upon the Lord Jesus Christ, that He may touch them also.

I was born in Newtown, Ebbw Vale, Monmouthshire on April 16th 1891. My parents were humble people, who made me, as a lad, go to Sunday School at Ebenezer Church, Pontygof, Ebbw Vale, but when I became a young man, I gave way, as I thought, to live my life in full measure. I am one of thirteen children. I had the pleasure, with Pastor Jacob Purnell of pointing my father to Christ one year before he died. My dear old mother lived until 1953, to within a few days of her 92nd birthday. She fought a good fight to bring the children up in this world. Her memory is precious to us all as a family.

I gave my heart to Jesus Christ in Beaufort, Monmouthshire, in November 1921, in a little church called “Jim John’s Chapel”, under the ministry of Pastor Jacob Purnell and Isaac Roberts. God bless the memory of these men.

My dear wife, for whom I do thank God with all my heart, was saved two weeks prior to me. She had been in a very bad state, physically, she was anaemic, and also her mind was affected. The Lord wonderfully healed her, both in body and in mind, and it was this great change which I saw in her in such a short time that made such an impression on me.

I can look back and see the invisible hand of God in my life. When mother was on her death-bed, she told me that when I was a child, just six months old, her eldest brother said to her, as he was leaving for America, “Mary, there is something about this child!” but what it was he could not explain.

Two days after telling me this, as she lay dying, she took my hand, and although she was blind, she prayed “God bless my minister son.” Yes, I believe God did know me as a child six months old.

When I look back to those sinful days, I marvel that God spared me from death. Had it not been for divine intervention, I would have been crying “The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved.” (Jer. 8:20). I remember as a lad, just seven years old, playing with some young men. I was riding on the front of an iron tram, which was running freely down a steep incline, when I fell underneath. I was almost killed. Seventeen of my teeth were knocked down my throat. I broke my leg in two places and had seventeen stitches in my mouth, but God healed me. I had many accidents in the coal pits when I worked there. Many times did God have mercy on me when I was in the habit of drinking, robbing my wife and children and living a fast life. Oh! The mercy of God to one like me!

The only championship I ever won was a silver watch for selling the most evening papers when I was a lad. This I valued very much. I also remember fighting a man with naked fists on the mountain one early morning. I managed to win in the 7th round. Twenty eight years

later, I was asked to visit the same man who was dying of cancer. No one had been able to approach him about his soul previously, but God gave me favour to talk to him about his mother, who had been a God-fearing woman. Then his heart softened and he confessed Christ as his Saviour. Praise God!

I must confess, my sin brought me down very low. Living in a house that was condemned, with my wife and five children, my dear wife very weak and anaemic. I have said I was a condemned man in a condemned house, but meetings, started in a house nearby, were Apostolic in doctrine. Pastor Jacob Purnell and brothers Thomas and James Seabourne and Ephraim Morris were the main workers. My wife, in her weakness went to these meetings, gave her heart to the Lord, was anointed with oil and prayed for. The Lord did touch her, but gradually, and she was restored to full health. Praise Him!

In a very short time after this, I took to reading my Bible, and conviction came to me one day while I was on the mountain. I said "Spare me, Oh God, until the meeting tonight, and then I will surrender." Little did I think He would have done it then if only I had asked Him! That night I went to the meeting. I do not know what the sermon was about, or the text, but when the altar-call was given, I said I would have Christ as my Saviour. Three others followed me that night. Praise God! I was still living in the old condemned house, and it was then I began to be ashamed of my past life. I prayed much that God would deliver me from that house, but no, I must reap what I had sown, but I believe God dealt with my soul through these circumstances. I remember one day, in my poverty and distress, seeing the mountain so high – in debt, no work, no clothes, a creditor coming to ask for money and I had none to give him. When he left my home, I fell on my knees in the condemned house, crying on God, and as I considered the mountain to be too high, a thought from the Lord came to my mind. "A little faith can remove a mountain." That enabled me to act the man. God did help me. The day dawned after much struggle, and the mountain was laid low. All my debts were paid, and I was free to look in the face of all men. Praise Him for His grace and power.

I remember, while still in the house, that two of my children were ill. I rose one morning at 3.30 to go to my work, but firstly to pray. I was ashamed for visitors to come to my house, so before sending for the doctor, I called on God to touch my children. With tears on my cheek, I opened my bible, and my eyes lighted on Jer. 31: 15 – 17. "Thus saith the Lord. A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, and thy children shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, thy children shall come again to their own border." I must confess, I went to work wondering what would happen that day. When riding in the train that morning, with other men, someone struck up the hymn "Safe in the arms of Jesus, safe on His gentle breast." I must confess, I looked out of the carriage window to weep, but praise God! When I returned home that day, both of my children were sitting at the table eating dinner! Oh yes! He can heal and answer prayer to-day.

I remember one test which came to me, which was, to stand in my own street and tell the people that Christ had saved my soul. I trembled with human fear, but also with the power of the Holy Spirit. By the grace of God, I pressed on to go to church with the shabby clothes I had, seeking the baptism of the Spirit, going to every tarrying meeting, yet having no particular feeling. However, one morning while I was in bed after working all night, the Lord did baptise me, and I spoke in an unknown tongue. Praise His Holy Name! I was eager to let all the in the church know that I had been baptised, and I intended to speak in tongues that night, in church. The Holy Spirit, however, did not allow me to, which was proof to me that it was for His glory, and not for my own aggrandisement that He had blessed me.

