

# Dancing in the Spirit . . . (no really!)

A MEANDERING EXPLORATION INTO  
BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN  
'BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT'  
AND TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY.

An essay by Stu McGregor

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## INTRODUCTION

Jürgen Moltmann opens his first chapter of *the Trinity and the Kingdom* with these three questions:

What do we think of when we hear the name of the triune God? What ideas do we associate with the Trinity? What do we experience in the fellowship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?

The answers will vary greatly . . .<sup>1</sup>

This honest appraisal of Trinitarian theology, and by extension, pneumatology (as will become clear) gives us an important insight into the ambiguity that is inherent in a doctrine scarred by a multiplicity of perspectives and persuasions. This ambiguity could be the reason for a young Melancthon to comment that “We adore the mysteries of the Godhead. That is better to investigate them.”<sup>2</sup> But Melancthon’s statement really is about being content with ambiguity not mystery. Ambiguity is apathetic<sup>3</sup> in that it will not invite inquiry; mystery however, beckons investigation and stimulates exploration.<sup>4</sup> Ambiguity will also allow for arbitrary separation of doctrine and praxis; mystery draw practice into it and reshape it. The issue that we need to tackle though is whether this ambiguity is created by theological ambivalence or whether the mystery has been delved into as far as it can be.

Gordon Fee makes the same point this way:

“For some a book on the Spirit as ‘theology’ is the kiss of death; and in many ways I am in that camp.”<sup>5</sup>

This statement became a primary motivator for Fee to bring an understanding of the powerful presence of the Spirit back into Pauline scholarship.<sup>6</sup> He wanted to reconcile experience with theological rigour.

In this essay we are addressing the question of what ‘baptism in the Spirit’ is and how is it regulated by the Trinitarian mystery. I want to see if there is a way to bring the Trinity out of the theologosphere and into the pew theology of Sundays. I want to demonstrate that the Trinity can be present in the phenomenon of Baptism in the Spirit.

## UNPACKING THE CRISIS

From the outset we must concede that the doctrine of the Trinity is very complex and as Alister McGrath observes, “is unquestionably one of the most perplexing aspects of Christian Theology.”<sup>7</sup> We are talking about exploring the depths of the greatest of mysteries, the constitution and economics of the Trinity—it could be simplified to a discussion about Trinitarian ontology and its<sup>8</sup> relationship with a human being. For example, how do we speak of the interface between the Trinity and what took place at Pentecost? There seems to be an enormous chasm between what many claim is the experience of the Holy Spirit

and the doctrine of the Trinity—so much so that it seems odd to talk of the Trinity when talking of Pentecost except as a passing reference. It's almost as if we cannot engage the experience and the doctrine without one detracting from the other and so we end up with an extraordinary bifurcation of ideas with an assent to ambiguity (not mystery) holding them together.

It's completely understandable to have this chasm because there is actually a plethora of doctrinal frameworks from various experiences, traditions and strong biblical exegesis to support many different positions. Fortunately, on the whole the positions seem to oscillate roughly into two camps. Kathryn Tanner describes this polarisation:

“On the one view . . . the Spirit is thought to work immediately—both instantaneously and directly, without any obvious mediating forms—in exceptional events, rather than in the ordinary run of human affairs, upon the interior depths of individual persons, apart from the operation of their own faculties, in ways that ensure moral probity and infallible certainty of religious insight. On the other side, the Spirit is thought to work gradually, and without final resolution, in and through the usual fully human and fully fallible, often messy and conflict-ridden public processes of give-and-take in ordinary life.”<sup>9</sup>

In the first the Spirit bypasses the fallibility and sinful corruption of the human and in the second the omni-competent ability to rework human inadequacy for its own purposes. It is a shrouded conflict between Scholasticism and Pietism, rationalist and experientialist, where thought and concept are at odds with certainty and application. “Does it make sense?” asks the former; “Will it work for me?” asks the latter.

We cannot deny that the experientialists have the popular vote as they are bringing an ever-increasing patronage through their doors.<sup>10</sup> Evidence suggests that the charismatic movement is a majority force in contemporary Christianity, and Gary Badcock observes “that it is best understood as a living critique . . . of the church’s traditional thinking about the Spirit and its general stance in relation to religious experience.”<sup>11</sup> They offer constraints and boundaries in the human sphere but ask us to relinquish control of ourselves to the supernatural sphere.<sup>12</sup> There is a fierce tension between the body and the spirit.

