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BIBLICAL VERSUS SACRAMENTAL APPROACH: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ROBERT MENZIES AND SIMON CHAN'S VIEWS ON BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

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1. Introduction

Discussion about the baptism in the Holy Spirit, perhaps has become the most controversial and important doctrine among Pentecostal scholars. J. Rodman Williams states, "in the Pentecostal and Charismatic traditions the doctrine of baptism in (or with) the Holy Spirit occupies a place of critical importance."[1] This doctrine has been more problematic especially when Pentecostals try to see its relationship with *glossolalia* or speaking in tongues.

How do we explain the relationship between baptism in the Holy Spirit and *glossolalia?* This is the question that I will answer by investigating two prominent scholars in the Assemblies of God church: Robert Menzies and Simon Chan.[2] Menzies is the representative of the classical Pentecostal position; Chan is the representative of the sacramental approach. Throughout this essay I will examine, compare, and synthesize their theological positions.

[1] J. Rodman Williams, "Baptism in the Holy Spirit," in Stanley Burgess, ed., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements,* rev. and exp. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 354.

[2] I choose them because both Menzies and Chan can represent two different approaches in viewing the relationship between baptism in the Holy Spirit and *glossolalia.* Moreover, I would limit myself to the issue of the relationship between *glossolalia* and baptism in the Holy Spirit.

In this essay I would argue that their views should not be seen as contradictory to each other. I think that it is better not to apply an "either/or" logical framework in comparing Menzies' and Chan's understanding of baptism in the Holy Spirit, but rather the "both/and" framework. Let us see them individually first, and then I will make a concluding comparison as well as see their contributions to Pentecostal theology.

2. Robert Paul Menzies: A Brief Description of His Life

Robert Menzies is a son of an eminent Pentecostal historian, William Menzies.[3] He was born in 1958. He is one of the leading New Testament scholars who used to teach at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, Baguio City, Philippines. He earned his M.Div. from Fuller Theological Seminary in 1983 and in 1989 he received his Ph.D. from the University of Aberdeen under the supervision of I. Howard Marshall, a world-renowned New Testament scholar.[4] After teaching several years at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, he moved to Northern Asia and became a fulltime missionary. Before I move further in discussing his theological positions on the relationship between *glossolalia* and baptism in the Holy Spirit, let me examine first his methodologies in building a theology.

[3] See a brief description of the life of William Menzies in R.P. Spittler, "Menzies, William Watson," in Stanley Burgess, ed., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements,* rev. and exp., ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 871.

[4] The dissertation that he wrote for his Ph.D. was published first in 1991. See Robert Menzies, *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts* JSNTSup 54 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991). This book was revised for a wider audience and republished by T&T Clark in 2004 under the title *Empoweredfor Witness.* See Robert Menzies, *Empoweredfor Witness: Spirit in Luke-Acts* (London: T&T Clark, 2004). This book is quite significant for Pentecostal studies. In reviewing this book, James D. Dunn even acknowledges, "...this is a work of significant and substantial scholarship whose strengths cannot be done full justice to in a brief review." See James D. Dunn, review of *The Development of Early Christian Pneumatology with Special Reference to Luke-Acts,* by Robert Menzies, *Evangelical Quarterly* 6612 (1994): 176. Menzies has also written many articles posted in *Pneuma, Journal of Pentecostal Theology, Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies,* etc. The book *Spirit and Power* is a compilation of his articles. See William and Robert Menzies, *Spirit and Power: Foundations of Pentecostal Experience* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000).

2.1 Menzies' Theological Methods

Menzies is not only a typical Pentecostal, but also Evangelical in his approach. There are three things that I would comment on Menzies' methodologies which developed his theological system. First, he rejects the idea of Pentecostal hermeneutics.[5] For him, Pentecostal hermeneutics is no more than evangelical hermeneutics. Hermeneutics should be an investigation to find the meaning of a text in its original historical context. Menzies is very much in favor of the so-called reading "behind the text" or the authorial intent hermeneutical approach.[6] We have to find the intention of Luke in order to articulate our Pentecostal theology. Obviously, this is a typical evangelical approach to the Bible. Moreover, the high view of the Bible is clearly seen in his writings. This then leads him to the second point of his methodology.

[5] See Robert Menzies, "Jumping off the Postmodern Bandwagon," *Pneuma* 16 (Spring 1994): 115-20. This article is later included in his *Spirit and Power;* 63-8. It is his response to Timothy Cargal's article: "Beyond the Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy: Pentecostals and Hermeneutics in a Postmodern Age," *Pneuma* 15 (Fall 1993): 163-87. Cargal strongly argues that if we see the way Pentecostals approach the Bible, especially in French Arrington's writing, we will find that Pentecostal's way of reading the Bible does not fit at all in the framework Evangelical or Fundamentalist-Modernist epistemology. Therefore, Cargal suggests that it would be more relevant and better if Pentecostals can embrace the postmodern epistemological framework and use it for their hermeneutical approach to the Bible. Menzies argues against this article. He frankly says that Cargal's writing is "lucid, insightful and ultimately disturbing." See *Spirit and Power,* 63. He sees one of the most dangerous consequences of Cargal's approach is that the truth will become very subjective and relative.

