The ‘Ordo Salutis’ and Charismatic Movement

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One of the central concerns of the last five centuries of theological debate has been the relationship of justification to sanctification. Prior to the Reformation, justification and sanctification were not clearly distinguished. Justification was, in effect, dependent in part upon a prior work of sanctification. The Reformers reordered this understanding. They clearly separated these works of grace. Justification became entirely dependent upon the imputed righteousness of Christ. Man’s response to this example of God’s grace is to respond by faith. The work of sanctification follows on from this. It is, however, never complete, for whilst man is justified, he always remains a sinner—simul justus—simul peccator. The Protestant ordo salutis is thus justification followed by sanctification, whereas the Catholic order is the reverse of this.

Within Protestantism, one of the most significant developments in the accepted ordo salutis came from John Wesley. In his theology, the focus of the ordo salutis shifted from justification to a point subsequent to it. For Wesley, the ordo salutis began with prevenient grace which draws men to the Father; then convincing grace brings about repentance and saving faith. From saving faith, justification ensues. Yet this brings about only a ‘relative change’—liberation from the guilt of sin. Final justification is not complete at this point. A work of sanctification must be effected between the two moments of justification. This work of sanctification has a dual nature. Sanctification not only has a progressive and gradual character; Wesley also believed that it is a particular experience taking place at an identifiable moment. It is given in answer to faith, and is received in its entirety. As a result of this gift, the Christian’s life increases in sanctity, ‘which is a necessary qualification for eternal life.’

It is clear that, under this scheme, sanctification must become the dominant component in salvation. Wesley himself was aware of this, and regarded his doctrine of sanctification as the peculiar tenet of the Methodist movement. As he wrote in a letter dated 15 September 1790: ‘This doctrine (full sanctification) is the grand deposition which God has lodged with the people called the Methodists, and for the sake of propagating this chiefly He appeared to raise us up.’

Wesley’s emphasis was subsequently adopted and modified by the evangelists and theologians of the American holiness movement. In this new context, and under the influence of the camp meeting, the
principal modifications were in the direction of individualism, emotionalism and an increasing emphasis upon the crisis experience. In the mid-nineteenth century, through the preaching of C. G. Finney and the writing of Asa Mahan, the crisis experience became known as 'the baptism with the Holy Ghost'.

This term came into greater prominence with the evangelistic campaigns of both Moody and Torrey who, in their counselling, promised a further experience of grace called 'baptism in the Spirit' which converts were to seek diligently. Torrey added a new and decisive element. He wrote: 'The baptism with the Holy Spirit is an experience connected with, and primarily for the purpose of service... the baptism with the Holy Spirit has no direct reference to cleansing from sin. It has to do with gifts for service rather than with graces of character...'.

The significant change here is in the purpose of sanctification. Wesley had seen the work of sanctification as having two parts: first, the relationship between the believer and God through Christ; and second, the transformation of behaviour. Torrey saw it a different way. Sanctification was no longer the divinization of man; it was his empowering. The focus of theology was moving even further away from justification; here we see it moving away from sanctification.

This continuing change of theological focus became more pronounced at the end of the century. Benjamin Irwin, a Baptist preacher, was drawn into the holiness movement and discovered in the writings of John Fletcher, an early Methodist, an important new emphasis. Fletcher had taught that beyond sanctification there is a further experience which he called 'the baptism of burning love'. This is an inflow of divine fullness which is given only to the sanctified and the pure in heart. Irwin adopted this into a three-stage ordo salutis: conversion, sanctification, and the baptism of fire.

As the nineteenth century came to a close, Americans were surrounded by a whirlwind of change: economic, social, intellectual and religious. This led to a widespread desire for the church to demonstrate to the world its power and vitality. It was directly from this context that Pentecostalism sprang.

As a full scale movement it dates from the remarkable series of meetings in Azusa Street, Los Angeles, which began in 1906. But its beginnings may be traced back to the Topeka Bible College where what was to become a distinctive belief for Pentecostals was first fully formulated at the end of 1900—namely 'that in apostolic times speaking in tongues was considered to be the initial physical evidence of a person having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.'