This tension is called into sharp critique when the doctrine of the Trinity is introduced, for the Trinity takes us out of pure experientialism and into the realms of a mystical and existential engagement of the “I” with the transcendent unknowable other “eternal thou”. In other words, when we lay claim to have been in any way affected by God, we claim to something both as terrifying and as healing as Isaiah’s experience in his vision of the temple (Isaiah 6). As Badcock says “Encounter with God is an awesome thing, and often a crucifying experience.”<sup>13</sup> Any experience of God should reveal God for who God is not just

for how God has been experienced by an individual. Badcock continues with how speaking “of an experience of the Holy Spirit is to imply that there has been an experience of the holiness of the source of that experience.”<sup>14</sup> It is impossible to know God without holiness confronting our sinfulness after all “blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.” (Matt 5:8) Any apprehension of a revelation of God will involve a massive ontological reorientation in *every* aspect of humanness; it demands engaging in the fierce tension, as God has engaged with it—even through the cross. These elements seem to be lacking in the pew understanding of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. If this is an encounter with God, surely the demands left on the individual are great.

Let us now examine briefly the idea of Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

A discussion of Baptism in the Holy Spirit

At its core baptism of the Spirit is existential.<sup>15</sup> It is about how the Holy Spirit is experienced as supernatural power by a believer as promised in Scripture. Luke records Jesus as telling the disciples to wait to be “clothed with power from on high” as the Father has promised.<sup>16</sup> When the disciples waited and then experienced extraordinary supernatural events—tongues of fire spreading throughout the room (Acts 2:3), other languages were spoken, and miracles began to be performed (Acts 3:1–11). This is just the tip of the iceberg and the narrative of Acts speaks of empowerment after empowerment; signs and wonders remain a feature of the rest of the New Testament. Even cessationists agree miracles and charismata were a feature of early Christianity.

We have to somehow reconcile this supernatural with the theology of the Trinity and it seems that rationalism has been the dominant flavour until the last century. Gordon Fee warns that “in our having [God’s] Spirit, we not settle for a watered down understanding that gives more glory to Western rationalism and spiritual anaemia than to the living God.”<sup>17</sup> James Dunn sums up the situation in saying that though the ‘ecstatic’ evidence of the Spirit leaves many uncomfortable, the

“ . . . very features of primitive or raw spirituality, which the church has regarded with deep suspicion and usually dismissed out of hand for most of its history, were the features that occasioned the astonishing developments that made Christianity what it is and what it believes! *Christianity began as an enthusiastic sect!*”<sup>18</sup>

These ‘enthusiastic features’ are what Pentecostals see as the ‘empowering experience of Spirit baptism’, which is an empowerment for witness and evidenced by the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit—most usually (though not exclusively) tongues.<sup>19</sup>

One of the issues is whether these enthusiasms have been taken too far and that the Biblical record has been distorted to fit with experience. John Stott warns that a doctrine of the Holy Spirit must not be constructed from purely descriptive passages in Acts adding

that it would be ‘impossible to build a consistent doctrine from them because there is no consistency about them’.<sup>20</sup>

Instead of going into an analysis of these scriptures to work out the procedure of being baptised in the Spirit, I would be content to focus on what all sides seem to agree on. If Stott can say “. . . the gift of the Holy Spirit is a *universal* Christian experience because it is an *initial* Christian experience”<sup>21</sup>, and then Fee, who is from quite a different perspective, can say, “whatever else happens at Christian conversion, it is the experience of the Spirit that is crucial; and therefore it is the Spirit alone who identifies God’s people in the present eschatological age”<sup>22</sup>, then it is fair to say that whatever the procedure, something extraordinary is expected of a believer when they claim to have the power of the Spirit, or be filled with the Spirit, or be baptised in the Spirit.