[6] Joel Green explains that there are three ways of approaching or reading a text: *behind the text, in the text,* and *in front of the text.* Reading *behind the text* is an authorial intended meaning approach. In this approach, we try to find the meaning that lies in the mind of the author. The meaning can be discovered by trying to think as the author thinks, feel as the author feels, etc. Reading *in the text* assumes the textual autonomous notion. The meaning should be found in the text and not in the mind of the author. The last approach is reading *in front of the text* or reader response approach. This kind of approach assumes that the reader is the determiner of the meaning of a text. For further discussion see Joel B. Green, "The Challenge of Reading the New Testament," in *Reading the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation,* ed. Joel B. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 6-8. For discussion on reading *behind the text,* see E.D. Hirsch, *Validity In Interpretation* (New Heaven/London: Yale University Press, 1967), 1-23; Robert H. Stein, "The Benefits of an Author-Oriented Approach to Hermeneutics," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (September 2001): 451-66; Scott A. Blue, "The Hermeneutics of E. D. Hirsch, Jr. and its Impact on Expository Preaching: Friend or Foe," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (June 2001): 253-69. Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "Legitimate Hermeneutic," in Donald K. McKim, ed. *A Guide to Contemporary Hermeneutics: Major Trends in Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 111-41. For further discussion of reading *in the text* see Norman Geisler, "The Relation of Purpose and Meaning in Interpreting Scripture" *Grace Theological Journal* 512 (Fall 1984): 229-45. For discussion on reading *in front of the text* or reader response see Michael Cahill, "Reader-Response Criticisin and the Allegorizing Reader" *Theological Studies* 57 (March 1996): 89-96; Robert F. Fowler, "Who is 'the Reader' in Reader Response Criticism?" *Semeia* 31 (1985): 5-26.

Second, for Menzies, Pentecostal theological articulation should be in response to their evangelical friends' challenges. Within this framework Menzies starts to build his Pentecostal theology. His theology is a form of dialogue between his Pentecostal heritage and evangelical epistemology. Menzies believes that Pentecostals should use an evangelical framework in order to make them (evangelical friends) see that Pentecostal theology is valid. It seems like the validity of Pentecostal theology is determined by evangelical epistemology. So, the Pentecostal theological task is to convince the evangelical friends of the validity of the Pentecostal experience. If Pentecostals can prove their theology in this framework, then their theology is sound. In other words, Pentecostals will find their true identity if they can be accepted by their evangelical friends. Moreover, he states,

> My vision of the future is quite different [from Cargal's vision]. I see assimilation of the modern Pentecostal movement into the broader evangelical world as an exciting and positive event. Loolting back over the past fifty years, we can affirm the strength we found in our evangelical heritage. This is especially true with respect to biblical interpretation.'

The third thing that I want to point out is that Menzies' theological methodology does not leave any room for church tradition. Perhaps because of his strong evangelical heritage of *Sola Scriptura*, he tends to neglect the role of tradition in the process of theologizing. So, theology must merely be built on biblical exegesis.[8] Even though he tallts about the limitations

[7] Menzies, *Spirit und Power,* 67.

of biblical theology and affirms the role of systematic theology in formulating a theological system, he still does not affirm the importance of church tradition. I think that Menzies sees systematic theology as no more than synthesizing *all* biblical data in answering our modern questions.[9] Biblical theology, for Menzies, is a field that sees the individual books in the bible as independent from one another, i.e., Pauline theology or Lukan theology, and so on.

2.2 Menzies' Theological Affirmations

Having stated his theological methods, let me examine his theological position on the relationship between baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. In this part I will examine several theological affirmations of Menzies that have been great contributions to current biblical studies as well as to Pentecostal studies.

First, he strongly affirms the distinctiveness of Lukan pneumatology. After exegeting biblical texts, especially Lukan materials, Menzies came to the conclusion that the Lukan view of the concept of endowment of the Spirit does not have soteriological significance, which is of course against the influential work of Dunn.[10] For Menzies, Luke in his narratives depicted the Spirit as the source of power "which enables God's servants to fulfill their divinely appointed tasks."[11] Thus, the whole system in Menzies' theology of baptism in the Holy Spirit is built on Lukan pneumatology.[12]

[8] If we carefully read his "Evidential Tongues: The Essay on Theological Method," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 1 (1998), 111-23, we will find that the whole discussion is actually hermeneutical methods and not "theological" methods in a broad sense. Why is this? I think primarily it is because his presupposition that theology should be built merely on the basis of biblical account.

[9] For further discussion see ibid, 126-30.

[10] Cf. James D. Dunn, *Baptism in the Spivit: A Re-examination of the New Testament Teaching on the Gift of the Spirit in Relation to Pentecostalism Today* (London: SCM Press, 1970).