This new and distinctive doctrine fitted into the order of salvation in the following manner: first came conversion, then sanctification, followed by baptism in the Spirit. The early teachers of the movement,
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Parham and Seymour, regarded sanctification as the essential preparation for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This represents a de-eschatologization of the Wesleyan scheme of salvation. For Wesley, the purpose of sanctification was to prepare for salvation; now it paved the way for service and individual assurance of God's presence and power.

This three-tier view of salvation was the hallmark of the emerging Pentecostal movement. However, from a relatively early point, W. H. Durham began to put forward a simpler scheme:

I began to write against the doctrine that it takes two works of grace to save and to cleanse a man. I denied and still deny that God does not deal with the nature of sin at conversion. I deny that a man who is converted and born again is outwardly washed and cleansed but that his heart is left unclean with enmity towards God in it... This would not be salvation. Salvation is an inward work... It means a change of nature... It means that all the old man, or old nature which was sinful and depraved, and which was the very thing in us that was condemned, is crucified with Christ.5

Thus sanctification is no longer a distinct and sudden experience subsequent to justification. The two are merged into one work of grace, which is quite separate from baptism in the Spirit. No longer is there a three-stage way of salvation, only a two-stage ordo salutis. Despite some vociferous opposition to Durham when he first put forward this two-stage scheme, it became the dominant model within Pentecostalism.

Upon first encounter, the Pentecostal preaching of salvation appears to be thoroughly within the Protestant framework. The starting-point is identical, 'the utter depravity of human nature' bringing as its consequence 'the necessity for repentance and regeneration.' A person who is regenerate is said to be justified by faith in the atoning blood of Christ. In spite of this formal affirmation of the doctrine of justification by faith, the doctrine is robbed of meaning by various other elements in Pentecostal teaching.

First, the utter depravity of human nature is not taken very seriously in connection with the genesis of faith. In contrast to Luther's view of the bondage of the will, man plays a decisive role in coming to faith. Thus Pearlman, a leading Pentecostal, says, 'Is faith a human or a divine activity? The fact that man is commanded to believe implies the ability and the obligation to do so.'6

Second, it cannot be doubted that the doctrine of justification by faith does not, in the Pentecostal movement, hold the central position that it does within Reformed theology. For whilst sanctification may no longer be the dominant motif of Pentecostal theology, its focus of attention remained at a point subsequent to justification; namely, baptism in the Spirit. This is the primary characteristic of Pentecostal preaching and practice.
Thirdly, Pentecostalism suffers from the merging of justification with sanctification. Within Pentecostalism, justification does not have any clear precedence over sanctification. Pentecostals emphasize sanctification to such a degree that justification by faith is claimed to be insufficient for salvation. They insist that there must be a minimum of sanctification or there can be no redemption. So Barrett says, ‘Inward purification must be achieved in order to enter heaven, because it is written “holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. 12:14).’ Professor Hollenweger illustrates this understanding very vividly in the story of the man condemned to death for embezzlement. Those present in court took pity on him and raised £1,999,19.6d. But since the man owed £2,000, the judge ruled that he must be condemned. In despair, the man went through all his pockets and then, to wild applause, produced 6d. This example demonstrates the dual character of justification within Pentecostalism. Despite the extensive changes in the ordo salutis since Wesley’s scheme, it still bears his mark. In spite of the large proportion of the debt being paid for him (£1,999.19.6d), there still remains a proportion which depends upon the exertion of the condemned (6d). Sanctification is still a necessary qualification for justification. As a result of this, sanctification within traditional Pentecostalism has played an important part in the preaching and teaching of the movement. This has led the individual believer to be concerned to deny himself and to remain unspotted by the world, for only in this way will justification become a reality. In practice, this has led to ethical rigourism and the neglect of the positive renewal of the believer; what Calvin called the ‘vivification of the Spirit.’