There seems to be a consensus among the writers I have read, which is by no mean exhaustive, that discussions of *when* Baptism in the Holy Spirit occurs is a red herring—*that* it occurs is what really matters. It’s interesting to note that even Clark Pinnock (a charismatic theologian) doesn’t see ‘second blessing’ as a special and expected Spirit event except in that it does seem to happen. He suggests that these later charismatic experiences as a product of a deficient openness to the Spirit at the conversion experience.<sup>23</sup>

Coming back to Badcock’s assertion that speaking of “an experience of the Holy Spirit is to imply that there has been an experience of the holiness of the source of that experience” we can see that there is a sanctifying aspect to this ‘being clothed’. Badcock asserts that for many Reformed and Evangelical Christians this rebirth constitutes a definition of Spirit baptism as ‘regeneration or new birth through a faith response to the proclamation of the gospel.’<sup>24</sup> We receive the Spirit not as a result of any good works of obedience which we may have done, but ‘by hearing with faith’ that is by hearing and believing the gospel (Gal 3:2). More simply, ‘we . . . receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (Gal. 3:14).’<sup>25</sup>

The baptism motif is powerful in describing this event and its out-workings<sup>26</sup>. Sacramental traditions view Jesus’ reception of the Spirit at water baptism as paradigmatic for our own experience—to that end, Baptism in the Holy Spirit ‘is the metaphor used by John the Baptist to characterize and inaugurate the person and work of Jesus in the Gospels.’<sup>27</sup> It is not just *a cleansing from* the past<sup>28</sup> but it is *an entering into* a life as an agent of the Kingdom of God. There is a rebirth that takes place and the Spirit empowers us for this new reality. Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz describes this process with a beautiful image of ‘ensoulment’:

“The four evangelists agree in reporting the baptism of Jesus and his ensoulment by the *pneuma*. The Christian church has always understood baptism as a new birth, as birth through the *pneuma*. Thus the baptism of Jesus marks his new coming to be, because God the Spirit ensouls him and gives him life.

Baptism and the gift of the *pneuma* therefore represent a further aspect of associating Jesus' life and activity as closely as possible with the life and activity of the entire creation. The inner logic of this is seen in the fact that Jesus' activity takes place by virtue of the same power which in the beginning—so to speak, in the first exhalation of God—produced light.”<sup>29</sup>

Christ's ensoulment is the beginning of a new age of the Kingdom of God. Baptism echoes the first breaths of creation from birth, to rebirth, hence the strength of the metaphor of baptism for us. In short, Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a 'prophetic call' into bearing witness to Jesus through word and deed.<sup>30</sup>

So building on this general agreement that Christians are 'clothed with the Spirit', the primary point of contention as to *when* the believer is filled with the Holy Spirit—i.e. is it at conversion (initiation), at water baptism, or a second confirming act (second blessing, Baptism in the Holy Spirit)—dissipates into the background.

I want to summarise my thoughts like this for the sake of ease.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit = being filled with the Spirit = conversion/initiation

This will not satisfy many people, but I'm arguing not from experience or procedure, but from the longer effect of such a procedure. What results in our encounter with the Holy Spirit is really of tantamount importance.<sup>31</sup> Whether that be expressed by gifts is absolutely meaningless if the fruit of the Spirit is not present. Badcock helpfully summarises this position in saying that "*charisms* can be empty noisemakers (1 Cor 13:1)—or even pathological when detached from any deeper religious content—and that . . . the thing of greatest importance is the deepening of faith and spiritual life that has been experienced." It really is the latter that is the most positive mark of charismatic influence.<sup>32</sup>

From this point in the discussion I would like to look at how all this interfaces with the Trinity.

#### A DISCUSSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S RELATION WITH THE TRINITY

It is important to remember that for the 1st Testament readers the idea of Trinity was inconceivable. If the historic trajectory of the Bible shows us anything about the Holy Spirit, it shows at the very least a constant development in understanding. D. Bloesch describes what he calls a triadic evolution of the doctrine of the Spirit from "animistic, associated with primitive religion . . . in which the Spirit is thought of as a self-contained subject who takes possession of humans, endowing them with leadership gifts or prophetic powers", through a "dynamistic view, which portrays the Spirit as an immanent vivifying force or substance" and to arrive at "the personal presence of the living God and sometimes as a

mode of God's being and action." In this final paradigm of understanding "the Spirit is not simply power, but the power of vicarious love."<sup>33</sup>

This vicarious love is a wonderful concept but has contributed, by virtue of language, to a privatised understanding of the 'presence of God.' I suggest that 'personal presence'<sup>34</sup> has become a stumbling block in our understanding of the power and love of the Holy Spirit, simply because at the pew<sup>35</sup> level it culminates in a diminishing of the significance of the Godhead into 'my experience' of it.