[11] Menzies, *Empowered for Witness*, 202. Actually Menzies' thesis has been challenged by Max Turner. Turner sees the Spirit of Prophecy in the book of Acts has a strong soteriological and rather than missiological significance. See the complete discussion in Max Turner, *The Holy Spivit and Spiritual Gifts: Then and Now* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996). He wrote an essay recently and again criticized Menzies' exegetical and theological idea. See Max Turner, "The Spirit and Salvation in Luke-Acts," in Graham N. Stanton, Bruce W. Longenecker, and Stephen C. Barton, eds. *The Holy Spirit and Chvistian Origins: Essays in Honor of James D.G. Dunn* (Grand Rapids, *MI:* Eerdmans, 2004), 103-16.

[12] See Menzies, *Spivit and Power,* 47-61.

> Luke's Theology is indeed different from that of Paul. Luke not only fails to refer to soteriological aspects of the Spirit's work, his narrative presupposes a pneumatology that does not include this dimension (e.g. Luke 11:13; Acts 8:4-25; 18:24-19:7). Of course a detailed examination of Luke's two volume work would be required to defend this assertion.[13]

Menzies strongly argues that Luke is an independent theologian. His theology must not be determined by Paul or other writers in the Bible, but he adds that Lukan theology should be "*complementary*" to that of Paul.[14] Furthermore, he seems to see the interaction between Evangelicals and Pentecostals as the interaction between Paul and Luke. On one hand, Evangelicals see baptism in the Holy Spirit from a Pauline perspective. On the other hand, Pentecostals see baptism in the Holy Spirit through the eyes of Lukan theology.

Second, he believes in the initial evidence doctrine of classical Pentecostals. As I have stated above, Menzies' position is representative of a classical Pentecostal theological understanding. Menzies strongly maintains the idea that *glossolalia* is the physical initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. In defending this doctrine, it is interesting that he thinks that biblical theology is not enough to explain this theological formulation. For him, there is a twofold problem when we try to build this doctrine on biblical theology. First, the evidence that we have in the Lukan accounts is not uniform. The second problem is that it is not really clear that the Lukan account on speaking in tongues is a normative doctrine.[15] Therefore, he begins to open his eyes to the contribution of systematic theology. We need to remember that for him systematic theology is an effort to see the relationship between authors of the Bible. He states,

> I have argued that the doctrine of 'tongues as initial evidence,' although not explicitly found in the New Testament, is an appropriate inference drawn from the prophetic character of Pentecostal gift and the evidential character of tongues speech. Although tongues-speech, as a form of inspired or prophetic speech, is integral to Pentecostal gift, Paul makes a significant

contribution to the discussion by highlighting it potentially universal character.)"

Thirdly, I think I need to examine his understanding of the doctrine of subsequence in relation to his polemic argumentations against Gordon Fee. Fee, in his book *Gospel and Spirit,* strongly challenges the Pentecostal idea that baptism in the Holy Spirit is a separate experience after conversion.[17] Fee basically says that Pentecostals simply base their theology on the narrative account in the book of Acts without being able to show that those narratives are intended to be normative. This issue is known as the so-called historical precedent issue[18] to find a normative theology in the book of Acts. And for Fee, Pentecostals are not able to provide a nonnative pattern of tongues in Acts. Therefore, "this leads Fee to reject the traditional Pentecostal position."" The issue is more hermeneutical rather than theological. Menzies strongly reacts against Fee's position that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not distinct from conversion not based on the historical precedent in the book of Acts. Menzies sees this challenge as an extremely serious problem for it touches the very heart of Pentecostal theology.[20] Fee's "essential message is that Pentecostals have, in terms of theology, nothing new to offer the broader evangelical world."[21]

In order to answer that challenge, once again Menzies emphasizes the distinctiveness of Lulcan pneumatology. According to Menzies, the doctrine

[13] Ibid., 52.

[14] Ibid., 144.

[15] Menzies, *Spirit and Power*, 123.

[16] Ibid. 127. Thus. we can see here that Paul contributed the universal character of prophetic speech and Luke contributed the prophetic character of tongue. When we combine them, we can still build the doctrine of initial evidence. This is Menzies' argument from systematic theology perspective. This, of course, is still a strict form of *Sola Scriptura* approach to systematic theology.

[17] Gordon Fee, *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991). Cf. Gordon Fee, "Hermeneutics and Historical Precedent --A Major problem in Pentecostal Hermeneutics," in R.P. Spittler, ed. *Perspective on New Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1976), 118-32; Gordon Fee, "Baptism in the Holy Spirit: The issue of Separability and Subsequence," *Pneuma* 7/2 (1985): 87-99.