Whilst living in the condemned house, we went on strike in the colliery, and I decided to put the Bible to the test – not to ask any man for a penny, nor go to the parish for food. My dear wife was quite willing for this test, which lasted six weeks, during which time I was tested to the limit, but God took me through. I recollect that, at the end of six weeks, my little boy, Windsor, who was about three years of age, went to his aunt to beg some food. When I saw him, I went to my bedroom to seek the face of the Lord. “Lord, thy Word tells me that the righteous shall not be forsaken, nor his seed beg bread.” (Psalm 37:25). I broke in my spirit before God, and melted. Going downstairs, I saw my dear wife sitting before the fire reading her Bible. Then came the verse to me; “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

In this time of trusting, having very few clothes, I found a shirt on the mountain, studded with little specks. My daughter, Edna, who became a missionary in Jamaica, was with me. I was too delighted to go home, so I went to Pastor Purnell’s home to show it to him. He asked me if it would fit me.

“Man,” I said “god has sent it, it’s bound to fit!”

Yes, when I put it on, it was just my measurement. I preached about the old shirt many times, but nobody ever claimed it. The day of miracles has not ended. The Bible tells of a man who received a suit of clothes in a miraculous manner (Mark 15:5).

I must thank God that He helped me to work and to pay all my debts, so that I could face all my creditors in the town where I lived. I paid my debts at the public houses, grocers and clothes shops. I also paid back a large sum that I owed to the parish. To God be the glory! May I say here, to help other people, I believed, even in that state, that two shillings (ten pence) in the £ belonged to God. You ask, “Should I pay tithes if I am in debt?” I say, “Yes, then God will help you to pay the debts all the sooner.”

I must confess, it was a great day in my life, when God, through the prophet, Pastor J.O Jones, called brother Tom Seabourne and myself to hold up the hands of Pastor Jacob Purnell. At that time, many churches were opened in the Monmouthshire district and many souls were saved. Pastor Purnell was used more than any of us in soul-winning. He was a good shepherd who worked hard to establish the work and to train us in many ways. I remember my first attempt to pray in public. In those days, two or three would be praying together, but I wanted to have a chance when no one else was praying. The opportunity came when there was a lovely unction on the meeting. I rose to my feet. I had a head full to pray, as I thought, but I failed to open my mouth! God knew how to deal with me. Amen. But, after that, God helped me at all times.

My first endeavour to preach took place on a Sunday morning. I had my message ready when the Pastor called on me. I stood, started reading, but I didn’t know when to stop. I was too shy to look at the people, but I gave out the text. ‘Lot in the place where he ought not to be,’ and the devil was saying to me: ‘Those women are saying ‘*You* are in the place you ought not to be’. I sat down, feeling ashamed to look up, but God, praise His Holy Name, has so helped me since, that by His grace I fear no power or man. I say this in humility of heart. Again, I recall my first wedding. Someone had given me a frock-tail coat, and I had a large rose in the lapel. I was ashamed to walk to church with the coat on, so I carried it on my arm and put it on in the vestry. When I faced the congregation, I did not know where I was; yet I got through. That was the last time I wore a frock-tail coat in public!

The Lord delivered my family and me from the condemned house, and we went to live with my dear old mother, who was a widow. She did much for us, helping us in many ways. From her home I went many nights to the mountaintop to spend time with God, and from this I gained many strange experiences. I recall one night, about mid-night going to the mountain, and fear took hold of me in the dark. I returned home. No-one but the devil, myself and God knew about it, but the next day a minister by the name of Willie Lane was with us, and in his ministry he kept shouting: ‘Be not afraid of the dark, it is I’.

‘Oh my God,’ I said, ‘I failed Thee last night’.

After that, God helped me to face the darkness. I felt many times, when I returned home in the middle of the night, that I had been helped of God to win battles against principalities and powers.

Very soon after going to Ebbw Vale from Beaufort, God gave us a beautiful church, wherein many souls were saved. We also did much open-air work in those days.

Things started to turn to my advantage materially. My work and home were blessed of God. At work I was what was called a ‘£1 a day man’, which, at that time was very good indeed. One day, at work, I had an accident to a big toe, but, believing in divine healing, I just looked to God. In a little while after, I had another accident to the same foot. This time, a cold tremble and a sweat came over me. Then I prayed in the bowels of the earth as a miner; ‘O God, do help me. I am poor; I am now getting good money. Touch my foot. Help me not to lose any work. I don’t want compensation, it will only be a trifle to what I am getting’. I rested awhile, then returned to my work; then I had another tap on the same toe. I growled out something to God; and after that, the devil tormented me that I had cursed God. I went home and had my foot attended to; then, resting on the bed, I read a message by Daniel Steele. He asked the question: ‘What do you say the old man is?’ One would say it is the devil, another it is inbred sin another it is the old nature. ‘Well,’ he said, ‘it is an ugly thing within us, which God alone can deliver us from.’ That day, I claimed deliverance from my old man (Romans 6:6). God sounded the depths of my soul through the accident; for which I continually praise him.

After this deliverance I was tempted in a different manner. Doubt seemed to come into my soul; I felt that I had been cut off from God. This lasted some months – an awful experience. In the experience, I tried to get the victory, but all to no avail. When I looked into the Bible for a text to help, it would be one that would drive me into a worse state, and bad dreams would come nightly. One night I had a dream, and I saw two policemen in a large green room, and the one said, ‘Let that man go!’ I held this dream in my heart, and that week the Lord called me to the full-time ministry through the prophet Omri Jones. I felt, at that time, that I was the most unfit man under God’s sun to accept this calling, yet the dream helped me to be patient.