When our interpretive lens is limited to subjective experience, we are left with some significant problems. When we say we 'experience God', 'God's presence', 'the power of the Spirit', or 'baptism in the Spirit', what are our statements conveying about the role of the Father and the Son? If we 'consume' the outworking of these experiences into ourselves for ourselves, then how does that involve the infinitude of the Trinity?

Yves Congar takes this question further, "Is it a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit?" Because "there is no activity of the nature or essence of the divinity that exists prior to or independent of the Persons" then "no action can be attributed to the Holy Spirit independently of the Father and the Son."<sup>36</sup> Congar presses us to be intentionally Trinitarian in whatever manner we speak of God. To speak of the Spirit is to speak of the Father and the Son. When we talk of relation with the ontological Trinity, we will do so with language expressing the route we take i.e. the Spirit or the Son.

### **Appropriation**

One way to answer these concerns is the doctrine of appropriation where we appropriate certain attributes to the different persons of the Godhead—"it is *appropriate* to think of the work of Creation as the work of the Father."<sup>37</sup> These attributes are much more readily reconciled into our own personal experience of the Trinity and most often the connection point with the Holy Spirit. Quoting Galtier, Congar says that, "the only purpose of the attributes applied to the individual Persons 'is to make their personality manifest to us.' This does not lead to any diversity in their activity, their will or their power."<sup>38</sup> Congar brings M. Scheeben's insight into the mix:

"Although the substance and the activity are common to all three Persons, the possession of the substance is peculiar to each Person. Each Person possesses the divine nature in a special way and can also possess a created nature in a way that is peculiar to him and thus possess it on his own. The Son alone assumed a created nature in his physical possession. Could the Holy Spirit also not take possession of a creature in a way that is peculiar to his Person, by means of a possession that is less perfect and purely moral . . . so that the other divine Persons may possess

that creature in that determined relationship, not directly, but only in him, as is the case with Son in his humanity? . . . In his hypostatic personality and by virtue of that personality, the Holy Spirit is the pledge by which we possess the other Persons . . . ”<sup>39</sup>

This is where *person*<sup>40</sup> is important. We ought to consider the word ‘person’ not in the individualistic and autonomous sense in which we are accustomed, but rather a person is “that which enters into relationships and does not exist apart from them.”<sup>41</sup> Moltmann argues that it is “essential to understand the Spirit in *relation* to the Son as Word.” The Father utters his eternal Word in the eternal breathing out of his Spirit.<sup>42</sup> There is a natural procession that takes place but always constrained by relationship to the other. The command giver is God the Father, the enabler is God the Word or the Son and the active agent is God the giver of life is the Holy Spirit. Hence we see the Holy Spirit as being intrinsic in the makeup of creation, intrinsic in the ordering of life, intrinsic in the sustaining of our souls, intrinsic in the work of the Cross.

To illustrate the idea of distinctiveness in the Trinity Karl Rahner writes:

“In Scripture it is the Father in the Trinity who is our Father, and not the threefold God. The Spirit dwells in us in a particular and proper way. These and like statements of Scripture and Tradition are first of all *in possessione*.”<sup>43</sup>

So the three are acting independently but causally and appropriate to the personalities. They take ‘possession’ of the object of their action. As the Son became incarnate, the Spirit operates uniquely, but embedded with the same hypostasis as the Father and the Son. The appropriation to the Spirit is the breath of life, the animator of being. The Spirit is *in possessione* of a person and the church. To be filled with this Spirit is to participate in this appropriation, to participate in the redemptive process of the corrupted creative order. To be filled with this Spirit is to be sustained by the awe inspiring love that emanates from the heart of the Father, to be overwhelmed by this love as revealed in Christ. We are participants in the cosmic activity. But it is certainly not a privatised affair. As Congar concludes:

“The three Persons may act together in the descending line of efficient causality, nevertheless (1) they do so according to the order of the procession and the special character of the hypostatic being of each Person. (2) In the order of return established in this way, (a) the image of God as Trinity is realised in the soul in a way that is more profound and more conforming, and (b) the soul thus made holy is placed in a relationship with the three Persons as the term of its knowledge of faith, of supernatural love and often of experience . . . In this way, in its relationship of

ascent back to God, the soul has a special connection with each of the three Persons, and this relationship will be fulfilled in the beatific vision.”<sup>44</sup>

The advantage of the appropriation model of the Trinity is that permission is given for specific encounter with the Son and the Spirit. However, the limitation is that at the existential level it too easily divvies up the Trinity into a mild form of modalism i.e. when we experience baptism in the Spirit we are encountering God in the mode of the Spirit.<sup>45</sup> Even upon reflection the relation in the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is still singularly with the Holy Spirit. While it is a useful model, it still falls short. This is in part because of the linear procession of activity inherent in the Trinitarian expression. We need to mess it up a little, bring a little chaos into it so we can't apprehend it fully through one singular hook. We need several entry points in order to bring more fullness into our experience.

### **Perichoresis**

Thomas F. Torrance has a take on another model that has been around since the Cappodocian Fathers who needed to defend themselves against charges of Tri-theism.<sup>46</sup> He sees that *perichoresis* actually does away with the doctrine of appropriation. *Perichoresis* allows God to not only be Triune in Being but Triune in Activity.

“Since God's Being and Activity completely interpenetrate each other, we must think of his Being and his Activity not separately but as one Being-in-Activity and one Activity-in-being.”<sup>47</sup>

Inherent in this understanding is the idea of the 'divine dance', which is only an idea, but it is an access point for the pew theologian. This dynamic interaction that maintains distinctiveness without compromising one-ness is very useful to our discussion. Now we have a case where the engagement with the Spirit of God is not limited to a static representation, or as an 'it'<sup>48</sup>, rather there is a dynamic understanding that all three are present in the Holy Spirit. What is most obvious to us is not actually the totality of the experience; we apprehend 'in part' only. What is obvious to our perceptions is actually a kenotic movement of God for the sake of our relationship to him. I would argue at this point that we are able to see the Trinitarian dimension of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Because the image is dynamic and circulating and interchanging free-flow (dance if you like) then when we use terms like 'being baptised in the Spirit', we understand that we are participating in that relational movement, and in that movement, we see gaps that need filling, that can only be filled by bringing the Trinity into our experience. Furthermore, the I-thou is reciprocal. We become participants in the Trinitarian project of redemption.<sup>49</sup>

Rahner's axiom introduces this dynamic—"the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity, and the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity." Rahner pushes us to speak not

only of how the Trinity interacts with the world, but also how the world is involved in God.<sup>50</sup> There is a tangible relationship present in the 'I–thou' dynamic in that when we relate to the Trinity we are absorbed into it and in that sense, we are filled by it. Our identification point may still be the Holy Spirit, but we are still fully immersed by and into the fullness of the Godhead. When I am talking of this I am of course thinking of the image in terms of scale. It is much like a dust particle will encounter the Sun; our net effect on God is non-existent. His effect on us? Completely transformational.<sup>51</sup> That is, in my view, baptism in the Spirit.<sup>52</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In this essay we have looked all too briefly at the idea of Baptism in the Spirit and how it can be reconciled to the infinitude of the Trinity. The Spirit is talked about as wind and fire for good reason. He is unpredictable, self-determining, fully God and therefore uncoercible. We do well to approach these topics with trembling humility for to talk of God is an awesome act. I think part of the problem in this discussion is that things have gotten out of kilter. Theology of the Trinity has been left in the theologosphere because the church doesn't know how this doctrine connects to their everyday lives. Our 'application' based evangelicalism has undermined theological discourse and truncated the understanding of the pews. The pews are focussing on what is important for living but only in bite-sized chunks. And this, I think, is where the crisis is sourced.