[18] This issue has been also addressed by Roger Stronstad in "The Biblical Precedent for Historical Precedent," *Paraclete* 27 (Summer 1993): 1-10. See also the response and clarification of Fee in "Response to Roger Stronstad's 'The Biblical Precedent for the Historical Precedent'," *Paraclete* 27 (Fall 1993):15-9.

of subsequence must be built on Lukan intentionality. He further states, "For if our description of Luke's distinctive pneumatology is accurate, then Luke's intent to teach a Spirit-baptism distinct from conversion for empowering is easily demonstrated."[22] Moreover, Menzies argues that Lukan redactional effort in Luke 11:1-13 by adding the word "Holy Spirit" to the hypothetical Q shows that he seems to anticipate the post resurrection experience of the church, which is the day of Pentecost.[23] Since it is assumed that the Lukan community was Christian, the promise of the Holy Spirit here cannot be understood as a soteriological gift.[24] Furthermore, "Luke's usage elsewhere indicates that he viewed the gift of the Holy Spirit in Luke 11:13b as an enduement of prophetic power."[25] So for Menzies, this redactional action of Luke shows that he wants to encourage his community, which is composed of post-Pentecost disciples, to ask for the gift of Spirit that will enable tliem to be effective witness.[26]

There are three main theological affirmations: distinctiveness of Lukan pneumatology, initial evidence, and the doctrine of subsequence that we can see in Menzies' writings. These three theological tenets, of course, are strongly emphasized by most classical Pentecostals.

Since Menzies is able to articulate those Pentecostal theologica! tenets in a biblical theology approach, then in that sense, he has been a good representative of the classical Pentecostal position. We need to appreciate what he has done as a significant contribution to Pentecostal theologies. Now let us see Simon Chan and his theological method on liow to approach Pentecostal theology and experience.

3. Simon K. H. Chan: A Brief Description of His Life

Simon Chan is now recognized as a leading scholar in the area of spiritual theology. He got his Ph.D. from Cambridge University. He is an Earnest Lau Professor of Systematic Theology at Trinity Theological College, in Singapore. Presently he is the editor of *Trinity Theological Journal* and an ordained minister with Singapore Assemblies of God. In the area of Spiritual Theology, Chan is considered as one of the most

[19] Menzies, *Spirit and Power,* 110

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.; 115.

[23] Ibid., 116.

prominent contemporary scholars, beside Richard Foster, Robert Mulholland, Dallas Willard, Marjorie Thompson, et. al.[27]

3.1 Chan's Theological Methods

There are several things that Chan emphasizes in his theological methods. First, Chan believes that tradition has to play a significant role in the process of theologizing. Doing Pentecostal theology should not be based on the Bible only, but also on the variety of interpretations of the Bible throughout church history. Therefore, beside exegeting the text of the Bible, he strongly challenges Pentecostals to do their traditioning process by engaging with other Christian traditions.[28] Pentecostals have to find their roots in a broad Christian tradition. For Chan, classical Pentecostals in general tend to be very anti-tradition. They do not want to bind themselves to the past but they want to have new things. Chan observes that the language of "newness" has become very popular among Pentecostals today. Therefore he says that Pentecostals are "traditional in an unconscious way."[29] The other problem in the process of traditioning in Pentecostalism, according to Chan, is that "it is oral rather than written."[30] When people begin to reflect on something and conceptualize something, Chan sees that there is a sort of fear of losing dynamism among them. But Chan strongly argues,

[24] Ibid., 117.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] See Glen A. Scorgie, "Hermeneutics and the Meditative Use of Scripture: The Case for a Baptized Imagination" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 4412 (June 2001): 276. Cf. Clark Pinnock, review of *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life,* by Simon Chan, available in http://www.mcmaster.ca/mjtm/2-r1.htm [Accessed on September 18, 2005]. Pinnock states, "It is a wonderful book [*Spiritual Theology*] on the subject and supplements admirably the work of other devotional writers. For example, I myself love Richard Foster and Henri Nouwen in particular, but I found that Chan brought more theological analysis and substance into play. The book is fully documented across the whole range of devotional classics, studies of spirituality, and contemporary theology. I know of no book which is as informed and helpful on these matters as this one is. Chan is conversant with spiritual writers of every school and commends practices of every tradition."

> ...despite the apprehension about theological reflection, Pentecostals still need to reflect and theologize if they are to ensure that Pentecostal reality is to be bequeathed to the next generation basically intact. If the first ten years represent the heart of Pentecostalism we need to find out why and how it could be recaptured the heart of Pentecostal for subsequent generations.[31]

Thus, Chan believes that a traditioning process is extremely important for a movement like the Pentecostal movement. If Pentecostals fail to reflect theologically on what they experience, then there is a danger of losing its value in the coming generations.

The first method then logically leads him to the second theological method, which is the importance of the church as a community of believers in building theology because, for him, "traditioning is by nature a communal affair."[32] Chan affirms the role of the community of believers in the process of theologizing and analyzing the Bible.[33] The text of the Bible is not to be individually interpreted. Chan states,

[28] Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spirituality Tradition,* Journal of Pentecostal Supplement Series 21 (New York: Sheffield, 2003), chapter 1.

[29] Ibid., 23.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid., 24.

[32] Ibid., 17.