A little while after this, I was sitting in Bethel, Beaufort when a strange warm feeling came into my breast. I said: “O God what is this?” And the scripture came to me: “He that believeth shall not make haste.” (Isaiah 28:16); and oh, that verse was very in my condition!

I have been asked what my experiences were when I went up the mountain to pray. I will mention a few. One night, the lightning was flashing very vividly, and I stood to gaze at it, but the Lord said to me: ‘Bow your head and acknowledge my Majesty.’ Another night, about 2 a.m. I had had my time of prayer when a chorus came to me, which I sang. It consisted of the following lines:

Jesus paid it all
All to Him I owe
Sin had left a crimson stain
He washed it white as snow.

Singing this through many times, the devil spoke to me in a very real way telling me that no-one was listening, only the sheep and stray ponies. But I said to him: ‘*You* are listening anyway!’ Yes, it was a witness against Satan, that I could sing in the lonely hours of the night, when no human voice could be heard. Amen! Another time, I was coming down the mountain, after having been in prayer, and it was very dark. On approaching the town, I heard heavy footsteps and then a voice told me to halt.

‘Yes,’ I said, ‘what is it?’

Then the question was asked: ‘Where have you been? What have you been doing?’

I answered: 'I have been praying to my Father in Heaven.'

The voice said: 'Pass on.'

He was a policeman, only his buttons could I see, and when I told him I had been with my father, I think he was more afraid than I was. Another night, I looked up into the heavens. The stars were shining above my head, as if a great parasol were opened to me. Oh! The beauty of being alone with God! "Alone with God the world forsaken alone with God, O blest retreat!"

BROTHER DAN WILLIAMS'S TESTIMONY.

I should like to commence by taking a verse of scripture as a basis for my testimony – Luke chapter 19 verse 9: "This day salvation is come to this house." My story, therefore will be in two parts (a) Home without salvation. (b) Home with salvation.

Home without salvation.

I can go back to 1916 during the first World War, this being my earliest recollection as a child of four years of age. My father's youngest brother came home on leave. It was Christmas time and I had received a drum as a present and my father, being merry with the home-coming of his brother, in his merriment (being drunk, of course), put his foot through my poor drum, and that was the only Christmas gift I had for some years. I remember that during these early years of my life, my mother was in very poor health, caused by the bedroom ceiling collapsing on her and me some few days after my birth. At this time we lived in Collier's Row, Ebbw Vale. We left Ebbw Vale for Beaufort in 1917. We then went to live in what was correctly addressed as Eagle Cottages, which afterwards became known as the condemned house, in which lived the condemned man (my father) and his family. Truly we were deprived of the best things in life through drink and gambling, whilst God, I believe, has helped me to forget that I had a drunken father, I can clearly remember all the same.

Ours was a life of poverty and scarcity in many ways because my father was a captive of drink. We were 5 children. On many occasions, whilst my father was working on the night shift, I, being the eldest, was called to my mother's bed-side, who, because of her nervous depression would cry out that she was dying. Both she and I felt the need of God's help. As far back as I can remember, until the day of her salvation, my mother was truly a nervous wreck. Her cries were pitiful, and the loneliness of her spirit was very evident in the fact that she would go out onto the hillside near our home during these times of depression, which were almost continual. I was her constant companion in these bad times and I feel that God began to move in my heart in these early days of my life.

The condemned house was indeed an awful sight, internally and externally. It consisted of four rooms, two bedrooms upstairs, and one living room and one bedroom on the ground floor. The window in the bedroom on the ground floor was boarded up and the room used as a pantry. The stairs had several steps missing, and to go upstairs one had to jump over the missing steps. The bedrooms contained very little furniture, but quite a number of baths and buckets to catch the rainwater coming through the ceiling. The only

Living room was a very poor example of a home, very little furniture, and instead of wallpaper, white lime. It was altogether, a home without salvation. We children went to the Methodist Sunday School. Speaking for myself, I longed to be a Christian and for Christian parents.

Often-times, I remember going into the vestibule of the Methodist Church while the evening service was proceeding, with a deep longing in my heart to be in the service, but I felt it was not the place for the likes of me. I had poor clothing, a poor home and a drunken father. But God was not far away from giving me the desires of my heart and increasing the strong hatred of alcoholic drink. As happened to Zacchaeus, Christ passed through Jericho to meet with him, so Christ passed through Beaufort and met with my father. In the life of Zacchaeus there were

many obstacles to his meeting with Jesus. He was an outcast from his nation, hated by the Jews and conscious of his own smallness of stature, but his determination to meet with Jesus enabled him to overcome all these obstacles. In the lives of my parents there were many obstacles, but God moved, first in the heart of my mother, and then in the heart of my father, enabling them, too, to overcome the obstacles that barred them from coming to Jesus.

Home with Salvation.

I should like to quote the words of Christ to the man of Gadara – Mark chapter 5, verse 19: “Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee and had compassion on thee.” As this man had been bound by fetters and chains and could not be tamed by any man, so, too, had my father been bound by fetters and chains. But when Jesus came into this man’s heart He broke all fetters, snapped all chains and what man could not do in taming him, He did! He then gave him a great commission: “Go home to thy friends and tell them.....” I would like to call all who read these words “My friends” and tell them how great things the Lord has done for us as a family.