There is a wonderful metaphor that describes how these things can get out of kilter, it's actually a reflection on the "what is the good news" but the metaphor works nicely in this doctrinal issue too:

. . . a musical metaphor that illuminates the issue: the difference between a fundamental and an overtone. In music, every tone you hear contains within it a fundamental frequency that determines if it is an A, a D flat, or an F sharp, for example. But every tone also contains overtones, which are other frequencies that sound simultaneously, giving the fundamental tone a unique "flavor." The overtones are why an F sharp played on a piano sounds different than the same note played on a tuba or guitar. All three instruments can be playing the same fundamental (F sharp) but they will be sounding different overtones, giving each instrument its unique sound quality.<sup>53</sup>

The fundamental of this discussion is the unity of the Trinity, the overtone is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. With too much focus on the Baptism in the Holy Spirit we end up with a privatised spiritual fix. God recedes rapidly into the background as being only as meaningful as our incidental experience. But entertaining discussions with such

dynamic significance as *perichoresis* can only serve to invigorate us into deeper and more sustainable faith. <sup>54</sup>

I think this answers the two questions I asked at the beginning of this essay “Does this make sense?” and “Will it work for me?” Both are adequately answered in a *perichoretic* framework.

I’ll leave James Dunn with the (second to!) last word.

“A church that seeks to restrict and control the Spirit, as too dangerous and unpredictable, may be safe, but it has signed its own death warrant. A church that seeks to follow where the Spirit leads will have to expect the unexpected and be prepared to be shaken to its core. But that’s life, the life of the Spirit.” <sup>55</sup>

So . . . let’s dance!

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#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom : the Doctrine of God*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Moltmann cites P. Melancthon, *Loci Communes*, 1521, *Melancthons Werke II*, ed. R. Strupperich, Gütersloh 1952, p. 7. Ibid., 1.

<sup>3</sup> in a very soft sense of the word

<sup>4</sup> And yes, I am thinking of the Scooby Doo Mystery Mobile kind of investigation too! A mystery was something to be solved, rather than ignored.

<sup>5</sup> Gordon Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 2.

<sup>6</sup> “Person, Presence, power: these three realities are what the Holy Spirit meant for the apostle Paul. . . . To recapture the Pauline experience and understanding is the key to our finding our way into the ‘radical middle,’ where we expect neither too much nor too little.” Ibid., 8

<sup>7</sup> Alister E. McGrath, *Christian theology : an Introduction* (Oxford, UK; Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell, 1994), 247.

<sup>8</sup> Now that’s a question. “its” or “their”? :)

<sup>9</sup> Kathryn Tanner, “Workings of the Spirit: Simplicity or Complexity?,” in *The work of the Spirit : pneumatology and Pentecostalism*, ed. Michael Welker (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006), 87–105 87.

<sup>10</sup> Gary D. Badcock, *Light of Truth and Fire of Love : a Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 1997), 137.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> I want to footnote this as it could be a distraction to the general argument of the essay, but in excess the experiential tends to a Gnostic cosmology where one’s flesh is reprobate and the spirit transcendent. This is indeed one of the central heresies that 1 Corinthians was written to correct.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 144.

<sup>15</sup> “In the crucial developments which shaped the distinctiveness of Christian pneumatology it is important to observe that the Spirit (*ruach, pneuma*) was still understood as an *existential* term, expressive of life-transforming experiences.” James Dunn, “Towards the Spirit of Christ: The Emergence of the Distinctive Features of Christian Pneumatology,” in *The Work of the Spirit : Pneumatology and Pentecostalism*, ed. Michael Welker (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006), 21.

<sup>16</sup> “And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you

have been clothed with power from on high.” Luke 24:39

<sup>17</sup> Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 9.

<sup>18</sup> Dunn, “Toward the Spirit of Christ,” 23.

<sup>19</sup> Frank D. Macchia, “The Kingdom and the Power: Spirit Baptism in Pentecostal and Ecumenical Perspective,” in *The work of the Spirit : Pneumatology and Pentecostalism*, ed. Michael Welker (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2006), 109.

<sup>20</sup> John R. W. Stott, *Baptism and Fullness : the Work of the Holy Spirit Today* (London: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 30.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>22</sup> Gordon Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God* (Peabody Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1996), 88.

<sup>23</sup> “Because the power dimension of the Spirit has been most neglected, subsequent encounters are most often charismatic in nature.” Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love : a Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 167

<sup>24</sup> Dunn, “Toward the Spirit of Christ,” 114.