[33] For further discussion on the role of the community see Simon Chan, "The Church and the Development of Doctrine," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 13/1 (2004): 55-77. This is a very interesting article that was originaliy presented in his inaugural lecture at Trinity on 3 October 2002. In this article, Chan strongly argues that the church plays an important role in the development of the dogma. He mentions that the weakness of Thomas Oden and D. H. Williams' approach is that even though they put both church tradition and the scripture as the authorities instead of *Sola Scriptura,* but it is too narrowly limited to the patristic church. Besides these two Protestant theologians. Chan also sees that some of Pentecostal theologians, such as Amos Yong, Dale Irvin, Frank Macchia and Ralph Del Colle, have articulated the role of the church in the development of doctrine in relation to the role of the Spirit. Chan states, "Yet if the promising works of these Pentecostals (which have already moved beyond the static doctrines of scholastic evangelicalism) are to contribute to the further progress of dogma so that one day the Church achieves' unity of faith', the ecclesiological issue cannot be bypassed. However, it will have to be an ecclesiology that is intimately linked to

> Conservative Christians have tended to understand interpretation as involving a one-way process centering on the text, as if there is a single, independent meaning in there waiting to be discovered, which once discovered, will decisively settle the issue What the canonical approach has helped us to see is that meaning arises from the interaction of Scripture and the interpretive community.[34]

The community is the determiner of the meaning of the text. For him, the spirit of Protestantism has made the scripture more personal.[35] He strongly suggests that Christians should let the church or the community of believers determine the meaning of the text." For him, "the failure to recognize the critical role of the community in the interpretive process is one of the main reasons why biblical scholars on both sides of the debate over tongues and the doctrine of subsequence are not anywhere nearer to resolving the issues."[37]

Thirdly. unlike Menzies, he maintains that we have to emphasize the unity of the Bible more. He calls this the canonical approach. For him, we must not build a theology only on one particular author of the Bible. This, of course, refers to Menzies' approach that sees Pentecostal theology only from a Lukan perspective. Chan, in disagreement with Menzies, says, "We will, therefore, have to begin with a broader and more integrated biblical understanding of Spirit-baptism than what the Lukan narrative provides."[38]

These are three inain theological methods that we clearly can see in Chan's writings. Because he is a systematic theologian, 1 think that we can really understand why he tries to build his theology from a broad perspective. Let us see how he explains Pentecostal theology from this broad perspective.

pneumatology. To the extent that the link between Spirit and Church is weak, the result will be a weakened view of dogma" (see 61). So what is his theological proposal in handling this problem? He sees the importance of the church wherin he argues that we need to see the church as a "divine-humanity" entity that existed prior to the creation (as the body of Christ). The church connects the creation with Christ, the second person in the Godhead. Because the church is divine and human, she is also authoritative in the developmental process of doctrine. Besides that, he also acknowledges the role of the Holy Spirit and the interpretive community.

[34] Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, 43.

[35] See Simon Chan, *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 114-21.

3.2 Chan's Theological Affirmations

Simon Chan is a very creative theologian. He is able to articulate clearly Pentecostal theology from a different and broader perspective than what Menzies has done. Let us see some of his theological affirmations with respect to baptism in the Holy Spirit.

First, just as Menzies believes, Chan also believes in the so-called initial evidence. As I have stated above, Chan does not build his theology on one particular author in the Bible. For Chan, the whole issue of "initial evidence," can be settled if we can show that there is a relationship between speaking in tongues and baptism in the Holy Spirit. If there is no relationship between them, then the doctrine of initial evidence will fall apart.?" Therefore, he prefers to see the doctrine of initial evidence from several different perspectives, such as biblical, theological, and cultural-linguistic. This approach, of course, is a lot broader than mere biblical cxegesis. From a biblical perspective, Chan investigates biblical authors one by one and sees their intention.-"' After examining Matthcw, Mark, Luke, John, Paul and other biblical writers, Chan comes to the conclusion that baptism in the Holy Spirit has a far richer meaning than what is represented by Lukan writings. He argues, "A Lukan theology of the Spirit, if we follow Schweizer and Menzies, does not provide an adequate basis for a Pentecostal theology."[41] Furthermore, Chan believes that if the baptism in the Holy Spirit is understood as power, then that power would only be the result of a "revelational encounter with the triune God."[42]

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[37] Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, 45. For further discussion on Chan's ecclesiology see *Simon Chan, "Mother. Church: Toward a Pentecostal Ecclesiology," Pneuma 22/2 (Fall 2000). 177-208.*

[38] Ibtd., 46.

[39] Ibid., 45.

[40] At this point I do not agree with John B. Carpenter's strong charge that Chan is a theologian that promotes a "reader response" hermeneutics. See John B. Carpenter, "Genuine Pentecostal Traditioning: Rooting Pentecostalism in its Evangelical Soil: A Reply to Simon Chan" *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 6/2 (January 2003): 309-10, especially note 21. It is true that he emphasizes the role of community in the process of interpretation. But it is not like what Carpenter describes. Carpenter sees Chan as a theologian that does not care about the intent of the authors of the Bible. I think Carpenter has misunderstood him. What Chan means is that biblical exegesisperse is not enough for building a dogma or theology.

Furthermore, from a theological perspective, Chan believes that Pentecostals have to find a theological explanation of the relationship between baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. At this point we can clearly see Chan's sacramental theology of baptism in the Holy Spirit. Chan, along with Frank Macchia,[43] Clark Pinnock,[44] and Kilian McDonnell,[45] believes that the phenomenon of speaking in tongues and its relationship with Spirit-baptism should be understood in the sacramental perspective. Chan argues, "… a connection can be made between tongues as a sign and the presence of the Spirit as the thing signified from a sacramental perspective."[46] Speaking in tongues symbolizes a spiritual reality, which is baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Moreover, in response to Macchia's understanding of speaking in tongues as a sacrament, Chan divides it into two different categories: tongues as sign of spirit-baptism and tongues as prayer.