In November 1921, Pastor J. Purnell of Beaufort, and Pastor W. James of Pontardawe, began holding cottage meetings in our street in the very house in which my mother saw the light of day. I remember my mother going to the door of the house with a little shawl over her head, in a very nervous state, entering and asking the pastors to pray for her. In this meeting she gave her heart to the Lord and straightway the Lord began to work in her heart and mind. She became a changed woman, testifying to all that the Lord had saved her and had commenced delivering her from her fears.

My father could see a great change in her life and for the first time in his life he began staying in at nights, caring for us children, while my mother went to the meetings. Within three weeks, he, too, began going to the meetings, which were held in various places, some in houses, some in what was known as “Jim John’s chapel” and on Sundays in the local school. I remember a man telling me that he was in a public house one Sunday night, when my father came in and called for a drink. He then became the object of sneers because he went to the Apostolic meetings. This man said that my father drew the glass from his lips and with great force smashed it saying: “This is the last!” Soon after this incident he went to a service held in Jim John’s chapel. The preacher that night, Pastor Purnell, to anyone unsaved to accept Christ as their Saviour. My father, in response said: “I’ll have Him Jake.” (Thank God, Jesus had him too.) Our house, for the first time, became a home, for it is Christ who makes a house a home. It is possible to live in a condemned house, with all its poverty, but, because of Christ’s presence, it becomes a home.

What joy was ours when, instead of putting my hand in his pocket and finding a pack of cards, I could put it in and take out a New Testament! What joy was ours as a family when for the first time grace was said at our table. The appearance of our home changed, too, because text cards and pictures were hung upon, revealing to all who entered that there had been a change.

The year 1926 was the year of the General Strike. We were still very poor, even though salvation had entered into our home, but God came to our aid and we began to prove that He answers prayer. My father was given a big Bible, and what joy it was to see him read it and enter into conversation with Brother Morris and Pastor Purnell concerning spiritual things. God was still helping my mother, and I was still her companion when she went shopping, to help her carry her goods. In every shop she would testify to the shop assistants of what the Lord had done for her. One day, when going to Brynmawr, she felt the old feeling of depression coming upon her, and she stopped and cried on God to help her. She told me there and then that she felt an unseen hand upon her back, giving her the strength to continue on her journey to Brynmawr, complete her business and return home.

This visitation of God's helping hand gave my mother great confidence in His keeping power. Each day she improved in health, and her nervous system became stronger. My father, too, grew in grace, and very shortly after being saved, he gave his first sermon from Jeremiah chapter 12 verse 5; "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, how canst thou contend with the horses?" Within six months of being saved, he was called to be an elder in the church. It became a source of surprise to many, that one who had been a notable sinner should receive a call into eldership in such a short time. The Lord said at that time that he would become one of the leaders of the church, which prophetic utterance was later verified. About this time, a great possibility presented itself to us as a family. We were offered the tenancy of an ex-army hut that had been converted into a bungalow. I remember how, with joy, I helped my mother to scrub out this hut – the hope of a new house, even though it was a hut, was to me a great pleasure. My pleasure came crashing to the ground, however, because the Word of the Lord called my father to leave Beaufort and return to Ebbw Vale to live with his mother, who would also become a help to his family, and to commence a church in Ebbw Vale.

In about the year 1923, we left Beaufort for Ebbw Vale, which became the foundation of my father's ministry. We began holding meetings in my grandmother's home; very shortly we hired a room in the Market Hall Assembly Rooms, which became the birthplace of many Apostolic members. One night, in a bad storm, two or three of the windows in this hall were blown in and smashed. The same night, my father went to see if all was well, and that was what he found – smashed windows; he prayed that God would come to our help. The next morning, I remember answering the door and being asked, by a man, for the keys of the Apostolic Church. I gave the keys to him. Who he was, I do not know, or who authorised him to do the job of repairing the broken windows. We could not find out, so no bill was paid. Who brought the keys back we do not know, but the job was done. We counted this to be an answer to prayer.

When we started holding services in the hall, there was only one brother besides my father, so I became very active in giving out the hymnbooks and tending to the fire, etc. I was saved at the age of twelve, and as a reward for the many services I rendered to the church, I was given a suit. This was my first suit with long trousers. In January 1925, I started to work underground with my father, and our place at the coalface was often times my father's study. Many times I would speak to him, but he would ask me to be quiet because he was preparing a message for the night's service. I once tried this, too, but a fall of coal came and almost buried me! I remember coming home from work one day with my father, when, as was our custom, we bent our knees in prayer to thank God for keeping us and bringing us home safely. Before my father rose from his knees, he placed his hand on my youngest brother who was then a baby in arms, and was very ill. He prayed that God would touch him, and before he rose from his knees, God had touched my brother and healed him. Some time in 1925 we left the Assembly Rooms and worshipped in the local Elementary School. In this schoolroom, we saw and heard more things than it is possible to record. I recall the salvation of the late brother J.S.Jones, who was a musician. He taught many of our young people to play and sing correctly. Then there was a man called John Stephens. When he was in India, John had badly beaten up a prison warder. He spent nine months in a condemned cell, waiting for the warder to die, but God graciously spared him John was wonderfully saved and healed by the Lord. We stayed at the school until we moved into our own building at Pontygof in 1931.

Although it was a great joy to hear the Lord set the Ebbw Vale assembly in order for the first time, it was also a disappointment for me, because I thought that surely, because of all the work I had done for the church, I was worthy of the call of a deacon! But God called two other men as deacons and I was left out. However, some three years later, when I was called, I felt most unworthy.