<sup>25</sup> Stott, *Baptism and Fullness*, 31.

<sup>26</sup> “Spirit baptism can emerge as a powerful metaphor of the pneumatological substance of God’s redemptive work through Christ.” Dunn, “Toward the Spirit of Christ,” 114

<sup>27</sup> Macchia, “The Kingdom and the Power,” 113.

<sup>28</sup> which is really the only way we can talk about it an include Jesus’ experience of baptism as paradigmatic for ours.

<sup>29</sup> Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz, *God’s Spirit : Transforming a World in Crisis* (New York; Geneva: Continuum ; WCC Publications, 1995), 39.

<sup>30</sup> Macchia, “The Kingdom and the Power,” 121.

<sup>31</sup> “The term is not the issue. Whatever we call it, it is important that the full package of baptismal blessing be quickened in us . . .” Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 169

<sup>32</sup> Badcock, *Light of Truth*, 137.

<sup>33</sup> Donald G. Bloesch, *The Holy Spirit : Works & Gifts* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 65–66.

<sup>34</sup> I do like Fee’s phrase ‘empowering presence’.

<sup>35</sup> pew theology is not meant perjoratively, rather as a way of describing theological reflection in popular Christian thinking which tends to be crude like crude oil needs refining. Nothing wrong with the product in and of itself if you want to light a big fire, but when it’s refined, there’s so much more it can do and do so much more effectively if fire is the aim.

<sup>36</sup> Yves. Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit.*, trans. David Smith, vol. 2 (New York : Seabury Press ; London : G. Chapman, 1983), 87.

<sup>37</sup> McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 299.

<sup>38</sup> Congar, *Spirit, Vol 2.*, 87.

<sup>39</sup> Yves. Congar, *I believe in the holy spirit.* (New York: Seabury Press, 1983), 88.

<sup>40</sup> a very undignified term when applied to God

<sup>41</sup> Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 36.

<sup>42</sup> Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom*, 170.

<sup>43</sup> Congar, *I believe in the holy spirit.*, 88.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 89-90.

<sup>45</sup> Actually, it has been argued that much of the crude theology of the pew is in fact a “tritheistic existential modalism.”

<sup>46</sup> Graham Buxton, “On the Trinitarian Doctrine of Perichoresis: The Spirit in the divine, the human and the physical,” April 2008, [http://www.taborelaide.com/downloads/downloads\\_about\\_staff\\_articles/On\\_the\\_Trinitarian\\_doctrine\\_of\\_perichoresis.doc](http://www.taborelaide.com/downloads/downloads_about_staff_articles/On_the_Trinitarian_doctrine_of_perichoresis.doc)

<sup>47</sup> Thomas F. Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God, One Being Three Persons* (Edinburgh, Scotland: T&T Clark Ltd, 1996), 198

<sup>48</sup> Fee laments this tendency for us to apprehend the Spirit through our metaphors and as a result truncate him to inanimate imagery i.e. wind, water, fire, oil. This is why we would refer to the Father and Son as him, but the Spirit as ‘it’. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 6

<sup>49</sup> Buxton, “On the Trinitarian Doctrine of Perichoresis: The Spirit in the divine, the human and the physical.”

<sup>50</sup> Badcock, *Light of Truth*, 171

<sup>51</sup> indeed the appeal of *perichoresis* to the scientific community is noteworthy. Buxton, “On the Trinitarian Doctrine of Perichoresis: The Spirit in the divine, the human and the physical.”

<sup>52</sup> Although I urge you not to press the analogy too far!

<sup>53</sup> Benjamin Sternke, “Benjamin Sternke on The Good News,” *J.R. Woodward: Dream Awakener*, <http://jrwoodward.net/2009/05/benjamin-sternke-on-the-good-news/>.

<sup>54</sup> If we have the courage to not limit the Holy Spirit to a template of interactions we can only do better. And much as some proponents of Baptism in the Holy Spirit may want to differ, the prescription base that they operate on is fundamentally flawed. The irony of their seeking to bring people into the freedom of the Spirit actually restricts them to a privatised formula that doesn’t bring them to the fullness that is available.

<sup>55</sup> Dunn, “Toward the Spirit of Christ,” 26.