

The Three Waves of Spiritual Renewal of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement

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The study focuses on the historical dogmatical analysis of the three waves of spiritual renewal which started in the early twentieth century and affected most Christian denominations by focusing on the manifestation of the spiritual gifts. The author will identify the major historical dogmatical influences of the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement, the characteristics and the leaders of the movement, as well as the directions of development on the personal and on the community level.

Keywords: *Pentecostalism, Charismatism, Neo-Charismatism, spiritual gifts, baptism with the Holy Spirit, speaking in tongues*

Undoubtedly, the most important Christian spiritual movement of the last decades (some would say of the last century) is the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement. The current estimates show that the movement has raised over half a billion faithful Christians from all the major Christian denominations, most of them located in the southern hemisphere (South America, Africa and Asia).¹ Pentecostals derive their name from Pentecost (*Pentecost* in Greek) – the Descent of the Holy Spirit or the birth of the Church which was marked by the manifestations of the miraculous spiritual gifts (speaking in tongues, prophecies, healings). Pentecostals and Charismatics do not think Pentecost is repeatable, but they think that the mighty spiritual manifestations that have accompanied the event are repeatable and desirable for all the Christians throughout the Church history.

Evidence of the special manifestations of the Spirit is spread throughout the entire history of Christianity. Even though this evidence is sporadic and sometimes there are inconsistencies, it is present as realities historically written. The first Pentecostal churches emerged in the early twentieth century

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¹ The Pentecostal theologian Amos Yong estimated that at the beginning of the third millennium, there were two billion Christians of whom 65 million were Pentecostals, 175 million were Charismatics and 295 million were Neo-Charismatics. If we take into account the growth rate in just two decades, perhaps 10% of the world population, i.e. one third of all Christians could be Charismatics. Amos Yong, *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh. Pentecostalism and the Possibility of Global Theology*, Grand Rapids 2005, p. 19.