In 1927 we left my grandmother's house for a council house, where we remained until my father went to the Aberdare district in 1935. Many and varied were our experiences in this new council house. It was with joy that we saw our home being furnished little by little. So grateful was I that I often saved my pocket money until I was able to buy some added gift for the home. Work in the colliery was very hard, and wages were very poor and my father's great longing was to clear his past debts. I entered into this longing with him, and to realise its fulfilment we often went to work with dry bread in our food boxes. Often, on returning from work, we would have bread, margarine and potatoes. One incident stands out clearly in my mind. My father and I came home from our day's work, and my brother, Windsor, (who had just begun to work), also came in just at the same time. Together, we sat at the table. My father gave thanks and asked for God's blessing on the food. As we began to eat, my brother, who at this time was unsaved, said; "Dad, there's something very strange about this food; it tastes beautiful." My father answered him saying: "Yes, my boy, God's heavenly sauce has been poured upon it." After many struggles, God delivered my father from all his debts. My father's interest in his home was clearly to be seen. He would have no debt, and he always paid his tithes whatever came. For this, I admired him. Many people thought him an austere man and without natural affections, but I can say differently having lived, worked and worshipped with him. What he preached in the pulpit he practised at home and in work. In all our family sicknesses he was as tender as a nurse and as careful of us as any father could be.

In about the year 1928 my father had a nervous breakdown, and how terrible it was to see him cry as I had often seen my mother cry in her unsaved days. But, praise be to God, he delivered him! All these experiences were preparing him for his future ministry for God. In the year 1931 he was called into the full-time ministry of our church.

I truly loved my home and my parents, and especially the Lord Jesus for all that He has done for us as a family.

A Brief Account of the Inception of the Apostolic Church in the Monmouthshire Valleys.

The Apostolic Church is now taken for granted in the Monmouthshire valleys, but there was a time when the name "Apostolic" was not known there, nor was there a church for worship.

The Pentecostal movement started in the top of the Monmouthshire valleys in the home of the parents of Brother Ephraim Morris in Brynmawr who lived near the old Heathcote pond. How contact was first made is not known, but two Pentecostal brethren from Aberavon, a Mr. Price Davies and Mr. Arthur Davies, used to visit this home in 1911-12. Many were saved at these services, and converts were baptised in the Heathcote pond. These meetings caused quite a stir in the neighbourhood, and the members became known as the "Pentecostal Dancers." The younger members had to suffer much persecution. One of the younger members, Ephraim, was a schoolboy at the time, and upon him the hand of God rested mightily. In later years he had much to do with the foundation of the work in the Monmouthshire valleys.

The first members of the Pentecostal Church were Mr. and Mrs. Morris, Mr. and Mrs Myrddin Davies and Mr. Charles Noble, who later became the accepted pastor of the movement.

Around 1917-18, a young man named Jacob Purnell who lived in Beaufort and was the organist of Zoar Baptist Church, Beaufort, received a direct call from God to leave that church and go whither he knew not where. Then began a search by this young man for the perfection of the will of God. There was a band of people at Ebbw Vale known as the Holiness Mission, who were zealous for God. He went there, as one of those brethren put it, "Diligently seeking the Purposes of God." For him, it was not to be found there, but while going there, he met Mr.

Charles Noble, who introduced him to the Pentecostal movement, but, as later events proved, this also was not the fullness of the Divine call for Jacob.

At Easter time 1918, Pastor Stephen Jeffreys held a Pentecostal mission at Zion Baptist Church, Brynmawr. Amongst those attending were Jacob Purnell, Ephraim Morris, James Seaborne and the brothers Charles and David Noble. During these meetings James Seaborne received the Baptism of the Spirit. He went and told his brother, Thomas, who lived in a little village called Tarvanaubach near Tredegar, who asked the brethren mentioned above to visit his home and hold meetings there. This invitation was accepted, and during the meeting held at the home, although not baptised with the Spirit, brother Seaborne received an anointing; but his wife, who was present was baptised, and a young man who was present was saved. He was Mrs. Seaborne's brother, James Meale, who later became a Pentecostal minister.

Later these brethren, with a Mr. Charles Bennet started to hold meetings at the home of Mr. Charles Noble at Brynmawr. Pastor Hodges of Hereford visited them there, and although at that time not attached to the Apostolic Church, he set them in order as an Assembly. Charles Noble was the overseer, Jacob Purnell an evangelist and David Noble a Deacon. Later, they were holding meetings in the home of brother David Noble, and during this time – in which they were paying tithes and God was speaking through the Prophetic Word – some problems arose chiefly because some of the brethren wanted to obey the Prophetic Word. They decided to meet and talk this over, but because they could not agree, brothers J. Purnell, E. Morris and Thomas and James Seaborne decided to leave the other brethren.

It became necessary for these brethren to do something for themselves about meetings, so they decided to hold such in the week at the home of Brother T. Seaborne at Tarvanaubach – which caused quite a stir and much persecution. They began to hold meetings, too, at Sardis Chapel, Beaufort and also at the home of Brother Jacob Purnell at Beaufort on Sunday evenings. Open – air meetings were also held, and at one of those early meetings in South Street, Beaufort, a man who had been drinking called them into his home, and before they left, in the early hours of the morning, he was gloriously saved. So the first convert in Beaufort was Mr. W. Porter, fishmonger. His next – door neighbour, Mr. W. Davies, had been saved previously, and attended the Wesleyan Church, which he left to join with the brethren. He opened his home for meetings. During this period Pastor and Mrs. Hodges visited Beaufort, and one Sunday night, at Pastor Purnell's house, Mrs. Hodges lectured on the Tabernacle.