Pentecostalism appears to be strongly within the Protestant tradition. Whilst it is a development of a strand of that tradition, the ordo salutis of Pentecostalism is more akin to the Roman Catholic ordo salutis than to the Reformed view. Its conception of the role of man in the genesis of faith would be described by Catholic theologians as ‘created grace’, and the merging of justification with sanctification is thoroughly in tune with Catholicism. The great gulf between the two schemes is that the Pentecostal is placed within a revivalistic framework, whereas the Catholic is within a sacramental framework. The work of grace in the former begins with conversion, whereas in the latter it is baptism. Sanctification in the former is through a life of self-denial fostered within the meetings; in the latter it is through partaking in the sacramental life of the church. The revivalistic approach is crisis-centred, emotional and individualistic; the sacramental approach is life-centred, low-key and corporate. The framework of the two approaches is, therefore, radically different, but the underlying theology is remarkably similar.
The Protestant charismatics

When members of the main-line denomination became attracted to Pentecostalism they were drawn by Pentecostal practice rather than by their doctrine. The experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit was primary, and theological reflection followed it. The baptism in the Holy Spirit was closely associated with speaking in tongues, which was followed by a renewal of personal piety and a sense of joy and peace. It was this that attracted people.

But what impressed us most . . . was the fellow named Bud. He seemed so happy and so sure of God that he made us hungry to know what he had . . . so we asked him ‘What’s happened to you?’ and he just said ‘Oh, I’ve been baptised in the Holy Ghost!’ . . . We were so attracted by what we felt and saw in that young man’s life that we said ‘We want it too!’

It is not without significance that the testimony of the young couple is to what they felt and saw, rather than what they thought, and that the explanation they received was couched in traditional Pentecostal terms. It is scarcely surprising that they described their own experience in such terms. They derived their experience in Pentecostal groups and their explanation was the only one available.

Thus they took over the Pentecostal doctrine of the two sorts of Christians; those who had been baptized in the Spirit and those who had not. The former were characterized by having a crisis experience marked by the onset of speaking in tongues. Much of the earlier literature focused upon this. As the movement grew and the flow of printed matter accelerated, it consisted almost entirely of testimonial didactic and apologetic material whose warp and weft was a church empowered by the baptism of the Holy Spirit and endowed with spiritual gifts. This was the dominant concern of the movement and of the individuals associated with it.

Those who were drawn into the renewal movement came from an incredible variety of backgrounds: Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, etc. These Protestant charismatics continued the Pentecostal tendency of seeing baptism in the Spirit as a distinct experience subsequent to conversion. To be sure, the Spirit is seen as active in bringing a person to faith and repentance, but this is other than baptism in the Spirit. Spirit baptism may occur simultaneously with conversion, or subsequently; but in neither case are the two identical. The Protestant charismatics therefore adopted the emphases of Pentecostalism. The focus of their attention was subsequent to conversion. Yet it is doubtful if this seriously affected their understanding of the ordo salutis. The majority of participants within the charismatic movement adopted the orthopraxis of Pentecostalism, but little of its doctrine.

This can be clearly seen from their attitude to sanctification. We
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have already noted how sanctification played an important role within the Pentecostal ordo salutis. Whilst this had been increasingly minimized since the beginning of the movement, heart purification was still regarded as an important preliminary to the baptism in the Spirit. Protestant charismatics normally bypass the doctrine entirely. Thus Don Basham urges that 'baptism in the Spirit is not an attainment or reward based on some supposed degree of holiness.'13 Michael Harper, on the other hand, stresses that we should 'repent of every known sin' 14 as a preliminary to reception, but he does not say that this is an essential prerequisite. Indeed, sanctification is more likely to be the result of baptism in the Spirit, rather than the other way round.15 So we discover a movement increasingly drifting away from its prior stress on sanctification.

This is clearly underlined by a review of charismatic emphases in the literature of the movement. Sanctification is rarely considered. When it is mentioned, it is usually incidental to the main thrust of the work.16 There are a number of works where an emphasis upon sanctification is implicit. These tend to use the model of the Christian warfare as the main pattern of ongoing Christian life. The Christian is seen as continuously fighting the powers of evil. These are understood to be responsible for international, social, personal and family conflict.17 But they can be overcome by 'wielding a new weapon—the all victorious name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.'18

This emphasis is so peripheral that later writers saw the need to reintroduce the doctrine in order to change the concern of charismatic groups away from the present exercise of gifts, self-fulfilment and group harmony. Smail saw many charismatics as 'like a man who has come into possession of a set of tools and has enjoyed handling them but still does not know what to do with them.'19 Pastoral necessity was therefore prompting some discussion of the doctrine of sanctification. But there is little sign that this concern has yet become widespread.