> The distinction between tongues as evidence and as gift in the assembly is very much part of the Pentecostal 'tenets of faith'. But what is important is that the two functions bear substantially different relations to the Spirit. In Spirit-baptism the Spirit is in complete control (evidence by tongues), whereas in the gift of tongues no such entire control is assumed. On the contrary, one may safely assume that its regulation in the public assembly suggests a high degree of human control.[47]

Theology is broader than biblical exegesis. It does not mean that biblical exegesis is not important. Chan wants to remind Pentecostals that there are many theological problems that cannot be answered simply by exegeting biblical texts.

[41] Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, 49.

[42] Ibid.

[43] See Frank Macchia, "Tongue as a Sign: Towards a Sacramental Understanding of Pentecostal Experience," *Pneuma* 1511 (Spring 1993): 61-76; Frank Macchia, "Sighs Too Deep for Words: Toward a Theology of Glossolalia," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology 1* (1992): 47-73; Frank Macchia, "Groans too Deep for Words: Towards a Theology of Tongues as Initial Evidence," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies 1* (August 1988): 149-73.

[44] See Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 124-99.

For Chan, tongues as prayer actually fits more in what Macchia says about sacramental theology. Chan then relates it to the Pauline account in Romans 8:26. "The believer in the very act of speaking may be said to realize sacramentally the presence of God."[48] But what about the first kind of tongues (tongues as evidence)? Chan argues that it must be understood through the doctrine of trinity. Chan sees the doctrine of tongues in terms of the relationship between Father and Son and the Spirit. The communication and realization of trinity is in speaking the Word. He states, "… in speaking the personal identities of Father and Son are realized."[49] Through language God also has a deep engagement with people. Therefore, if speaking in tongues can be understood as "an overpowering theophany",[50] where one has a deep intimacy with God though language, then the effort to seek *the* evidence will not be a problem anymore. Chan strongly states,

> Glossolalia may be compared to the 'gift of tears.' The questions to ask, therefore, are not, are there not other signs of sadness that we can look for? Or worse, must one cry in order to be sad? (cf. a similar, equally misplaced question: Must I speak in tongues in order to be filled with the Spirit?) Rather, one simply recognizes a 'necessary' relationship between tears and sadness… In brief, if the initial baptism in the Spirit is understood as essentially denoting an experience of deep personal intimacy with the triune God in which the Spirit exercises full control, then it would in fact be quite accurate to see tongues as its natural concomitance or evidence.[51]

Thus, it is in the context of intiinate relationship with God that we can clearly see the relationship between speaking in tongues as the sign of the reality of baptism in the Holy Spirit. Chan maintains that *"glossolalia* does not have status of proof."[52] He prefers more to use the word "concomitant" because this word represents the idea of relationship.

Second, Chan also strongly believes in the doctrine of subsequence. But once again the way he approaches this doctrine is totally different from

[45] See Kilian McDonnell and George T. Montague, *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the first Eight Centuries* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991).

[46] Simon Chan, "The Language Game of Glossolalia, or Making Sense of the 'Initial Evidence'" in Wonsuk Ma and Robert Menzies, eds. *Pentecostalism in*

what Menzies does." Chan sees that Pentecostals always fail to distinguish between a phenomenological reality and a theological reality.[54] The failure to distinguish between a theological reality and a phenomenological one prevents Pentecostals from understanding other Christian tradition positions, such as the Roman Catholic. Furthermore, for him, "What is phenomenologically different may yet be a theological reality."[55] Chan insists that Pentecostals, along with Evangelicals, have a very narrow understanding of conversion. Pentecostals see conversion as a single crisis experience, so whatever experience comes subsequent to it is taken to be theologically distinct.[56] Chan argues, "The problem of the Pentecostal doctrine of subsequence arises precisely because they share a faulty doctrine of conversion with their fellow-evangelicals."[57] Pentecostals' old argumentation, according to him, is not theologically adequate to explain the doctrine of subsequence. Conversion and Christian initiation, for Chan, should be understood as a process that follows some stages of spiritual development. "The importance of the doctrine of subsequence is that properly understood it provides basis for sound spiritual development."[58] But Chan insists also that baptism in the Holy Spirit should be strongly related with the concept of sanctification. Therefore, if we put baptism in the Holy Spirit and conversion as one event, then sanctification will lose

Context: Essays in Honor of William W. Menzies, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Suppleinent Series 11 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 86.

[47] Ibid., 88.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid., 89.

[50] Ibid., 90.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Chan, *Pentecostal Theology,* 58.