Up until this time, no contact had been made with the Apostolic Church, but the brethren had heard that there was to be an Apostolic Convention at Dowlais at Easter. They went to this convention at which Pastors J. J. Williams were ministering, and had conversation with Brother Isaac Roberts who was in charge of the convention. He advised them to get in touch with Penygroes, which they did. At a later date these brethren went to their first convention at Penygroes. Money was short, so they went by bicycle.

While at Penygroes the brethren from Beaufort heard that some of the pastors from Penygroes were going to Abergavenny to hold meetings over a weekend. So, without their knowledge, Pastor Purnell had bills printed announcing that an Apostolic convention was to be held that same weekend at Beaufort, at the Sardis Chapel already mentioned. The pastors from Penygroes, Pastors D. P. Williams, Jones Williams and Omri Jones, came to hear about it, and on their way to Abergavenny, they got out of the train at Beaufort station, where they were met by Pastor Purnell. The pastors from Penygroes were perplexed, but the Lord gave the answer. They went into the old waiting room on the station, and Pastor D. P. enquired of the prophet,

Jones Williams. The direction that God gave them was that Pastors D. P. and Jones Williams should remain at Beaufort, and that Pastor Omri Jones should go on to Abergavenny. So the first Apostolic meeting held in Beaufort was in the old waiting – room on the station platform.

On the Sunday afternoon they met together at Sardis Chapel. In that meeting, besides the pastors, were 11 brothers and sisters. Pastor D. P. explained to them the Tenets and Beliefs of the Apostolic Church, afterwards inviting any of those present who wished to receive the Right Hand of Fellowship to do so. Six of those present accepted, including Jacob Purnell, and so the nucleus of the Apostolic Church in the Monmouthshire Valleys was formed. At that time, too, through the Prophetic Word, the Lord set aside Pastor Purnell to lead the flock, and Brother Ephraim Morris as the Prophetic Channel.

On the advice of Pastor D.P. Williams, the brethren applied to the Education authorities for use of a school classroom at Beaufort for meetings on Sundays, which was granted. By this time, although no more had joined the fellowship, news had spread about these people who were doing strange things, and it was causing quite a stir. Peculiar things began to be said of their doings; so much so that people became curious. On the Sunday afternoon, the group went to a small classroom in Beaufort Hill Primary School. At the back of the school is an old tip, and on the top of this, some people had gathered to observe what was going on. As they could not see anything, some of them went inside to have a look, and when some of the brethren began to speak in tongues, those who came to see became frightened and ran out. This happened again on the Sunday night. Others went in and then the Lord began to speak through the Prophetic Channel, Brother Ephraim Morris. When those who had come to see heard the voice of God, they did not run out, and from that time, many who had come out of curiosity began to attend regularly. The little classroom became too small, a bigger one was taken, and eventually a bigger one again. The people were coming; the Lord was saving! Members of other Denominations started to attend, and this earned the brethren the title of “Sheep – Stealers”. The non – churchgoers, the drunkards and all kinds were being added to the church. At the “Second meetings” (i.e. a meeting held after the normal Sunday night meeting) on Sunday nights the congregations from other chapels would go to the old school. They wanted more!

Appendix IV

The Original Tenets of the Apostolic Church

The tenets of the Apostolic Church were published in English in 1920 (Up to 1919 they had been in Welsh) are as follows:

1. The unity of the Godhead and the Trinity of the Persons therein.
- 2 The utter depravity of human nature, the necessity for repentance and regeneration, and the eternal doom of the finally impenitent.
- 3 The Virgin Birth, sinless life, triumphant Resurrection, Ascension, and abiding Intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ; His Second Coming and Millennial Reign upon earth.
4. Justification and Sanctification of the Believer through the finished work of Christ.
- 5 The Baptism of the Holy Ghost for believers, with signs following.
- 6 The Gifts of the Holy Ghost for the comfort, edification and building up of the Church, which is the Body of Christ.
- 7 The Sacraments of Baptism by immersion, and of the Lord's Supper.
- 8 The Divine Inspiration and Authority of the Holy Scriptures.
- 9 Church Government by Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers, Elders and Deacons.
- 10 The possibility of falling from Grace.
- 11 The obligatory nature of Tithes and Offerings.

In 1921 Tenet No. 3 was amplified to read "Sinless Life, Atoning Death"; and in 1937 Tenet No. 6 was re-worded to read "The Nine Gifts of the Holy Ghost for the edification , exhortation and comfort of the Church, which is the Body of Christ. All; but Tenets 5, 6 and 9 would be considered orthodox by most Evangelical Churches.

Appendix V

The numerical results of the empirical studies

Table 1: The average age of current Apostolic Ministers

Primary Calling	Cohort	Youngest	Oldest	Average Age
Apostle	14+3 ⁴	42	65	53
Prophet	6	53	65	60
Minister who is not an Apostle or Prophet but who prophesies regularly	17+1 ⁵	35	62	47
Minister who is not an Apostle nor Prophet and who does not prophesy	30	28	65	49
Total	67+4	28	65	50

⁴ Three apostles chose to withhold details of their ages.

⁵ One pastor who prophesies chose to withhold details of his age.