The orthopraxis of Pentecostalism has been assimilated into the charismatic movement and the orthodoxy rejected, not only with regard to sanctification but also in connection with justification. The orthopraxis of Pentecostalism is that of revivalism. It is a movement that is intensely concerned with winning converts from the world. The urgency of evangelism is also evident in many Protestant charismatic circles. It is stressed that the positive renewal of the believer should lead to the conversion of outsiders. As David Pytches points out: 'Personal renewal is one thing, an essential; church growth is another, but the two should be vitally linked. We are grateful to God that in South America the one has led to another.'20 Renewal is frequently linked with church growth, where the emphasis is upon the methodology of evangelism rather than its theological undergirding.

Yet when we consider the theology of justification as expressed by Protestant charismatics, it displays the concerns of contemporary
Protestantism rather than Pentecostalism. This is seen in two matters. First, there is little discussion of the doctrine. This is not unique to charismatics. According to R. A. Leaver, the doctrine of justification has scarcely been discussed for over a decade, even amongst evangelicals.21 Those who are supposedly the guardians of the Protestant heritage have directed their concerns elsewhere into church reform, the social application of the gospel, and other forms of activism. Charismatics, therefore, reflect the wider concern for church survival and reform of the larger denominations.

Second, when the doctrine is discussed, it is seen as simply one metaphor amongst others to describe our deliverance through Christ. So David Watson states, 'No one word can adequately describe the meaning of the cross, but a glance at different facets of this diamond may help us to grasp the teaching of the New Testament. Three concepts in particular are found...justification, reconciliation and redemption.'22

The Nottingham statement reflects a similar point of view, where justification is seen as a Pauline view of the gospel to be placed alongside others.23 So, as charismatics have been more open to the influence of the ongoing theological debate than their Pentecostal brethren, it occasions little surprise that their thinking reflects more recent understandings of justification.

It would appear that, whilst Protestant charismatics have adopted some of the emphases of Pentecostalism, they have not accepted it lock, stock and barrel. They were not content to accept the theological framework of Pentecostalism, and remained convinced of the general soundness of their earlier theological approach.24 They retained, therefore, the ordo salutis of the stream of thought with which they were associated. The charismatic experience did not lead to a critical review of their theological position. The common position was: ‘Neo-Pentecostalism does not change our theology, it makes us more fervent. Neo-Pentecostalism does not change our ecumenical commitment but it makes us more alive.’25

As this is the case, we can conclude that there is no distinctively charismatic doctrine of justification, no distinctively charismatic doctrine of sanctification, and no distinctively charismatic ordo salutis. There is simply a spirituality within Protestantism which is concerned to move towards fullness of life in the Holy Spirit which is marked by, first, a desire to exercise the whole range of the gifts of the Spirit, and second, a desire to use these gifts in the proclamation that Jesus is Lord to the glory of the Father. This spirituality is marked by orthopraxis rather than by orthodoxy. It centres upon worship and relationships within the community. It has brought fresh life and vitality to the declining church in the West, but it has yet to contribute any significant thought on the central doctrines which sustain the church.
The present charismatic movement in the Roman Catholic church is considered to have its origin in a retreat organized for students at Duquesne University in February 1967. This stemmed from contacts that four professors had made with Pentecostalism, first through literature and then through personal contacts. Feeling profoundly dissatisfied with their spiritual programmes, they were searching for a deeper and more satisfying alternative which they found in Pentecostalism.