[53] Chan rejects Menzies' approach because of two reasons. The first reason is that Menzies' method is based on a highly debatable foundation. "It depends very much upon making a clear demarcation between Luke and Paul." For Chan, biblical scholars would surely accept that Lukan pneumatology has strong missiological significance. But to say that there is no soteriological aspect at all, maybe they will not accept it. The second reason is that Menzies' idea of subsequence is based on the separation between sanctification and empowerment for witness. Because Chan believes that power should not be separated from spiritual growth, then to see baptism in the Holy Spirit as pure missiological in its nature will lack "wider contextual grounding as it leaves out dimension of personal relationship."

its distinctiveness character and focus.[59] So how does he explain the doctrine of subsequence?

Chan believes that the distinction between baptism and confirmation in the sacramental tradition churches can provide a sound theological explanation of the doctrine of subsequence. By borrowing the explanation of Yves Congar that confirmation signifies that the Holy Spirit is distinct from the Word: we are baptized into Christ, confirmed by the Spirit, Chan thinks that the idea of subsequence is very important theologically and sacramentally."[60] By the sacrament of confirmation, the disciples, on the day of Pentecost, were sent as witnesses and founders of the church. Therefore, the baptism in the Holy Spirit must be understood as a Pentecostal version of sacrament of confirmation. He states, "Confirmation clarifies the Pentecostal concept of the 'second work of grace' while interpreting this subsequent 'constitution' by the Spirit within the unified theological reality of Christian initiation."[61] So, Chan still believes that baptism in the Holy Spirit should be part of conversion or Christian initiation, of course, in a broader sense than the evangelical understanding of conversion. But at the same time, just as the sacrament of baptism should be separated from confirmation, within this framework, the importance of the doctrine of subsequence must be affirmed.

4. Evaluation of Both Approaches

Before I move further to the evaluation of these two Pentecostal scholars, let me say some things that we need to consider as preliminary thoughts. It is important for us to remember that theology is not done for God because God does not need theology. Humans are the ones that need theology. As Karl Barth has strongly pointed out,[62] theology is "our" reflection of who God is and what He has done. Theology is not God himself. Even though the object of theological studies is God, the theology is still our task. Theology is formulated by humans to answer human needs. Thus, since theology is human-made, then theology should not be understood as inerrant. If there is debate and different opinions in theology, it should be seen as a normal thing because there is no such thing as "perfect"

Therefore, Chan sees Menzies' idea argumentation for the doctrine of subsequence does not make any theological sense. Chan believes that people cannot have power without relationship. "Empowerment, rather, should be understood as a result of spiritual growth." See ibid., 86-7.

[54] Chan, *Language Game,* 91.

[55] Ibid., 91.

or "infallible" theology. Theology must be opened for development and improvement. I believe that "Pentecostal theology" should be understood in this frame of reference. Pentecostal theology is a reflection on God's nature and deeds. Unfortunately, for many years Pentecostals have failed to do this theological task. The main reason for this is perhaps the early Pentecostals had a strong conviction that Jesus was coming soon. This eschatological expectation made them think that there was no more time to think about theology. Russell Spittler has put it in a very interesting statement, "Pentecostals have been better missionaries than theologians."[63]

Nevertheless, Frank Macchia has shown that there has been a shift in Pentecostal theological paradigms.[64] But the question remains: whom should this theology address? There are at least two main audiences or "consumers" of Pentecostal theology. Those audiences are external and internal audiences. On one hand, the former one has something to do with the dialogical polemic (fellow Christians) and dialogical apologetic (non-Christians) purposes." But on the other hand, we need to remember that Pentecostal theology is also needed for the sake of Pentecostals themselves. If there is no theological reflection, how can Pentecostals maintain their distinctiveness? I am convinced that we cannot just tell the next Pentecostal generation *what* to believe without telling them *why* we believe it. The "why" task here, of course, can only be provided in a deep and critical theological reflection. It seems to me that the reason why the U.S. Assemblies of God has become, using the term of Cecil M. Robeck, "an emerging magisterium"[66] is because they cannot provide the "why" to the

[56] Ibid.

[57] Chan, *Pentecostal Theology*, 87.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid., 89.

[60] Ibid., 90.

[61] Ibid.

[62] See Karl Barth, *Evangelical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1963), 3-14.

[63] Russell Spittler, "Suggested Areas for Further Research in Pentecostalism," *Pneuma* 5 (Fall 1983): 39.

[64] For further discussion see Frank Macchia, "The Struggle for Global Witness: Shifting Paradigms in Pentecostal Theology," in Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Peterson, eds. *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel* (Oxford: Regnum, 1999), 8-29.

new generation. They end up forcing "unexplained" theologies on their members – AG ministers – to believe. It is interesting because Robeck says,

> The ministers of the Assemblies of God are expected to accept [at least the doctrine of initial physical evidence], without further question or discussion, the 'authentic' interpretation now given to this 'Tradition' by the members of the 'Magisterium'. This 'authentic' interpretation has become tantamount to the 'word of God' "[67]

It is clear that this happens because they do not know how to explain to this new generation why we believe what we believe. If we do not provide a deep theological reflection to the things that we believe, it will not be surprising that many will surely abandon the Pentecostal doctrine. With this in mind, we can now see the importance of the work of Chan and Menzies. They have played a significant role in the actual formulation of the "why" for the two main distinctive Pentecostal doctrines: initial physical evidence and subsequence. They provide this missing "element" in Pentecostal circles. Let us now evaluate their approaches.

