



PENTECOSTALISM AND CHARISMATISM

A Ghanaian Perspective

JOHN KWASI FOSU

Pentecostalism and Charismatism:

A Ghanaian Perspective

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ISBN: 978 - 9988 - 3 - 4497 - 9

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For further information, copies and distribution, please contact the publisher:

Published in Ghana by



**Glocal Publications
P. Box KS 16829
Kumasi**

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GENERAL CONCLUSION

This book purposed to study Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity from a Ghanaian perspective. It has been observed that the variations in Pentecostal and Charismatic categories and orientations make issues of definition and terminology difficult. However, in looking at the general orientation of Pentecostalism as a movement, some essential marks have been identified. Pentecostalism emphasises personal salvation in Christ as a transforming and empowering experience accessible by the *Holy Spirit*. An emphasis is therefore placed on the manifestation of the *Spirit* with a particular reference to the spectacular ones such as glossolalia, miracles and prophecy. Furthermore, the respective cultural worldview of the adherents of Pentecostals come into play. Relatedly, Pentecostal worship is characterized by popular interpretation of the Bible to meet existential realities. Pentecostals also make strategic use of the media and strongly emphasise the concept and phenomenon of holistic ministry.

An attempt has been made to give a general overview of contemporary Ghanaian Christianity with a particular emphasis on its Pentecostal influence. With 71.2% of the total Ghanaian population as Christians, Ghana is one of the nations in Sub-Sahara Africa with a high population of Christians. The steady growth of Christianity in Ghana has been attributed to the strong influence of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity, a phenomenon that has been described in this book as “Pentecostalisation of contemporary Ghanaian Christianity.” Through the influence of Pentecostalism, contemporary Ghanaian Christianity is characterized by contextualized liturgies, the resonance of African worldview, emphasis on

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the Spirit as empowering and transforming lives and the use of charismatic laity and media in ministry context, and the interpretations appear not to be faithful to the grammar of the texts. Next, the phenomenon of the prosperity gospel challenges the authenticity of a Christian who is poor. Moreover, it over-estimates Satan and his power and at times the teaching approaches dualism bringing out the false image of God competing with Satan. Furthermore, overemphasizing material prosperity endangers great traditional themes like the love of God, the sacrifice of Jesus, and grace.

From the discourse on the phenomenological description of Ghana's pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity, this book supports the argument that Pentecostalism and Charismatism are an integral part of African Christianity. Some significant points underscore this argument. To begin, the worship style of African Pentecostalism and Charismatism is African-oriented. This is seen in the style of singing, drumming and dancing of the Pentecostals. Next, theological formulations of Pentecostalism and Charismatism are at home with the African worldview. Further, the administrative structure and the leadership style in many Pentecostal and Charismatic churches are in line with the African concept of leadership. Here there is a warm fellowship (an example is the concept of communalism and clan head or *abusuapanyin*). Not all, Pentecostalism attracts the local indigenes as many of them are inclined to use their respective local languages in their worship services.

Charismatism also makes Ghanaian elites feel at home in the sense of their emphasis on African pride and heritage. Last but not the least, the exercise of the gifts of speaking in tongues and healing looks like the traditional religious background of the Africans. Their healing is similar to the way traditional herbalists/healers heal.

PREVIEW - SAMPLE