The original seekers, such as Ralph Keifer, adopted the Pentecostal description of the experience they had undergone, describing it as a 'baptism in the Spirit'. As the impact of this week-end spread rapidly throughout North America, those associated with this experience became known as the 'Catholic Pentecostal Movement', a name that provided the title of Edward O'Connor's first article on the subject in the summer of 1967. By 1969, the semi-annual meeting of the United States bishops was forced to comment on the movement. Their statement is illuminating. They were cautious, but welcoming. However, they took pains to underline the difference between Pentecostalism and Catholicism:

In calling it a Pentecostal movement, we must be careful to distinguish it from classic Pentecostalism...The Pentecostal movement in the Catholic church is not the acceptance of the ideology or practice of any denomination, but it likes to consider itself a renewal in the Spirit of the first Pentecost. 27

This stress on the distinctiveness of the Roman Catholic Pentecostal movement found many echoes in the early charismatic literature. Most of those involved were eager to stress their orthodoxy to the Catholic faith and their greater involvement in the church. 'It has deepened the attachment of members to the church. They have a livelier appreciation and heightened reverence for the church’s institutions.' 28 Whilst the earliest literature was eager to stress its orthodoxy, it was not always in deep accord with the Catholic understanding of the sacraments, sanctifying grace, the ordained priesthood and the church.

Until around 1970, Catholic charismatics had followed the same path as the Protestant charismatics. They had adopted Pentecostal terminology and practice. This was proving an uneasy marriage, for Pentecostal theology is essentially revivalist in character and is without a sacramentalist framework. The theological categories of Catholicism are sacramental. So whilst Protestants could accept baptism in the Holy Spirit as a second or third stage subsequent to conversion, Roman Catholics had to integrate their experience into their sacramental framework.

From about 1970 onwards, a number of professional theologians
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began to interpret their experiences in the light of the 'great Christian dogmas and the previous experience of the church.' Works from McDonnell, Gelpi, Sullivan, Tugwell, Hocken and Lauretin grappled with the renewal movement. Although each had a different approach, they were agreed that baptism in the Spirit was to be linked with initiation. As McDonnell puts it, “‘baptism in the Holy Spirit’ belongs to the making of a Christian and does not belong to a later, more mature, stage of the Christian life.” The theological focus for Catholic charismatics was no longer an isolated point subsequent to the beginning of the Christian life. It had been moved back to initiation, and this was not conversion but baptism.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the realizing of the grace that is infused at baptism. Whilst the sacrament is ‘complete sacramentally as far as what is done for a person is concerned, there may still be something lacking in regard to a person’s appropriation of what was done for him.’ This is realized (in Newman’s sense of ‘real assent’) by invoking the Holy Spirit, who gives freely. Lauretin systematizes this understanding by equating the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the third moment in baptism. The three moments bear the Latin names: sacramentum, the rite; res et sacramentum, the effect which is also a sign, an effect which is independent of the recipient’s disposition and points to the final effect; and the res, the ultimate effect. Thus baptism in the Spirit is the accomplishment of what baptism called for but did not achieve.

By incorporating ‘Baptism in the Holy Spirit’ into a sacramental framework, it was also possible to see its relation to the work of sanctification. It was concluded that baptism in the Holy Spirit is a moment of growth in the Christian life; this could be through a crisis experience, but more normally it is ‘typified by gradual growth towards union with Christ.’ A similar view is taken in the ‘Life in the Spirit’ seminars. This Catholic training programme has several sessions. The sixth, which is ‘Growth’, follows the session entitled ‘Praying for Baptism in the Spirit’. In this sixth session it is suggested that the ‘power from the Holy Spirit makes us grow’. This growth is clearly equated with sanctification, for the work of the Holy Spirit is to ‘make us realise the need for us to turn away from wrong doing; to re-order our priorities, to take away all those things which make us less loving.’

The Catholic understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer is very similar to that of Wesley. This is scarcely surprising, for ‘Wesley, the apostle par excellence of second-blessing teaching, dug his doctrine not from the ground of Reformed theology but from Catholic mysticism.’

Wesley was indeed influenced by such writers as Lorenzo Scupoli, Juan de Castaniza, George Lopez and Jean Baptiste de Renty. Wesley’s ordo salutis is essentially a modified form of the Catholic order. As Pentecostalism is a development of Wesleyan thinking, it is scarcely
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It is surprising that the Pentecostal and Catholic order of salvation bear many affinities. In the Catholic renewal movement we see the wheel come full circle. A process that began with a development in the *ordo salutis* some three centuries ago under the stimulus of Catholic thought, is reabsorbed into the Catholic faith.