These two scholars, Menzies and Chan, are very creative Pentecostal theologians. Instead of repeating their theological understandings, the chart below will briefly show the differences between Chan and Menzies. The explanation of each point can be seen in the descriptions that I have made above.

	Robert Menzies	Simon Chan
Target Audience	Evangelicals	Mainline churches
Theological Method	Biblical Exegesis only (pure *Sola Scriptura*)	Biblical Exegesis plus the community of believers and tradition
	Emphasis on Luke – Acts by using historical-grammatical and redactional approach to the Gospels.	Canonical approach
	Compartmentalization of biblical authors	The Bible must be seen as a whole
Theological Affirmations	Baptism in the Holy Spirit is only for empowerment to be witnesses	Baptism in the Holy Spirit is for both empowerment and Sanctification (or ethical life)
	Initial evidence is understood by a combination of biblical theology and systematic theology	Initial evidence is explained by using sacramental theology with a special emphasis on the intimate relationship between God and believers.
	The doctrine of subsequence is proven by Lukan writings	The doctrine of subsequence is explained by using the sacrament of confirmation

[65] One example of Pentecostal theology made to answer challenge and dialogue

The obvious differences that we can clearly see are their theological methods. Chan's approach in establishing theology is much broader than Menzies', which holds basically to biblical exegesis. Chan brings to our attention the role of community and tradition in the process of theologizing. Perhaps Chan's theological education in Cambridge University makes him think in this manner. Since Menzies studied under I. Howard Marshall, who is one of the best biblical scholars in the world, it is no wonder that his approach is very much biblical exegesis without involving other elements, such as church tradition. Thus, their theological background and education determines the way they build their theologies. It is obvious that their theological methods will surely lead them to a different explanation of the same doctrines (initial evidence and subsequence). In spite of these differences in their theological methods, the clear similarities that can be seen here is that they both still believe in the doctrine of initial evidence and subsequence.

The weakness of Menzies' approach is in reducing the Bible for Pentecostal theology to only two books. He can probably be trapped in the framework of canon within the canon. If so, then it means that he would probably repeat the same mistake that he said evangelicals have done.[68] Regarding Chan's position, it would be a bit difficult to teach or explain it in Pentecostal circles because Pentecostals are not sacramental tradition Christians. My question is should we be sacramental people in order to fit into Chan's theological framework? His concept is quite strange for Pentecostals. This makes me a bit hesitant to teach Chan's approach at the grass roots level or to people on the pews. On the other hand, I think that Menzies' approach is a lot easier for Pentecostals to understand.

In spite of those difficulties, the question that I think I have to answer here is should we put them in opposite to each other? I would argue that we shouldnot do that because they still affirm the same Pentecostal essential doctrines. We need both of them to give us, Pentecostals, solid foundations for our theological understanding. Their efforts are absolutely needed by Pentecostals. On one hand, Menzies provides a strong biblical exegesis for us. But on the other hand, Chan provides in a broader sense, a strong theological base for us. Moreover, Chan will help us to dialogue with our Christian friends from sacramental traditions. Menzies would help us to talk with our evangelical friends. They are not contradicting each other, but rather complementing each other. We need both of them. Therefore I

with other religions is the excellent work of Amos Yong. See Amos Yong

would not argue in favor of one of them. I would rather see them as equally strong and needed.

The other thing that we need to consider here, as I have stated above, is that Pentecostal theology is not only made for answering or dialoging with others outside the camp, it is also made for internal benefit. In this purpose I can tell that Chan and Menzies are complementary to each other. When a new generation of Pentecostals asks the question why do we have to experience baptism in the Spirit? What is it for? What is the relationship between baptism in the Spirit *andglossolalia?* I am convinced that Menzies' exegetical investigation of the biblical texts will surely be the solid biblical foundation for Pentecostal tradition. However, we need to remember that we cannot stop at the exegetical level. Macchia argues that this exegetical inquiry of Menzies must be worked out also on a theological level." At this level, Chan comes to the stage in order to take the exegetical results of Menzies to a deeper and broader theological context. So, in the meantime, Pentecostals now and Pentecostals in the future will have solid exegetical and theological grounds for what they believe and experience. I think this is really neat. If we neglect one of them, then our theology will become incomplete and uneven.

5. Conclusion

We, Pentecostals, should be grateful to God because He has given us two prominent theologians that can help us articulate our theological understanding. Menzies gives us solid biblical and exegetical articulation while Chan, a solid theological formlulation of what Pentecostals believe. Instead of presenting them as "either/or" options, I would suggest that we should see them as an integration (both/and). These two theological trajectories are a blessing for us. The coming of Menzies and Chan shows that Pentecostals have moved, according to Macchia, "from irregular theology to the rise of critical theology."[70] In this perspective, I think we need to appreciate what Chan and Menzies have done for us. The twofold purpose, which is external and internal purpose, of Pentecostal theological reflection can be fully achieved. My prayer is that God will give us more people like Menzies and Chan that will bless Pentecostals by helping them articulate their theological and biblical understanding. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

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