Table 2: Responses from AC apostles to the original questionnaire (cohort of 28)

	AS	A	NC	D	DS	NA
I was called into office by prophecy	10	9	0	4	4	1
I have moved location in obedience to prophetic direction	12	5	3	4	2	2
I have changed employment as directed by prophecy	1	1	3	7	8	8
I have changed significant plans, following directive prophecy	4	4	4	9	3	4
I would not obey directive prophecy unless I had a personal conviction first	3	9	4	9	3	0
I believe that the days of receiving directive prophecy are over	0	0	2	16	10	0
Directive prophecy should come through a recognised prophet in a meeting for leaders only	10	8	3	5	1	1
Directive prophecy should come through a recognised prophet in a public meeting	2	7	5	10	3	1
Directive prophecy can come through a recognised prophet in a prayer line, provided there is somebody else present who can judge it	1	14	4	7	2	0
Directive prophecy can come through any person with the gift of prophecy in a public meeting	0	2	0	9	17	0
Directive prophecy can be given from anyone to anyone in any context	0	1	0	9	17	1

(AS: Agreed strongly, A: Agreed, NC: Not Certain, D: Disagreed, DS: Disagreed Strongly, NA: Not Answered)

Table 3: Response from AC prophets to the original questionnaire (Cohort of 10)

	AS	A	NC	D	DS	NA
I was called into office by prophecy	3	1	3	1	0	2
I have moved location in obedience to prophetic direction	4	1	2	2	0	1
I have changed employment as directed by prophecy	0	0	0	3	2	5
I have changed significant plans, following directive prophecy	3	1	2	2	0	2
I would not obey directive prophecy unless I had a personal conviction first	1	1	2	4	1	1
I believe that the days of receiving directive prophecy are over	0	0	3	4	2	1
Directive prophecy should come through a recognised Prophet in a meeting for leaders only	3	2	1	4	0	0
Directive prophecy should come through a recognised Prophet in a public meeting	2	4	0	4	0	0
Directive prophecy can come through a recognised prophet in a prayer line, provided there is somebody else present who can judge it	3	3	0	2	1	1
Directive prophecy can come through any person with the gift of prophecy in a public meeting	0	0	0	4	6	0
Directive prophecy can be given from anyone to anyone in any context	0	0	0	0	10	0

(AS: Agreed strongly, A: Agreed, NC: Not Certain, D: Disagreed, DS: Disagreed Strongly, NA: Not Answered)

Table 4: Responses from AC ministers who are neither apostles nor prophets to the original questionnaire. (Cohort of 55)

	AS	A	NC	D	DS	NA
I was called into office by prophecy	11	9	6	20	5	4
I have moved location in obedience to prophetic direction	8	8	4	20	8	7
I would not obey directive prophecy unless I had a personal conviction first	14	16	13	10	2	0
I believe that the days of receiving directive prophecy are over	1	1	2	24	26	1
Directive prophecy should come through a recognised Prophet in a meeting for leaders only	7	17	11	16	2	1
Still Directive prophecy should come through a recognised Prophet in a public meeting	3	11	14	17	6	3
Directive prophecy can come through a recognised Prophet in a prayer line, provided there is somebody else present who can judge it	5	24	15	8	1	1
Directive prophecy can come through any person with the gift of prophecy in a public meeting	1	12	5	17	18	2
Directive prophecy can be given from anyone to anyone in any context	1	0	4	14	35	1

Table 5: In the past 20 years how many different types of church (denominations) have you attended for more than six weeks consecutively?

Age Group	A	B	C	No Answer
20-29	27% (11)	60% (24)	13% (5)	0
30-39	26% (11)	60% (26)	14% (6)	0
40-49	50% (23)	44% (20)	6% (3)	0
50-59	52% (26)	46% (23)	2% (1)	0
60-69	66% (35)	30% (16)	2% (1)	2% (1)
70-80	75% (38)	22% (11)	0	3% (2)
Total	144	120	16	3

(A: 1 denomination, B: 2-3 denominations, C: 4-5 denominations)

Table 6: How important is it to you that the church that you attend is part of the Apostolic Fellowship? (presented in a manner to show the age groups of the respondents)

Age Group	A	B	C	No Answer
20-29	23% (9)	75% (30)	0	2% (1)
30-39	26% (11)	74% (32)	0	0
40-49	20% (9)	76% (35)	2% (1)	2% (1)
50-59	46% (23)	54% (27)	0	0
60-69	51% (27)	43% (23)	0	6% (3)
70-80	63% (32)	29% (15)	2% (1)	6% (3)
Total	111	162	2	8

(A: I consider it to be of primary importance, B: It is the quality of the local Fellowship that is more important to me than its denominational banner, C: I did not realise that my local assembly was part of the Apostolic Fellowship)

Table 7: How important is it to you that the church that you attend is part of the Apostolic fellowship? (Presented in a manner that reflects the previous church attendance experience of respondents)

Denominations in past 20 years ⁶	A	B	C	No Answer
1	58% (87)	38% (57)	1% (1)	3% (4)
2-3	21% (26)	75% (90)	1% (1)	3% (4)
4-5	12% (2)	88%(15)	0	0
Total	(115)	(162)	(2)	(8)

(A: I consider it to be of primary importance, B: It is the quality of the local Fellowship that is more important to me than its denominational banner, C: I did not realise that my local assembly was part of the Apostolic Fellowship.)

Table 8: What style of sermon best describes your preference?