The experience of the Catholic charismatics has been completely integrated with their theological position. Far more thoroughly than their Protestant counterparts, they have sought to place their experience within the framework of the tradition of the church. As a result of their efforts, baptism in the Spirit has been united to a thoroughly Catholic *ordo salutis*.

Conclusions

So far this review has simply sought to report what has actually happened to the *ordo salutis* within one strand of the history of the Christian church; namely the tradition of Pentecostalism. It is now time to draw some conclusions from this.

1) The charismatic experience has not altered the *ordo salutis* of those who have become involved in the movement. At first it appeared quite likely that the close involvement of the early charismatics (both Protestant and Catholic) would lead to the adoption of Pentecostal doctrines. Some Pentecostal leaders expected an influx into their movement. This has failed to materialize, for whilst charismatics have adopted the practice of Pentecostals and some of their terminology, they have not accepted their doctrines, particularly the Pentecostal *ordo salutis*. Instead they have sought to integrate their experience within their own tradition. In this regard Roman Catholic theologians have made more sustained and successful attempts to achieve this end.

2) The charismatic experience is unlikely to alter the *ordo salutis* of any branch of the movement. Whilst the experience is, on occasion, overwhelming, emotional and vital, it rarely raises radical questions concerning the deep-seated beliefs of those involved. Generally it has the opposite effect; people become more attached to the tradition they formerly held. If the experiential impact of the movement is to consolidate 'home church' doctrine, it appears equally unlikely that further theological reflection will disturb this pattern. Whilst Professor Hollenweger sees the movement as raising critical questions for the established denominations, these questions seem to be related to praxis rather than orthodoxy.

3) If the charismatic movement is essentially a spirituality which leads to a profounder knowledge that one is a son of God, a vivification of prayer, a new desire to read the Scriptures, increased joy, and a sense of inner healing and cleansing, or, in other words, a 'renewing and deepening of assurance', this is to the good. The churches in the West has passed through an incredibly perplexing and difficult period in
their history. The church is in need of assurance. In a secular society the individual believer seeks confirmation that God is neither disinterested nor dead. The charismatic movement provides for these needs but it is not a universal panacea. One of the great problems confronting the church is its doctrinal division. This fragmentation of the body of Christ centred upon the ordo salutis. Yet the charismatic movement has brought no new insights to this central problem.

4) The charismatic movement has made a large contribution to the ecumenical movement. It has enabled large numbers of Christians of many different persuasions to worship and work together. It has deepened their sense of unity and their impatience with denominational barriers. It has given fresh life and impetus to the waning ecumenical movement. This contribution must not be minimized, but it must be recognized that there cannot be any reality to unity without doctrinal agreement. Indifference to doctrine may be the vogue, but the questions related to the respective ordo salutis of the Protestant and Catholic churches must be resolved. There are encouraging signs that this central problem is capable of resolution.39 Sadly, the contribution of the charismatic movement continues to be at the experiential rather than the doctrinal level.

It is to be hoped that the close encounters brought about within inter-denominational charismatic groups may be able to tackle some of the great problems of a divided body of Christ, in particular the role of justification and its relationship to sanctification in the salvation of the Christian.

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NOTES

7 ibid., p.125.
9 See A. Murray, The Full Blessing of Pentecost (Oliphants, London 1970), p.82, for a good example of this type of teaching. See also Hollenweger, op. cit., p.408.
10 Calvin also saw self-denial as the sum of the Christian life (Institutes, 3.VII.1) but he saw self-denial as going beyond the personal to giving us a right attitude to our fellow men (Institutes, 3.VII.4–7).
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11 In describing the sacramental approach as life centred, it is implied that sacraments revolve around the moments of heightened awareness within life, birth, adolescence, marriage and death. Between these great events the sacraments provide a continuous pattern around which life is structured.


28 ibid., p.21.