Age Groups	A	B	C	No Answer
20-29	13% (5)	10% (4)	77% (31)	0
30-39	16% (7)	2% (1)	82% (35)	0
40-49	17% (8)	7% (3)	76% (35)	0
50-59	22% (11)	2% (1)	70% (35)	6% (3)
60-69	21% (11)	2% (1)	70% (37)	7% (4)
70-80	24% (12)	3% (2)	67% (34)	6% (3)
Total	(54)	(12)	(207)	(10)

(A: I prefer a strong teaching sermon without the use of props or multimedia, B: I prefer a multimedia presentation with either props, drama or visual aids and with little strong preaching, C: A blend of both strong preaching and multimedia is best.)

⁶ Respondents were requested to specify how many different denominations they had attended for six consecutive weeks or more in the past twenty years.

Table 9: Are you more drawn to Apostolic conventions and conferences or to interdenominational events? (Presented in a manner that reflects the age group of respondents.)

Age Groups	A	B	C	No Answer
20-29	32% (13)	40% (16)	13% (5)	15% (6)
30-39	62% (27)	23% (10)	10% (4)	5% (2)
40-49	50% (23)	33% (15)	13% (6)	4% (2)
50-59	60% (30)	26% (13)	12% (6)	2% (1)
60-69	64% (34)	15% (8)	9% (5)	12% (6)
70-80	61% (31)	10% (5)	14% (7)	15% (8)
Total	(158)	(67)	(33)	(25)

(A: I am more drawn to attend interdenominational conferences and/or conferences organised by other denominations; B: I prefer Apostolic conventions; C: I have not attended more than one Christian conventions or conferences.)

Table 10: Are you more drawn to Apostolic conventions and conferences or to interdenominational events? (Presented in a manner that reflects the experiences of respondents regarding church attendance)

Denominations in past 20 years ⁷	A	B	C	No Answer
1	60% (90)	22% (33)	11% (16)	7% (10)
2-3	55% (67)	25% (30)	10% (12)	10% (12)
4-5	29% (5)	24% (4)	29% (5)	18% (3)
Total	(162)	(67)	(33)	(25)

(A: I predominantly attend conventions and conferences that have been organised by my own denomination, B: I am more drawn to attend interdenominational conferences)

⁷ Respondents were requested to specify how many different denominations they had attended for six consecutive weeks or more in the past twenty years.

Table 11: Which words best describe your understanding of directive prophecy?

Age Groups	A	B	C	No Answer
20-29	20% (8)	55% (22)	8% (3)	17% (7)
30-39	40% (17)	46% (20)	7% (3)	7% (3)
40-49	41% (19)	28% (13)	20% (9)	11% (5)
50-59	32% (16)	44% (22)	8% (4)	16% (8)
60-69	51% (27)	32% (17)	6% (3)	11% (6)
70-79	41% (21)	45% (23)	2% (1)	12% (6)
Total	(108)	(117)	(23)	(35)

(A: It confirms what I already believed that God had given me, B: It provides clear instructions that I must endeavour to obey, C: It contains another point of view that might be worth considering)

Table 12: How would you rate the amount of good prophecy that you hear?

Age Groups	A	B	C	No Answer
20-29	33% (13)	15% (6)	40% (16)	12% (5)
30-39	33% (14)	28% (12)	37% (16)	2% (1)
40-49	15% (7)	43% (20)	39% (18)	2% (1)
50-59	36% (18)	32% (16)	26% (13)	6% (3)
60-69	21% (11)	45% (24)	32% (17)	2% (1)
70-80	18% (9)	47% (24)	27% (14)	8% (4)
Total	(72)	(102)	(94)	(15)

(A: Increasing, B: Decreasing, C: About the same)

Table 13: Have you ever received directive prophecy?

Age Groups	A	B	C	No Answer
20-29	23% (9)	25% (10)	40% (16)	12% (5)
30-39	28% (12)	26% (11)	37% (16)	9% (4)
40-49	39% (18)	0	57% (26)	4% (2)
50-59	44% (22)	18% (9)	36% (18)	2% (1)
60-69	45% (24)	26% (14)	23% (12)	6% (3)
70-80	41% (21)	27% (14)	24% (12)	8% (4)
Total	(106)	(58)	(100)	(19)

(A: Yes and I have obeyed it, B: No but I would obey it, C: I want to judge any prophecy before I act on it)

Table 14: Who should judge prophecy? (Presented in a manner that reflects the various age groups of respondents)

Age Groups	A	B	C	No Answer
20-29	20% (8)	5% (2)	55% (22)	20% (8)
30-39	26% (11)	0	67% (29)	7% (3)
40-49	30% (14)	2% (1)	59% (27)	9% (4)
50-59	48% (24)	0	52% (26)	0
60-69	45% (24)	2% (1)	47% (25)	6% (3)
70-80	37% (19)	2% (1)	53% (27)	8% (4)
Total	(100)	(5)	(156)	(22)

(A: Senior Church Leadership, B: Other people who prophesy, C: Every Christian believer who hears it)

Table 15: Who should judge prophecy? (Presented in a manner that reflects the experience of respondents regarding regular attendance at different denominations)

Denominations in past 20 years ⁸	A	B	C	No Answer
1	40% (60)	1% (2)	54% (80)	5% (7)
2-3	31% (38)	2% (2)	59% (71)	8% (10)
4-5	18% (3)	6% (1)	47% (8)	29% (5)
Total	101	5	159	22

(A: Senior Church Leadership, B: Other people who prophesy, C: Every Christian believer who hears it)

⁸Respondents were requested to specify how many different denominations they had attended for six consecutive weeks or more in the past twenty years.

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